

PROJECT ON BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

AFRICA REPORT

Third Quarterly Report on Africa

July to September 2008

Volume: 2

Reports for the month of August 2008

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**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
ISLAMABAD**

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

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**Department of Politics and International Relations
International Islamic University Islamabad**

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

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Third Quarterly Report on Africa 2008

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BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: August 5, 2008

Sub-Saharan Africa

Abbas S. Lamptey

Period: From July 27 to August 2 2008

SUMMARY

The Chinese government has made a commitment of N386.1billion (\$3.3 billion) for the development of hydropower in Nigeria. Sources at the Ministry of Energy (Power) said the financial commitment by China to the hydropower sector is in line with the Federal Government's efforts at attracting private investment into the power sector. The government has been yearning for investment in the sector, given the current state of the country's hydropower stations and the huge capital requirements needed to standardise and build new ones. **Lagos State Government yesterday promised to fully compensate the community members whose 850 hectares land including economic trees and farms were acquired to establish the Lekki Free Trade Zone in conjunction with the Chinese authorities.** The Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) which is the exploration arm of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and a Chinese company, the China National Oil Development Corporation (CNODC) are involved in a battle for the ownership of a \$2billion oil block presently in possession of the Nigerian company. The oil block had been operated by NPDC as Oil Mining Licence (OML) since 1989 but NNPC was said to have put it for sale as Oil Prospecting Licence (OPL) 289 under questionable circumstances but NPDC has vowed not to give it up for any reason. **Business has been slow for many Ghanaian traders. They blame the situation on not only the influx of cheap Chinese products but also insufficient legal protection and corruption.** The concern about the Chinese expansion in business circles was illustrated with the convening of a roundtable discussion in November last year which looked at ways to protect small industries against the intrusion of Chinese products. **South Africa's International Trade Administration Commission (Itac) has begun antidumping investigations into stainless steel sink imports from China and Malaysia after local manufacturers claimed that almost half the product value of these imports came from state incentives.** THE dualisation and repair of some of Zimbabwe's major roads got a huge boost yesterday after Vice President Joseph Msika commissioned an assortment of earthmoving equipment bought from China. The equipment, which includes bulldozers, concrete mixers, hydraulic excavators, concrete dumpers, motor graders, tractors, rollers among others was bought at a total cost of US\$1,5 million by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. FAKE solar panels imported from China are flooding the local market, a top Ugandan official disclosed on

Monday. **The Chinese Business Community in Uganda can now comfortably operate their businesses in Uganda. This comes after Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE), with financial support from the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises translated the Uganda labour laws into Chinese to cut the language barrier problem.**

Ministers of Housing and Urban Development from more than thirty-five African countries yesterday commenced talks in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, on how to provide adequate and sustainable finances for housing provision and integrated urban development. Brussels is tempted to skip the translation of the interim economic partnership agreements (EPAs) into the 23 official European languages because of concerns that some African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries may change their minds about signing the final agreements. **HOPES of saving a world trade deal were dashed when World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks collapsed last night in Geneva, dealing a major blow to the global economy and raising questions over the continued viability of the WTO.**The meeting was the last chance to strike a deal on cutting tariffs and subsidies in agriculture and manufactured goods before the US presidential election in November. Talks collapsed when the main protagonists - the US and India, with the latter supported by China and Indonesia -- failed to reach a compromise on a measure to shield developing countries against massive agricultural import increases.

The African continent is loosing up to \$12 billion per year of its Gross Domestic Product in scaling up malaria intervention programs, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).WHO country representative, Olusegun Babaniyi said malaria remains a global threat to the attainment of social-economic targets, with three million and more cases and an estimated one million deaths annually.

The United Nations has rated human trafficking as the third highest profit earning industry after arms dealing and drugs. This was made known yesterday in Abuja by the Executive Secretary of National Agency for the Prohibition and Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), Mrs. Carol Ndaguba, while delivering a paper at the 4th Annual Women International Conference organized by Excellent Women International Forum in collaboration with NAPTIP.Ndaguba noted with dismay the alarming rise of the modern slave trade and child abuse which she claimed as becoming almost normal in Nigeria. In Nigeria, **the Bauchi State House of Assembly yesterday adopted a motion to re-organise Qur'anic Schools as part of measures to curtail the menace of street begging by children.** The Muslim community in Uganda wants a review of the domestic relations bill to cater for their interests before it is finally considered by Parliament. Speaking on behalf of Muslim women at the review of the domestic relations bill, Hajati Kezala Bakiya, said issues concerning women should be articulated in the proposed bill. **The domestic relations bill was shelved following**

resistance from the Muslim community that it doesn't cater for their interests especially on polygamy.

Nigeria's Ambassador to Sweden, Dr Godknows Igali, has expressed concern over the influx of Nigerian girls into that country. The envoy told NAN yesterday in Abuja that the Nigerian girls were moving away from Italy to "these Scandinavian countries to carry out their trade". **He said that the girls, who engaged mainly in prostitution, decided to relocate to the Scandinavian countries since the Italian authorities started cracking down on them.** As the profits to be made from fishing diminish with rising fuel costs and poor management of the sector, fishermen are increasingly turning to drug and people trafficking to boost their meager incomes, fishermen in Bissau and the Bijagos islands told IRIN. Clashes between insurgents and government troops in Beletweyne, Hiiraan region of central Somalia, have created serious food scarcities in the town, hitting thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) hardest, locals said. "Already, two children are said to have died of hunger; many others are malnourished," a journalist, who requested anonymity, told IRIN on 1 August. **A countrywide crackdown on foreign nationals working in Tanzania illegally will start soon. That would be part of a fresh bid geared at barring foreigners from occupying jobs that can be done by Tanzanians, Labour, Employment and Youth Development Minister Juma Kapuya told the National Assembly in Dodoma on Monday.**

Senator Gyang Dantong has said that Nigerians bent ongoing abroad for medical treatment might not be allowed to do so unless their foreign trip is approved by the Minister of Health. He assured that very soon a national hospital will be established to handle serious health related cases that might be referred from various teaching hospitals across the country, saying that a law being canvassed will deal with health workers who may be found misbehaving in hospitals. Two thousand eight hundred people have received HIV counselling and testing while 900 pregnant women have benefitted from Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV in the Niger Delta Region, a statement by members of the hospital advisory committee of the Niger Delta Response (NIDAR) has said. NIDAR which commenced operation in June 2007 was set up to prevent the transmission of HIV and mitigate the impact of AIDS in five states in the Niger Delta Region. A study aimed at establishing the HIV/Aids status on university communities in East Africa is set to start this October. The project will target 18 universities, six from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya each; according to the officials of the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA). **The Ugandan institutions earmarked for the study include Makerere, Mbarara, Gulu, Nkumba, Kampala International and the Islamic Universities in Uganda.** Funded by the Swedish International Development Agency, the \$700,000 (about shs1120m) project will also involve the East African Community through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission.

South Africa is making moves to become a low-carbon economy, says Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Marthinus van Schalkwyk. The minister announced on Monday that a progressive policy on climate change had been agreed upon by Cabinet that would help ensure that the country was helping prevent global temperatures from rising a further two percent. Frank Mulamuzi, an environmental advocate and executive director of the Ugandan NGO, the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), said the **Lake Victoria was mainly threatened by pollution. Across the three East African nations, the lake had become a reservoir for excessive untreated effluents, including sewage, industrial waste and other chemicals. "Pollution is a serious problem," he said.**

The news that the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) paid \$6 million monthly to militants to protect oil pipelines in the Niger-Delta has created disquiet in the country.

The Integrated Micro Finance Bank has introduced Islamic banking in its financial and investment products. Speaking in Lagos, Nigeria, on Wednesday, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank Mr. Simon Akinteye said one of its products which is shariah compliant is the Ijara. SHELL Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) has pleaded with the Federal Government to assist the firm in its oil exploration and exploitation activities in the Niger-Delta region by restoring peace, providing security, maintaining law and order in the region and also funding the Joint Venture. A RESEARCHER, at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Legon, Dr. Peter Quartey, has said that Ghana does not need more aid, but rather, better terms of trade, that would ensure that the country adds more value to its products for export. He lamented that Ghana depended heavily on aid, to the extent that, it seemed nothing would work in the country without the support of aid from donors, which often came with foreign policies attached. **THE long-awaited free trade area (FTA) for southern Africa will be launched on August 17 during the annual summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It will be preceded by a comprehensive information campaign across all 14 member states. Launching the information campaign for Namibia in Windhoek yesterday, Mvula ya Nangolo, special advisor to the Information Ministry, said the removal of import and export tariffs and trade barriers among the SADC countries would bring regional economic integration a huge step further.** Civil servants, teachers, doctors and most workers in Zimbabwe are failing to make ends meet because of poor salaries, but the so called cash strapped Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe has found the money to splash out on top of the range vehicles, generators, televisions and satellite dishes for sitting judges. The Herald newspaper said the RBZ donated a fleet of new Mercedes Benz E280 vehicles and other goods to the judges, to improve their conditions of service.

Political commentator Professor John Makumbe said the government is unashamedly bribing the judges, as there are many cases pending in the courts involving MDC members on dubious charges. **In Tanzania**, VIPR Industries Inc. of Canada has completed its acquisition of the Manyoni Uranium Property, which it described in a statement yesterday as highly Prospective. The Company said surveys have established strong potential for significant uranium mineralization at the property in Singida Region.

LIFTING of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, addressing the land question and restoring the rule of law are some of the challenges a government to come out of the on-going talks for a negotiated political settlement to the country's decade-long crisis between Zanu PF and the MDC will face. The agenda of the talks being facilitated by South African President Thabo Mbeki has a number of issues the protagonists should find solutions to before the negotiations' August 4 deadline.

A Federal High Court of Nigeria sitting in Abuja yesterday stopped the Federal Government from ceding the disputed Bakassi Peninsula to the Cameroonian authorities pending the determination of the substantive case pending before it. The Federal Government had said it would hand over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon on August 14, 2008 in line with the judgment of the International Court of Justice following the dispute that raged between the two countries for nearly two decades over the peninsula's ownership. **Meanwhile Militant youths in the Bakassi Peninsula, Friday, July 25, declared the oil rich area independent.**

The Security Council today terminated the mandate of the eight-year-old peacekeeping force monitoring the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea and requested UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to explore further with the two Horn of Africa countries the possibility of a United Nations presence in the area. **Unanimously adopting resolution 1827 (2008), the Council decided to end the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) when it's mandate expires on Thursday, 31 July, and called on the two sides to cooperate fully with the world body in the process of liquidating the operation.** It also demanded that Ethiopia and Eritrea comply fully with their obligations under the Algiers Agreements, "to show maximum restraint and refrain from any threat or use of force against each other, and to avoid provocative military activities". The Council emphasized that the termination was without prejudice to Ethiopia's and Eritrea's obligations under the Algiers accords, by which both countries agreed that the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission would be final and binding, and that their respective forces would respect the integrity of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). The withdrawal of national army troops from Sudan's oil-rich Abyei region should ease weeks of tension and pave the way for the return of thousands of people displaced by recent fighting in the area, observers said. "Those people have now withdrawn," Southern Sudan Army spokesman Major General Daniel Parnyang said. "We got some information yesterday [29 July] that

the troops they left behind were leaving, but we are still trying to establish how far they have gone [from Abyei]."Southern Sudan retains an independent military, according to the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), while Khartoum controls national forces deployed in Northern Sudan. In a drama-filled handover of their guns, Rwandan rebels aligned to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda - FDLR said on Thursday that their return can only be after 'inter-Rwandan dialogue', RNA reports. About 67 rebels from the RUD group (Rassemblement pour l'unité et la démocratie) and a dissident faction of the FDLR surrendered to a joint UN-DRC government reception center in the Lubero area of the North Kivu province.

Amnesty International and several other international and Kenyan organizations today called on the Kenyan government to conduct an independent and impartial investigation into the unlawful transfer of people from Kenya to third countries – including Somalia, Ethiopia and the United States. The organizations (see list below) said that the transfers are illegal under international law, and called on the Kenyan government to ensure that such unlawful transfers of people from Kenya to other countries are stopped. At least 140 people (nationals of at least 17 different countries, including Kenya) were arrested by Kenyan authorities between December 2006 and February 2007. Most were arrested as they fled to Kenya from Somalia as a result of the escalation in fighting in Somalia.

Egypt will contribute over \$40m towards the maintenance of River Nile in order to ensure water security in the Nile and Lake Victoria Basin. This was revealed by the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on his one-day visit to Uganda.

NEWS COMMENTARIES

An article titled: **Arrest Bush, Not Al-Bashir says:** Confession: If the above title looks like a reframed version of the one earlier used by one of my senior colleagues in Daily Trust, it's because he was right. The issues at hand necessitate the photocopy of that title. The height of international duplicity exposes itself when the International Court of Justice issues a warrant of arrest on Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir.

Another writer had this to say: The charges brought by the International Criminal Court against Sudan President Omar Hassan al-Bashir present a crack for sunlight to shine through the dark clouds of official terrorism perpetrated for over two decades by the Khartoum regime against helpless peasants, writes Okello Oculi. The oil found in Darfur will turn into a curse for the region, bringing about the loss of many lives, hand in hand with large-scale land alienation and devastation," so wrote Prof Fouad Ibrahim of Bayreuth University, Germany. **Writing about the Bakassi peninsula between Nigeria and Cameroon,** one writer says: Although Africans view their continent as one of the

conspicuous victims of selfish geopolitics; they themselves regrettably perpetrate the societal ills that leave their regions and countries behind other nations of the world. From the slave trade, colonization, struggles for independence, freedom with its disillusionments, and today's turbulent democratization processes, **there has been much that keeps observers wondering if African nations are genuinely committed to the challenge to forge ahead as far as economic development, peace and political stability are concerned.** Yet, without these virtues of live-and-let-live, there can be no regional and continental solidarity, for progress.

THE HEADLINES

1. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Hydropower Sector Gets N386.1 Billion Chinese Investment: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 28 July 2008.
- Nigeria: China Donates Library to Ube: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 1 August 2008.
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- Liberia: Country, China Sign MoU: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 31 July 2008.

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- Uganda: Fake Solar Panels Flood Market: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.

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- Eritrea: Minister Holds Talks With Visiting Chinese Investors: [Shabait.com](#) (Asmara): 29 July 2008.

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- Nigeria: Assembly Adopts Motion to Integrate Qur'anic Schools: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 31 July 2008.
- Benin: Prison Conditions Violate Human Rights: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 30 July 2008.

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- South Africa: Whites Did Not Steal Land From Blacks, Says Pik: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 29 July 2008.
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- Lesotho: Communications Authority Asked to Rescind Radio Station's Closure: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 30 July 2008.

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- Uganda: Muslims Appeal Over Domestic Relations Bill: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.
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- East Africa: Urgent Need for Dialogue After Departure of Unmee, Says Analyst: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 1 August 2008.
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- Sudan: Mandate of UN-African Union Mission in Darfur Extended By One Year: [United Nations](#) (New York): 1 August 2008.
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- Rwanda: FDLR Rebels Surrender, Demand Talks With Government: [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information](#) (Kigali): 1 August 2008.
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- Congo-Kinshasa: Monuc - Our Strategy is Conflict Resolution in an Integrated Approach: [United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (Kinshasa): INTERVIEW: 31 July 2008.
- Burundi: Government Questions Lack of Weapons as FNL Fighters Assemble: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 28 July 2008.

11. REBEL, MILITANCY AND “WAR ON TERROR”

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- Nigeria: Military Intelligence, SSS Raid Dokubo's Abuja Home: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 1 August 2008.
- Nigeria: JTF Averts Fresh Attack On Bonga: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 2 August 2008.

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- Zimbabwe: As Political Violence Subsides, the MDC Alleges New Cases: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.

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- Kenya: Unlawful Transfers of 'Terror Suspects' Must Be Investigated: [Amnesty International](#): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.

- Kenya: Sudan to Be Sued over Nairobi Bomb Attack: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 29 July 2008.

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- Cameroon: Rebels Declare 'Independence' of Bakassi: [The Post](#) (Buea): 31 July 2008.

12. NORTH AFRICA

- EGYPT Pledges 40 Million US Dollars for River Nile: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.
- Mubarak, Museveni Discuss Trade, Bashir ICC Indictment: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.
- Morocco: Journalist Mostapha Hurmatallah Released On Completing His Prison Sentence: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 28 July 2008.
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- Egypt: U.S. Not Living Up to Rhetoric on Support for Democracy: Freedom House (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 29 July 2008.
- Sudan: Egyptian Military Engineers Join UN-AU Mission in Darfur: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 24 July 2008.
- Tunisia: Journalist Slim Boukhdar Released: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 23 July 2008.

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- An African Perspective - is Cyber Democracy Possible? : [Fahamu](#) (Oxford): OPINION: 30 July 2008: [Clayton Peel](#).
- Arrest Bush, Not Al-Bashir: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): OPINION: 30 July 2008: [Ibrahim Muhammad](#)- Kaduna.
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- Sudan: Bashir's Indictment, a Ray of Light to Darfur: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): OPINION: 30 July 2008. [Okello Oculi](#).
- Cameroon: Intolerable: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): COLUMN: 28 July 2008: [Shey Peter Mabu](#).

THE REPORT IN DETAIL

14. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Hydropower Sector Gets N386.1 Billion Chinese Investment: Leadership (Abuja): 28 July 2008.**

The Chinese government has made a commitment of N386.1billion (\$3.3 billion) for the development of hydropower in Nigeria, leadership learnt at the weekend.Sources at the Ministry of Energy (Power) said the financial commitment by China to the hydropower sector is in line with the Federal Government's efforts at attracting private investment into the power sector.The government has been yearning for investment in the sector, given the current state of the country's hydropower stations and the huge capital requirements needed to standardise and build new ones.According to the sources, the \$3.3 billion is for 10 projects with the potential to boost hydropower generation by 6,000 megawatts of installed capacity in the country and the sub-Saharan Africa region.China, with about 70 percent of its investment concentrated in four African countries – Nigeria, Angola, Sudan and Ethiopian is currently financing the rehabilitation of 1,350 kilometres of railway and constructing 1,600 kilometres of new railway lines across the region.China Harbor Engineering Co. (CHEC) recently signed an agreement to build a \$1 billion road around the country's main oil hub of Port Harcourt. Officials from CHEC signed the memorandum of understanding for the construction of the 125 km (78 mile), six-lane road around the city during a visit to Beijing by Nigerian local government and AFC officials.It said the road-building project would be the largest of its kind in Africa.The Niger Delta is home to Nigeria's 2.1 million barrels per day (bpd) oil industry but is plagued by unrest due to attacks by militant groups on oil pipelines and the kidnapping of foreign workers and local politicians by criminal gangs.The Nigerian government has made developing infrastructure in the region one of the planks of its campaign to bring peace to the delta, where impoverished local communities complain they are seeing none of the benefits of oil wealth.

- **Nigeria: China Donates Library to Ube: Leadership (Abuja): 1 August 2008.**

Chinese government has donated a multi-million naira library building and facilities to Universal Basic Education (UBE) FCT chapter.A statement issued by the Public Relations Officer (PRO), UBE, Alhaji Mohammed Lawal, indicated that the library, which is located at the government secondary school Area 11, is named, Chinese Centre.Speaking during the commissioning of the centre, the outgoing Chinese Cultural Counselor in Nigeria, Mr. Jiang Wieming, said the aim of building the centre is to

promote cultural and educational programmes between Nigeria and China, adding that about six staff of the UBE were also trained by the Chinese authority. Also speaking, the newly appointed Chinese Cultural Counselor to Nigeria, Mr. Shan Baoxing, promised to continue from where his predecessor stopped by ensuring that the cultural and educational programme continues. Speaking earlier, FCT Secretary for Education, Alhaji Hussaini Halilu Pai, commended the effort of the Chinese authority for providing technical assistance to the nation's education sector. The secretary, who was represented by the Director, Department of Policy Implementation in the Secretariat, Mrs. Rosemary Umana, further called on other countries to emulate the Chinese government's efforts in providing all the necessary assistance to the growth of the country's education sector. In his part, Chairman, FCT Universal Basic Education board, Alhaji Musa Maikasuwa Yakubu, promised to ensure that the centre is fully utilised by all stake holders in the FCT education sector. Yakubu, however, appealed to students and the staff to avail themselves with the opportunity provided by the Chinese authority. Some of the items provided include, computers and accessories, sewing machines, DVDs among others.

- **Nigeria: Lekki Trade Zone - Fashola Pledges Adequate Compensation: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 1 August 2008.**

Lagos State Government yesterday promised to fully compensate the community members whose 850 hectares land including economic trees and farms were acquired to establish the Lekki Free Trade Zone in conjunction with the Chinese authorities. The State Governor, Mr. Babatunde Fashola gave the assurance yesterday when he held an interactive session with members and traditional rulers of the host community in the course of his extensive inspection tour of the Lekki Free Trade Zone. Fashola who spoke after the community's spokesman, Mr. Ayodele Olayinka, had raised some issues concerning compensation enjoined the hosts to exercise patience saying the matter would be adequately taken care of as provided by the law. He pleaded with the Governor to ensure that the land was used for the developmental purpose which it was earmarked initially. He also sought the commitment of the Governor in ensuring that all the residents of parcel B area who have not been catered for in terms of compensation are fully taken care of by the state government. Responding the Governor said that crop enumeration and measurement of the acquired territory would form the basis of determining the compensation to be paid. According to him, just as the state government has ensured that compensation were paid to area under parcel A, same would be extended to parcel B area in the zone. Fashola counseled the residents and the landowners not to be misled by misguided people into making unrealistic demands on the land being made use of, saying "even if tomorrow the investors decide to move away from here, the infrastructure would be available permanently for the your usage". He agreed with the suggestion of the community that the MOU can be revisited in the future if the need arises and commended the people of the community for the hospitality which they have been displaying to the investors in the area. He informed them that the state will make use of the land in the area for developmental purposes and was genuinely interested in accelerating the development

to the area. He restated the commitment of the administration to ensure that the 2.5 percent equity participation promised the people of the area is respected as well as the provision of 750 hectares of land in replacement for the residents of the area. This, he pointed out, is in addition to the houses which the State Government also promised to provide to the people who would be relocated from the free trade zone. Fashola reaffirmed the State Government's determination to provide infrastructure that would enable the free trade zone kick off in the shortest possible time adding that offers are already being received from people all over the world who wish to establish industries and production in the zone. He disclosed that he has received assurance from the project managers that by mid- September this year the total quantum of the amended drawings and plans with the full development plans to complete the basic drainages and roads would be ready. He added that the developmental plan would also include the completion of the main entrance gate, office complexes of the Customs, Immigration and all related control issues which needed to be dealt with before the commencement of the zone, urging that efforts should be redoubled to achieve the envisaged goals of the trade zone. The Consular General of the Chinese Embassy in Nigeria, Mr Guo Kun in his remark said the Lekki Free Trade Zone project is a very famous project which the people and government of China. The Managing Director of Lekki Free Trade Zone Development Company, Mr Allen Lee while taking the Governor and his entourage round the zone promised that 3.5 square kilometer of the road project would be ready by the commencement of the dry season. The Governor was accompanied on the inspection tour by members of the State Executive Council namely Barrister Opeyemi Bamidele- Information and Strategy, Prince Adesegun Oniru- Waterfront Infrastructure Development, Prince Niyi Oyemade- Commerce and Industry and Mrs. Sola Oworu, the Special Adviser on Commerce and Industry and other top government functionaries.

- **Nigeria: NPDC, Chinese Firm Clash Over \$2 Billion Oil Block: Vanguard (Lagos): 31 July 2008.**

The Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC) which is the exploration arm of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and a Chinese company, the China National Oil Development Corporation (CNODC) are involved in a battle for the ownership of a \$2billion oil block presently in possession of the Nigerian company. The oil block had been operated by NPDC as Oil Mining Licence (OML) since 1989 but NNPC was said to have put it for sale as Oil Prospecting Licence (OPL) 289 under questionable circumstances but NPDC has vowed not to give it up for any reason. Former Group Managing Director (GMD) of NNPC, Funso Kupolokun who was again present at yesterday's hearing told the committee that he was deceived by DPR into approving the oil block which was already in the possession of NPDC for sale to CNODC. The committee found that OML 65 was transformed to OPL 289 without first being first revoked therefore going against due process. Kupolokun who admitted the deal said he

was shocked when he was told after approving the sale of OPL 289 that the oil block was the same as OML 65 being operated by NNPC. The Legal Director of NNPC, Chief Sena Anthony exonerated the corporation from culpability saying that the records available to NNPC at the time it was sold indicated that it was dealing with OPL 289 and not OML 65 which she suggested had been revoked. "We worked on OPL 298. For OPL 298 to exist, there has to be a revocation notice for OML 65. Please, confirm from the Acting Director (of DPR) if such notice exist. The Production Sharing Contract (PSC) that we prepared was for OPL 298. We had not at that point received any information that it was OML 65. When we found that we had inadvertently executed a PSC for OML 65, I asked Kupolokun whether he was aware." For you to revoke a producing OML, there is a process. A notice must be given to the owners. The committee should call for the file of the revocation and the minutes of the meeting," she charged but a representative of NPDC, Mr. Emmanuel Enemuwa denied that a notice of revocation was in existence. The chairman of the committee, Igo Aguma therefore noted that the transaction on the oil block between the two companies, DPR and the NNPC was fraudulent and has threatened to recommend the prosecution of the individuals found to be culpable. He noted that there was a confidential agreement between the parties to sell the block at a giveaway price to the Chinese company which he noted knew the exact value of the block but paid a pittance. The Chinese firm had dragged the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) before the House of Representatives ad-hoc committee probing the activities of the NNPC, its subsidiaries and the DPR asking that the ownership of OPL 289 for which it had paid \$35.2million be reversed to the company. During the continuation of the investigation yesterday, CNODC, s Managing Director, Mr. Li Zhiming stated that his company won the oil block as well as OPL 471 during the 2006 bid round and later signed the Production Sharing Contracts with the NNPC in April 2007. But he added that all efforts to make the NNPC to transfer the block to the company including its protest to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua as well as the Chinese Ambassador in the country have proved abortive. According to him, "for the purpose of initiating petroleum operation, we have continually applied to NNPC for the transfer of the related data and facilities and the control of the block 289 and even asked the Nigerian President's attention through Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria on March 25th 2008." "We have no alternative but asking for a formal written letter to be issued for the refusal and the reasons but there is no response from NNPC up till now." Then, we learnt that NPDC, the subsidiary of NNPC had resumed the petroleum operation within the block 289 and this was confirmed by our investigation," he stated.

- **Ghana: 'You Have to Speak Up When Competition Destroys You':**
[Inter Press Service \(Johannesburg\): 31 July 2008.](#)

Business has been slow for many Ghanaian traders. They blame the situation on not only the influx of cheap Chinese products but also insufficient legal protection and

corruption. The concern about the Chinese expansion in business circles was illustrated with the convening of a roundtable discussion in November last year which looked at ways to protect small industries against the intrusion of Chinese products. But views on the issue are varied. Some see it as an opportunity while others think it is destructive to the economy. IPS visited the central business district of the capital Accra to hear from local traders what they are talking about when they say Chinese goods are killing their businesses. Philip Asobonteng (45) has operated a shop in Accra for more than 20 years. He told IPS, "we have no problem with competition but, if it is coming to destroy you, there is a need to speak up". Last year traders closed their shops to protest against what they regard as unfair competition. However, this elicited no response from the government. After all, the Chinese traders are not breaking any law. The country's investment code stipulates that any foreigner investing a minimum of 300,000 dollars can open a retail business. In addition to that, the business should employ 10 Ghanaians. Any foreigner who meets these requirements can legally start her or his own business. But, Asobonteng says, "they are using the laws to create hurdles for us and we want the government to take a stand". The Ghana Union of Traders (GUTA) sent a proposal to parliament in November last year urging members of parliament to review the investment code. They claimed that the code had not been reviewed since being enacted 13 years ago. According to GUTA, the minimum investment amount should be raised to one million dollars and the number of Ghanaians to be employed increased to 25. In addition, the commodity categories should also be reviewed. GUTA executive member Joseph Addy claimed that foreigners, including Chinese, were abusing the law. The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) has insisted that a partnership with China should be a win-win situation: "We need a measured approach to protect our interests in the trade relationship with China and other developed countries." This concurs with the majority of traders' views sampled by IPS. William Afflu, a seller of household products, told IPS, "these Chinese are using tricks to get around the law. They break the law in a very clever way and no one can take them to task." Addy had told the roundtable conference last year that some foreign traders registered as free-zone companies but then imported goods to sell on the Ghanaian market. Free-zone companies are given government incentives to manufacture and process goods inside Ghana. Other foreigners use the pretext of exporting goods to neighbouring landlocked countries to divert goods to the Ghanaian market without paying the necessary taxes, which makes these goods cheaper. In order to fight off the threats posed to local commercial interests, the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), together with the customs and excise services, immigration services and the police, set up a task force last year to arrest those foreign traders who were abusing the law. Unfortunately this intervention has not been sustained. One reason is the collaboration of some Ghanaians with foreign traders to flout the law. Afflu alleged in an interview with IPS that he knew Ghanaians who had approached foreigners, especially Chinese, to "front" for them to avoid them having to meet the criteria for foreign businesspeople. "These are things you see, you know what has gone on but the paperwork tells a different story. In the event of this happening, what can you do?" asked Afflu rhetorically. This development poses a difficult problem. How can business partnerships between Chinese and Ghanaians be checked? Meanwhile the government's trade with China is on the increase. Joseph Henry Mensah, a senior cabinet minister and chairperson of the National Development Planning Commission, does not regard China's increasing

presence in Ghana as a threat to the country. Rather, he sees it as providing trade opportunities which the country should take advantage of for the benefit of all."We are all spending time to fight a threat from China when actually there is none," Mensah argued.

- **Ghana: Relations With China - Into the Claws of Another Predator?:**
Inter Press Service (Johannesburg): 29 July 2008.

More and more, China seems to be taking up any commodity that can be had from Ghana. From copper waste and scrap, timber and natural rubber to aluminium waste and scrap and vegetable products are being exported to the upcoming Asian superpower. Cocoa is the latest addition to the list. Ghana is to export 6,500 metric tonnes to China this year, says Isaac Osei, chief executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD). This uptake of cocoa is meant to pay for the construction of the ongoing hydro-power project at Bui, north-east of the capital Accra. Government sources indicated last year that an arrangement had been entered into where cocoa production would be increased to supply extra cocoa to China. Trade between the two countries has blossomed over the years, with China benefitting most. By 2000, exports to China totalled only 25 million dollars with imports of 93 million dollars. Exports grew to 32 million dollars in 2003 with imports of 180 million dollars. In 2006, the figure went up to 39 million dollars for exports while imports surged to 504 million dollars. Despite the Bui project, some Ghanaians are concerned that China is benefiting from trade liberalisation by African countries while the same is not true the other way round. Virtually every African country has opened its doors wide to cheap Chinese imports. Osei pointed out in April this year at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) meeting in Accra that Ghana's efforts to promote cocoa trade with emerging industrial giants such as China and India were being undermined by trade tariffs applied to developing producers. Osei said developing countries such as Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire faced higher tariffs on cocoa imports to China and India than less-developed producers such as Benin, Guinea, Haiti, Togo or Uganda. "For us, it discourages investment in the cocoa sector here." There is disquiet within the cocoa industry because of the way consuming nations have continued to create distortions in the pricing of the commodity. Speaking on the same platform as Osei, finance minister Kwadwo Baah-Wiredu said there was an imbalance in the cocoa pricing system and urged cocoa-producing states to join forces. "The current cocoa-chocolate value chain is characterised by an imbalance where the manufacturing and processing end is well positioned at the high value end, compared to the cocoa producers who receive a low share of the final price," he said. With China's heightened visibility through cheap goods, some Ghanaians are particularly unhappy about the Asian state's approach to Ghana. Alfred Neimann, a commodity analyst at BMT Associates in London told IPS this development "is really surprising since China and India have maintained profiles as leading the development cause of the developing world." China needs to open up more and be flexible, especially when she is dealing with countries in the South. That is the only way that China can show that it is on the side of development," he added. Neimann said it is unfair that China -- having taken advantage of the free trade environment to flood poorer countries, especially Africa, with cheap imports which may not necessarily be of high quality -- turns round to prevent the flow of goods into its territory. Gabriel Orji, an official working in the Nigerian ministry

of trade, said that "there is no friendship when it comes to trade. What is happening between China and African states now is an evolving relationship that has to be properly defined and nurtured."Africa cannot move away from one predator only to get herself into the claws of another," Orji said. The governments of African states should use their encounters with their Chinese counterparts to get them to see things from the African perspective, he added. Getting proper rules in place is important for Ghana. The country is on course to meeting a national target of one million tonnes of cocoa a year by 2010. Consequently, it is keen to find more markets for its produce, apart from other attempts to add value to products locally. China is a potential market and, with improved trade relations, Ghana is likely to sell more cocoa since local processing facilities are not strong on the ground yet. An alternative is to find other ready markets. Already there have been diplomatic moves to export cocoa to Cuba but this will take time. Thus there is the need to find ways to create favourable trade environments devoid of hindrances. Employing about a million people in the six cocoa growing districts throughout the country, the cocoa industry is a major contributor to government revenue. It earned about 1.2 billion dollars last year.

- **Liberia: Country, China Sign MoU: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 31 July 2008.**

The Governments of Liberia and China have signed a memorandum of understanding under which China will lead the construction of three schools in Montserrado and Bomi Counties. An Executive Mansion release says the agreement was signed Thursday by the Ministers of Finance, Public Works, Justice and Education on behalf of the Government of Liberia while Chinese Ambassador Zhou Yuxiao and the project's construction manager signed on behalf of the Chinese government. In remarks following the signing ceremony, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf reiterated Liberia's commitment to the Sino-Liberia partnership. The President hoped for mutual relationship between the two countries, in which Liberia will also offer China something tangible to further cement the relationship. For his part, Chinese Ambassador Zhou emphasized his government's commitment to completing programs earmarked by President Hu Jintao during the China Africa Forum in 2006. He added that the implementation of China-aided projects in Liberia have been executed smoothly, commending President Johnson Sirleaf for the great interest she attaches to the projects. The New Georgia suburb of Monrovia, the city of Paynesville and Suehn Mecca community in Bomi County, have been selected as sites for the construction of the schools, estimated to cost US \$2.2-million dollars. The project is expected to be completed in ten months.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Chinese Textile Firm to Appeal 'Flawed' R17,5 Million CCMA Ruling: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 28 July 2008.**

CHINESE textile company Tai Yuen is to ask the Labour Court to review a R17,5m award made against it by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA). The award was made last week in favour of the bargaining council for the textile industry after a dispute over an attempt to impose their salary rates on the

company. The textile bargaining council had no right to impose such rates, Deneys Reitz director Bruce MacGregor and Tai Yuen's lawyers said at the weekend. "The bulk of Tai Yuen's products fall under the clothing bargaining council and not the textile council", MacGregor said. Tai Yuen is part of the Yulon Group, a diversified multinational company with its head office in Taiwan. The Yulon group is best known for its manufacture of Nissan and Mitsubishi vehicles under licence, and is one of the world's largest vehicle manufacturers. MacGregor said there were flaws in the CCMA award. He said the CCMA did not have jurisdiction to deal with the matter, including imposing a fine. "The commissioner, at the very least, should have identified the need for a demarcation exercise to be undertaken, especially where there had been interaction between Tai Yuen and the clothing bargaining council." Deneys Reitz will be proceeding on the basis that Tai Yuen was paying wages in accordance with their legal requirements, he said. In the event of the Labour Court reviewing and setting aside the award, Tai Yuen would seek to have the wages issue dealt with by the clothing bargaining council, he said. In 2004 the company was encouraged to invest through programmes offered by the KwaZulu-Natal economic affairs department and the tourism and trade and industry departments. The company had subsequently invested R500m in the first phase of a textile plant and had planned to invest further amounts of up to R200m in subsequent phases. MacGregor said it was unfortunate that the department had not been forthcoming with various promised discounted electricity prices. "As a result, a further matter was to be heard in the high court in terms of which the Mpofana Municipality and Tai Yuen are in dispute over electricity supply rates." MacGregor said that the municipality had failed to upgrade its power infrastructure on time which had resulted in the company being unable to commission R50m worth of machinery, limiting its rate of expansion and the rate at which it was creating jobs.

- **South Africa: China 'Dumps' Kitchen Sinks in Country: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 31 July 2008.**

SA's International Trade Administration Commission (Itac) has begun antidumping investigations into stainless steel sink imports from China and Malaysia after local manufacturers claimed that almost half the product value of these imports came from state incentives. Local manufacturers say imports are selling in SA at prices below the cost of raw material, causing major harm and threatening 500 jobs. The antidumping application was brought by Franke Kitchen Systems, which claims China's imports have surged to 60% of total imports from nothing only three years ago. Despite an import duty of 20% on stainless steel sinks, the price of imported products still undercuts locally manufactured sinks. The test for dumping is whether the price of the product in the country of origin is below the export price. "We have seen a massive price depression. The product is selling at below the price of stainless steel," said Gerhard Kotzee, business unit manager at Franke. Franke also claims that the supply of stainless steel in China is

not based on free market principles. But even as Itac has provisionally found evidence of dumping, the commission's investigation faces formidable challenges. In an agreement that trade consultants had warned could compromise local industries, SA had granted China market economy status and agreed to enhance debate on antidumping in return for China agreeing to the imposition of import quotas on cheap clothing and textile from that country. SA has not had a single successful antidumping investigation against China since granting it market economy status. And an Itac official acknowledged earlier this year that the new status had complicated the body's work and curtailed its ability to investigate dumping complaints brought against China. Franke brought a second application for countervailing measures in a bid to boost its chances of success. It claims that Chinese manufacturers benefit from a host of incentives, including special economic zone incentives, grants for export performance, preferential loans, grants, preferential tax, reduced land use fees and preferential purchases from state-owned enterprises. The overall margin of subsidisation for stainless steel sinks in China could be as high as 47,7%. "Whole industries in SA have been sacrificed to strengthen our trade ties with other countries. We are trying to prevent this from happening to us," Kotzee said.

- **Zimbabwe: Msika Commissions Roads Equipment: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.**

THE dualisation and repair of some of the country's major roads got a huge boost yesterday after Vice President Joseph Msika commissioned an assortment of earthmoving equipment bought from China. The equipment, which includes bulldozers, concrete mixers, hydraulic excavators, concrete dumpers, motor graders, tractors, rollers among others was bought at a total cost of US\$1,5 million by the Ministry of Transport and Communications. Speaking at the commissioning ceremony, Cde Msika said China was now one of the biggest single investors in Zimbabwe and this was testimony of Beijing's confidence in Zimbabwe despite the onslaught by Western detractors. He said the massive investment China has made in Zimbabwe since Harare embarked on a Look East Policy was evidence of the Asian giant's confidence in the country's capability to determine its own political, social and economic destiny. The earthmoving equipment procured is currently busy at Mukuvisi River bridge in Waterfalls where it is being used in the dualisation of the Harare-Masvingo Road. "Government and the ruling party deliberately adopted the Look East Policy as a means of overcoming the economic challenges currently afflicting our country because of the illegal sanctions imposed on us by Britain, America and their Western allies," he said. "I am delighted to note that this policy has been successfully implemented with economic deals and partnerships having been concluded with companies from the People's Republic of China, Russia, India, Malaysia, Singapore and other friendly countries in that region." Cde Msika castigated Britain and its Western allies for imposing an embargo on Zimbabwe, saying the country had done no wrong to warrant the sanctions. He said Zimbabwe was being punished because the Government was implementing resolutions that were agreed during the liberation struggle, which include giving people land. "What have we done. Do we deserve this? We have nothing to apologise for to these big powers. We believe that nothing but the truth is

what is important," said Cde Msika. He said Government did not take away all the land from whites but wanted it shared among the landless majority. Britain and its Western allies were imposing sanctions so that people could turn against the Government and it was crucial that Zimbabweans realised that, said the Vice President. "Don't blame (President) Mugabe for the shortages you are experiencing. You should know that these sanctions are meant to incite you to react against the Government. You must analyse issues. Yes, we are suffering because of sanctions but resist the temptations," he said. Speaking at the same occasion, the Minister of Transport and Communications, Cde Christopher Mushohwe, said the procurement of the equipment by the Department of Roads was one of the numerous deals his ministry had signed with China. He said the equipment would go a long way in revamping the country's road network whose maintenance had been hampered by the escalating costs of spare parts to repair old equipment, which he said was becoming obsolete. The ministry is set to acquire more earthmoving equipment from the Asian country, said Cde Mushohwe. He said the dualisation of the Harare-Masvingo Road from Mukuvisi River bridge to Zitac tobacco auction floors and the portion from Turnpike to Norton along the Harare-Bulawayo Road should be completed before the onset of the rainy season. "My ministry will continue to think outside the box to ensure that the road network is improved," he said.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Fake Solar Panels Flood Market: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.**

FAKE solar panels imported from China are flooding the local market, a top official disclosed on Monday. Richard Kanyike, the Solar Energy managing director, explained that local traders use popular brands to sell the cheap panels. He added that labels for the 50-watt panels were changed to 100 watts and sold to unsuspecting customers. "They tell customers that the 100-watt panel can work for six hours but when the customer reaches the village, the panels can't stand the time," Kanyike told a renewable energy and bio-fuels workshop at Hotel Africana, Kampala. The workshop was part of the investment outreach programme that helps discuss investor-needs and policies to identify bottlenecks hindering investment in the sector. Organised by the Uganda Investment Authority, the workshop also validated the sector issues and laid out new strategies. "Solar energy is a little bit different from the normal hydro-energy." It needs specialised people to sell and install the panels," Kanyike said. He urged the Uganda National Bureau of Standards to crackdown on fake solar panels.

- **Uganda: Country's Labour Laws Now in Chinese: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 30 July 2008.**

The Chinese Business Community in Uganda can now comfortably operate their businesses in Uganda. This comes after Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE), with financial support from the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises translated the Uganda labour laws into Chinese to cut the language barrier problem. The majority of the Chinese businessmen who come to Uganda hardly speak English and those who know only speak

the basics, yet Uganda's labour laws were drawn in English, the official language used in Uganda."We were asked by the Chinese community doing business in Uganda to translate the labour laws. This was after we signed an agreement of cooperation in Beijing in 2007," said the FUE Media Relations officer Mr Shafik Manafa at the workshop where FUE met with the Chinese Business Community at Protea Hotel in Kampala. Mr Manafa added that after the translation of the laws, the need for training arose and a one-day sensitisation meeting was held on July 24. He said more training would be carried out in the course of the year. The Chairman FUE, Mr Martin Kasekende cautioned the Chinese business community to get acquainted with Uganda's labour laws so as to take on their obligations as employers. China is one of Uganda's leading sources of Foreign Direct Investment countries. It is involved in agro-processing, energy, tourism, manufacturing and trade. "As employers you are supposed to comply with the labour laws of Uganda. Your compliance with the requirements of the law ensures industrial harmony at the workplaces, improvement of labour productivity and better business performance," Mr Kasekende said. Chinese investment projects in Uganda have helped to reduce unemployment, something that has seen an improved lifestyle of the people. Giving his keynote address, Mr Kasekende said; "The guidelines in the translated copy of the law were outlined in simple terms, the employers' obligations towards workers in their employment and are expected to guide you in implementation of the laws."

- **Eritrea: Minister Holds Talks With Visiting Chinese Investors: [Shabait.com](#) (Asmara): 29 July 2008.**

The Minister of Land, Water and Environment, Mr. Woldemichael Gebremariam, held discussion today with the visiting Chinese investors. In the meeting, different heads of the Ministry gave replies to questions put forth by the investors regarding the condition of Eritrean water resources, soil and environmental fertility. Noting the significance of the meeting in making the investment, the Chinese investors expressed appreciation for the information provided to them. It is to be recalled that the investors met and held talks with President Isaias, during which they expressed desire to invest in Eritrea, especially in the development of cotton.

15. PAN AFRICA

WEST AFRICA

- **'85 Percent of Africa's Land Has No Titles': [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 31 July 2008.**

About 85 per cent of the land in African countries has not been officially registered due to governments' failure to holistically address housing problems in the continent, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, said yesterday in Abuja. She also said in the case of sub-Saharan Africa, only one per cent of the land

has title mostly for high-level income groups. Dr Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka, in her submission at the second African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in Abuja, said land ownership is enmeshed between customary law and the so-called modern statutory systems of land tenure, adding that in urban areas, little progress has been made to provide access to land for pro-poor housing. She said: "In many countries, the problem is compounded further by a complete lack of financing mechanisms for housing. Though many countries once had nascent building societies and housing funds, most suffer from stringencies caused by structural adjustment." According to her, recently some countries have made efforts to establish credit mechanisms, but a few are of any scale and their impact and effect remain minimal. Dr Tibaijuka added: "The failure of investment in housing and infrastructure, together with the lack of related policies governing land and property administration and security of tenure means the poor are increasingly occupying marginal derelict land such as on hill slopes and flood prone areas."

- **SA, Ghana Sign Trade Deal: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 28 July 2008.**

Trade between South Africa and Ghana is expected to increase, following the signing of a memorandum of understanding, between Ghana and the Mpumalanga provincial government, on Friday. The agreement, which was signed by the parties in Nelspruit, follows earlier meetings between Ghana's trade delegation, consisting of some of the country's top businessmen, and the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency. The meetings were aimed at facilitating business partnership between the two countries. The agreement will provide import, export, and trade and investment opportunities for businesses from both countries. It will mainly focus on the agriculture, tourism and energy sectors, which have been identified as areas with huge potential growth. The political stability, economic growth and a government, which is committed to trade, is making Ghana a preferred business destination in Africa. The Executive Secretary of the Ghana Export Promotion Council, Collins Boateng, says: "This agreement is going to encourage business relations we want a partnership between businesses from Mpumalanga and Ghana, and we will facilitate that. We will do it by fielding businessmen to participate in promotional activities in Mpumalanga, and help to identify businesses in Mpumalanga, and visa versa." The agreement is also expected to assist South Africa, reach its millennium development goal, of halving unemployment by 2015, while businesses in Mpumalanga continue to benefit as well. Business giants such as MTN and Shoprite, are already trading in Ghana. Soon, products from Mpumalanga are expected to be traded there as well.

- **Countries Seek Roadmap for Urban Development: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 29 July 2008.**

Ministers of Housing and Urban Development from more than thirty-five African countries yesterday commenced talks in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, on how to provide adequate and sustainable finances for housing provision and integrated urban development. The gathering which is under the auspices of the Expert Group Meeting of

the 2nd African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD) opened up discussions on mechanisms to deal with the protracted issue of growing urban slums within the continent. Nigeria's Minister of State for Environment, Housing and Urban Development, Chief Chuka Odom, who addressed the opening ceremony at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, urged the assembly of eminent persons at the conference to try and provide a road map for coordinated programme of action that would address the critical issues of "slum eradication and adequate shelter for all." Setting the stage for the conference discussion, Odom charged participants to give prominence to the issue of housing finance as a pivotal factor in the shelter delivery process. "The greatest challenge to sustainable urban development between now and 2015 target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will be to garner adequate and sustainable finances for housing provision and integrated urban development, without which Africa will be unable to deliver on the MDGs on slum and poverty reduction," he said. The Minister said the meeting should take a sincere and in-depth look at issues of rapid urbanization currently consuming the continent, examine the growing unemployment and under-employment, decaying infrastructure, unmet housing needs and increasing poverty.

- **Supporting Mothers to Breastfeed Will Improve Children's Chances of Survival, Says Unicef: [United Nations Children's Fund](#) (New York): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.**

On the occasion of World Breastfeeding Week (1 to 7 August), UNICEF, along with the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), is recommending the provision of increased professional and informal support for breastfeeding mothers. "Breastfeeding is a key tool in improving child survival said Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director. "Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life can avert up to 13 per cent of under-five deaths in developing countries." Although there has been progress over the past 15 years, only 38 percent of infants under 6 months of age in the developing world are breastfed. Recent scientific studies have found that education and support for mothers significantly extends the number of months that mothers breastfeed, and is especially helpful in promoting exclusive breastfeeding. Other studies have shown that counseling and support in health facilities have led to increases in the number of mothers who initiate breastfeeding within the first hour of birth. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life reduces infant mortality linked to common childhood illnesses and under nutrition. Breastfeeding can reduce the number of deaths caused by acute respiratory infection and diarrhea - two major child killers - as well as from other infectious diseases. It also contributes to the health of mothers, and creates a bond between the mother and child. Appropriate infant feeding can save lives, ensure optimal growth and development, and contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In Ethiopia, UNICEF supports the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding up to six months and optimal complementary feeding practices through community-based approach in about 2000 villages of 65 districts. About 4000 health workers and 40,000 Volunteer Community Health Workers are being trained on skills to support mothers for practicing optimal breastfeeding and

complementary feeding. UNICEF is working with its partners and Governments in many countries to ensure the provision of increased support for breastfeeding mothers, including by health workers, counselors, mother-to-mother support groups, employers, relief workers in emergencies, legislators, the family and community social networks.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Africa: EU 'Rushing' EPAs Lest Continent's States Change Their Minds: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 27 July 2008.**

Brussels is tempted to skip the translation of the interim economic partnership agreements (EPAs) into the 23 official European languages because of concerns that some African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries may change their minds about signing the final agreements. An internal European Commission document dated July 17, 2008, seen by IPS, reveals that "translating and legally verifying the languages of the interim EPAs that were initialled last year is proving more burdensome and time-consuming than originally foreseen." With a view to speeding up the signing of all interim agreements in 2008 we suggest, exceptionally, to move away from the traditional way of establishing authentic texts in all official languages at the time of signature while agreeing to adopt them at a later stage," it adds. According to the document, the Commission is concerned that translating the bulky interim EPAs into the Union's 23 official languages will cause delays. The Commission has adopted the position that, without the EPAs, a trade regime is perpetuated with the ACP countries that is not compliant with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. "The Commission has estimated that if we follow the generally accepted approach prior to signature, the process could well take us past Easter 2009. Such delays would have repercussions regarding WTO notification and legal security," it says. But beyond the time and effort needed to translate thousands of pages of trade agreements into 23 languages, it appears the Commission has a more far-reaching concern. Translating the interim EPAs "may also increase political risks that certain ACP countries change their mind and decide not to sign the interim EPAs", the document explains. By cutting short the time European Union (EU) members have to debate in their national languages whether they support EPAs, the Commission hopes that the agreements will be signed by the European Council before African, Caribbean and Pacific countries are able to amend their position. The European Council consists of the heads of state or governments of the European Union and the president of the Commission. Should the European Council indeed decide to sign the EPAs in their current form, the Commission would then be able to notify these interim agreements to the WTO. Once notified, EPAs would be much harder to renegotiate for ACP countries. According to Jean-Denis Crola, responsible for the economic justice campaign with Oxfam France, "from day one, the Commission has used the issue of conformity to WTO rules as an excuse to cover up the real reasons it wants the agreements to be signed as soon as possible." This is not the real issue, as all commercial relations between the EU

and ACP countries have been WTO-compatible since January 1. Even those countries that did not sign interim EPAs are covered by the Everything But Arms trade regime," Crola says. "The real motivation behind the Commission's approach is the fear that some countries may change their position and reject any form of agreement," he adds. Under the pretence of saving time, the proposed strategy is in fact to rush through the approval process and set in stone interim commitments from ACP countries. In order for member states to be fully informed of the matters on which the Commission requests their approval, the European Union's usual protocol is to translate treaties into all member states' official languages. In a 2005 press release, the Commission's own directorate general for translation acknowledged that "the scale of [the EU's] multilingual regime makes it unique in the world, and to some the extra work it creates for its institutions may seem at first sight to outweigh the advantages." However, the directorate general for translation defended this policy as a prerequisite for democratic debate. "There are special reasons for it. The Union passes laws directly binding on its citizens and companies, and as a matter of simple natural justice they and their courts must have a version of the laws they have to comply with in a language they can understand," it concludes. The Commission document specifies that this is an exceptional departure from the protocol, "which was already tested in the Passenger Name Records Agreement signed by the EU and the US last year". This is an agreement on the exchange of passenger name records. This document's strategy is in direct opposition to the approach Christine Taubira, a French Member of Parliament representing Guyana, recently advocated in a report on EPAs commissioned by French President Nicolas Sarkozy. It offered recommendations aiming at restoring confidence in a negotiating process which has often been marred by accusations of bad faith from both the EU and ACP countries. One of these recommendations urges the EU to lift all linguistic ambiguities in order to foster increased clarity of the EPAs. It insisted that being informed in one's native language is a basic principle of international law. France, which is currently holding the rotating presidency of the EU, seems to have agreed that this recommendation was an essential step in a successful and equitable negotiation process. However, as the recent spat between Sarkozy and EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson has shown, the European position on the EPAs is still far from unwavering. Sarkozy attacked Mandelson for pushing EPAs that will lead to a reduction in EU agricultural production and for EPA negotiations that "influenced" the Irish vote against the EU reform treaty.

- **World Trade Talks Bomb: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 30 July 2008.**

HOPES of saving a world trade deal were dashed when World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks collapsed last night in Geneva, dealing a major blow to the global economy and raising questions over the continued viability of the WTO. The meeting was the last chance to strike a deal on cutting tariffs and subsidies in agriculture and manufactured

goods before the US presidential election in November. Talks collapsed when the main protagonists - the US and India, with the latter supported by China and Indonesia -- failed to reach a compromise on a measure to shield developing countries against massive agricultural import increases. SA's chief trade negotiator, Xavier Carim, said essential gains would be lost, which could have grave implications for the trading system and the WTO. Multilateral trade talks are likely to go into hibernation indefinitely as elections in the US throw negotiating mandates into disarray, while a slowdown in the global economy has already dampened the appetite for further trade reforms. Carim said WTO chief Pascal Lamy had done "as much as he could have on the main issues. In the end this broke down on issues in agriculture." He said the round's ultimate direction had veered off the developmental route promised at the start of the talks seven years ago in Doha, Qatar. "We cannot be under any illusion that what was on the table was a package for very modest reforms in agriculture. The price SA was being asked to pay until the point of the collapse was just exorbitant, and not worth the gains," he said. Trade ministers of the Group of Seven (G-7) bloc, consisting of Australia, Brazil, China, the European Union (EU), India, Japan and the US, yesterday mulled over a new compromise text Lamy put forward on Monday. But the talks failed to break an impasse on a clutch of key issues, notably what is called the special safeguard measure, a mechanism to allow developing countries to increase tariffs on farm produce in the event of import surges or price collapses. The Geneva meeting was scheduled to end on Sunday, but Lamy, in an attempt to save the round, extended talks to today. An important breakthrough on Friday when the G-7 countries reached consensus on a compromised position raised hopes that a pact was within reach. But those hopes were dashed last night as the G-7 emerged empty-handed after a marathon session with Lamy. The compromise on the safeguard measure specified that if import volumes rose 40% above the average over the past three years, tariffs could be raised above their current ceilings, with a ceiling of 15% of the current tariff or 15 percentage points, whichever was higher. The levels allowed were unpalatable to the US. Brendan Vickers, a senior researcher at the Institute for Global Dialogue, said the collapse came as no surprise. "The safeguard was of big concern to India. That country has 650-million subsistence farmers, whose positions the Indian government has to take into account. Then there were pages of flexibilities (for the US and EU) in a text in which they would have made modest concessions yet they would not yield on this issue," he said. Economist Matthew Stern, a director of Development Network Africa, said the collapse was also a blow to serious trade liberalisation in SA. "It is extraordinarily unlikely that SA would liberalise unilaterally. And over the next few years the appetite will likely diminish further. We needed an external impetus, and that has now gone," he said.

- **Balancing Poor Communities And Conservation: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 1 August 2008.**

Madagascar is entering uncharted waters in its bid to implement ambitious projects in partnership with poor local communities that will more than triple existing conservation areas. The Indian Ocean island is renowned for its unique and abundant terrestrial biodiversity, but its marine environment, which includes extensive coral reefs, mangroves and sea grass beds, has remained relatively unknown. In the arid southwest, the fragile

coastal marine resources are coming under severe pressure from over-exploitation by people living in the area, who are seen as integral to managing the island's natural resources."You simply cannot conserve marine resources successfully without talking to local communities," Volanirina Ramahery, marine project co-ordinator in southwest Madagascar for the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), told IRIN."People use these resources intensively, their lives depend on them. It is just not possible to conserve without looking at what problems the communities face," she said.President Marc Ravalomanana has made conservation an important pillar of his Madagascar Action Plan (MAP), an ambitious blueprint for economic and social development in one of the world's poorest countries.

Expanding conservation areas

The plan includes more than tripling the size of Madagascar's protected areas, from 1.7 million hectares to 6 million hectares, with a focus on marine environments and upgrading the protection of marine resources."Madagascar's conservation areas have traditionally been in wilderness regions with small human populations," Charles Gardner, an environmental management consultant based in the southern coastal city of Toliara, told IRIN."Now, with a push towards creating so many more protected areas, they are increasingly going to be in places where they affect far greater numbers of people; this calls for a whole new approach to the management of protected areas," he said.According to the WWF, the concept of community-based natural resource management means that the people who live on the land and depend on its natural resources should manage them.The benefits of such an approach are clear. "The people who live and work in an area feel it is their territory," Samba Roger, president of the Velondriake protected marine area, told IRIN. "They do not - they cannot - be told by others what to do. Using a top-down approach just creates problems; it is better to start from the bottom and work upwards."Stretching across 800 square kilometres of coastal and marine habitats, Velondriake is the south's first community-managed protected marine area. It is based in the commune of Befandefa, which is supported by the residents of 23 villages and managed by a committee of representatives and elders selected from these villages.In 2005, Madagascar's first seasonal ban on octopus fishing was introduced in Velondriake, allowing population numbers to recover from overfishing. This project proved so successful that the government has introduced a similar system nationwide.WWF's work in Madagascar has traditionally focused on terrestrial conservation, but several new marine projects in the southwest are beginning to take shape. While recognising that the support of local communities is key to ensuring the success of these initiatives, gaining their understanding is not always easy."No two communities have the same level of understanding," said Ramahery. "Some villages are aware that resource degradation is a serious problem and they want to solve it, but in some areas this is not the case. We can guide and give advice, but it's not our role to impose marine parks or ban fishing in an area."

Alternative livelihoods

Perhaps the biggest challenge is finding alternative livelihoods for resource-dependent fishermen. Madagascar has over 5,000 kilometres of coastline, and an estimated 60 percent of the population live along it, most of whom catch fish for a living. Most of the people on the southwest coast belong to the Vezo ethnic group, which means 'to struggle with the sea'. "There are many problems here, but first we need to help reduce fishing," Roger said. "But to do that people need other work; they need other jobs so they don't need to fish." Sustainable sea cucumber aquaculture initiatives are being developed to provide communities in Velondriake with alternative sources of income. In the Baie de Ranobe, a popular tourist destination 40km north of Toliara, local villagers are becoming involved in tourism. Communities in Ifaty and Mangily manage Fimihara, an association that has created a marine reserve in which all fishing is banned, which charges tourists and diving businesses an entrance fee to visit the site. Seasonal bans on octopus fishing have also been implemented.

- **Malaria Still a Major Challenge in Africa – WHO: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 29 July 2008.**

The African continent is losing up to \$12 billion per year of its Gross Domestic Product in scaling up malaria intervention programs, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). WHO country representative, Olusegun Babaniyi said malaria remains a global threat to the attainment of social-economic targets, with three million and more cases and an estimated one million deaths annually. Dr Babaniyi was speaking on Monday at the official opening of the Eastern and Southern Africa Annual Review and Planning Malaria Meeting, themed "Improving Malaria Diagnosis". The theme of the meeting is timely, he said, adding that it serves as a reminder of the need for African countries to pay attention to diagnosis in order to eradicate poverty. He said malaria has kept the poor people poorer, adding that it is consuming 25 percent of household incomes. Dr Babaniyi also emphasised the need for countries to improve the health provider's confidence in malaria diagnostic results. "The prompt use of microscopic examination in the diagnosis of malaria is vital, as it aids the management of the diseases by confirming clinical suspicion which also saves money and reduces evolution of drug resistance." The lack of confidence, he said, in the diagnostic results by health providers emanates from limited trust in the quality of diagnostic services. "It is for this reason that the WHO has developed a comprehensive manual on quality of microscopy and other diagnostic techniques in an effort to strengthen quality assurance and quality control in malaria diagnosis among countries," Dr Babaniyi said. Health Minister, Brian Chituwo said the Zambian government has introduced Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) in most health centres around the country. Dr Chituwo said the introduction of RDTs has since increased diagnostics services of malaria to 80 percent, adding that community health workers are currently under training. He noted that Zambia has made great strides in eradicating malaria, adding that according to the 2007 Demographic and Health survey (DHS) report coverage of key malaria interventions such as the use of insecticide treated nets has increased to 60 percent from 10 percent in 2001. "Prompt malaria diagnosis is one of the principle interventions for early and effective treatment in Zambia," Dr Chituwo said. He said his ministry wanted to ensure effective quality malaria diagnostic services are

strengthened at the most periphery health care centres in line with government's health vision of providing cost effective care close to households.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Continent Asks WTO Negotiators to Unlock Region's Agricultural Potential: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.**

As the World Trade Organisations (WTOs) trade negotiations enters into its decisive stage, African trade ministers attending WTOs mini-ministerial meeting in Geneva, wants the trade negotiations to unlock Africa's trade potentials so that the continent can fend for itself. This, according to the ministers, will enable Africa to effectively contribute in its own development needs such as livelihoods, food security and rural development. "If this is done, African countries will develop themselves via fair trade rather than relying on the diminishing aid. We therefore expect an effective solution that will address the instability of commodity prices in the world market, which continue to adversely affect the export of our commodities," a statement issued by the coordinator of the African Group, Mr Uhuru Kenyatta, said on July 25. Referred to as the Doha Development Round (DDA), the group wants an effective substantial reduction of trade distorting domestic support in rich industrialised countries, and increased market access for products of export interest to African countries. The DDA aims to place development at the center of the trade negotiations. Ten ministers from eight African countries are in Geneva attending the WTO Mini-ministerial meeting which started on July 21 in Geneva. They are Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Gabon, Lesotho, Mauritius, South Africa and Kenya. Uganda, once a chair of the African negotiating Group, is not represented. Mr Kenyatta also, Kenya's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade said that import surges have continued to undermine agriculture production in African countries. On cotton specifically, the group expects a more ambitious outcome that will substantially accelerate the reduction of production subsidies in developed countries. "Millions of poor people in African are dependent on cotton production. However, the huge subsidies provided by the developed countries have continued to depress world prices and thereby driving farmers out of production with no other sources of income," the statement said. "We are therefore looking forward to an effective and long-term solution on cotton. Of equal importance to the trade policy aspects of the cotton issue, is the development assistance dimension. This is in the Doha mandate". Progress has however been made on this aspect, but there is wide scope for faster implementation of the commitments by the developed countries and even faster disbursements. Bananas have also attracted attention. The African group wants a solution that will not impact negatively on the African banana exporting countries. "We are in support of the current consultations initiated by the WTO Director General on this issue with a view to arriving at an amicable solution that will continue to facilitate exports of bananas from Africa," it said. The African Group has concerns in both agriculture and Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations

regarding the negative impact of tariff reductions on preferences. Most of the exports from African countries are dependent on preferences granted mainly by the developed countries. The erosion of preferences will expose exports from Africa to abrupt competition leading to disruption of exports with adverse impact on export earnings as well as job losses. The African group further says it attaches great importance on the development aspect of the extension of geographical indications as well as their registration". "This will protect the originality of the African products and enhance both the market potential for resources emanating from the continent and the accrual of tangible benefits to the African Countries from which these resources originate" they said. "It will also be a good marketing tool that will ensure that African products do not lose identity in the global markets". The African Group is of the view that rules resulting from these negotiations in all areas, must not constrain the process of Africa's industrial development.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Profit - 'Human Trafficking, Second to Trade in Arms': [This Day](#) (Lagos): 30 July 2008.**

The United Nations has rated human trafficking as the third highest profit earning industry after arms dealing and drugs. This was made known yesterday in Abuja by the Executive Secretary of National Agency for the Prohibition and Traffic in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), Mrs. Carol Ndaguba, while delivering a paper at the 4th Annual Women International Conference organized by Excellent Women International Forum in collaboration with NAPTIP. Ndaguba noted with dismay the alarming rise of the modern slave trade and child abuse which she claimed as becoming almost normal in Nigeria. According to her, human trafficking which has an external and internal dimension, gives an interest rate of about \$9.5 billion annually and based on the US government research of 2006, people trafficked across national borders annually, ranks 800,000. Apart from poverty which she identified as the primary cause, she also pointed out that globalised capitalism; corruption and greed are contributing factors to the evil practice. While thanking the sister agencies of the Nigerian Police, Immigration Service, State Security Service and Nigerian Intelligence Agency for their unflinching support to NAPTIP in fighting the menace of human abuse, she called on all well meaning Nigerians to partner with the Agency in seeing that the evil custom is rooted out from the Nigerian system. The Executive Director of EXWIF, Mrs. Christabel Julie Okoye, while welcoming the guests, highlighted the inalienable role of mothers in the upbringing of children. She explained that the purpose of the conference is to bring excellence to motherhood which will in turn bring sanity to our decaying society.

- **Nigeria: Assembly Adopts Motion to Integrate Qur'anic Schools: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 31 July 2008.**

The Bauchi State House of Assembly yesterday adopted a motion to re-organise Qur'anic Schools as part of measures to curtail the menace of street begging by children. Alhaji Abdulkadir Wahu (ANPP-Sade), who raised the motion, said the integration of the non-formal schools into formal school system would provide access to free and qualitative education for all. He said the measure became necessary because there was a need to enhance security and check the increasing number of street begging by children and adults in major towns. Wahu, who is also the Chairman House Committee on Security, also recommended the introduction of salaries and allowances for Qur'anic teachers (Malams) and the provision of teaching and instructional materials. "It is desirable for the government to place them on a teacher's salary to enable them to enjoy the same benefits with their counter- parts in the formal school system," he said. "The schools shall be designed to cater for the need of the children to curtail street begging and inculcate discipline and good moral values," Wahu added. Also contributing, Alhaji Aminu Tukur, (ANPP-Lere-Bula Constituency), said the failure of the government to integrate the schools into the formal system had exposed the pupils to difficulties and also increased social vices. The motion was unanimously adopted by all the 31-members. The House also directed the Clerk to convey the message to Governor Isa Yuguda. It would be recalled that the state government had in a school assessment exercise carried out in 2007, registered more than 5,000 Qur'anic schools located in the 20 local government areas. (NAN)

- **Benin: Prison Conditions Violate Human Rights: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 30 July 2008.**

Prison conditions in Benin are so deplorable that they were, alongside police brutality, one of two reasons that compelled the international human rights watchdog Amnesty International to list the country in its annual State of the World's Human Rights report for the first time in 2008. Prisons suffer from overcrowding, cases of unjustified detention, a lack of trained prison staff and lack of adequate food, according to the report. Amnesty highlights Abomey prison 150km north of Cotonou in central Benin which it says holds up to six times as many prisoners as it was designed to. The prison in the capital, Cotonou, holds 2,445 prisoners in a facility set up to house 400. A separate research report published in June 2008 by Beninese non-governmental and human rights organisations including Amnesty International Benin (AI) and the Organisation for the Defence of Prisoners' Interests (DDP) also highlighted the poor conditions for the approximately 800 children who are held alongside adults in the country's prisons. According to AI, "Women and children are particularly vulnerable and live in precarious conditions in prisons. A large number of women are detained with their children and have to give birth without an attendant physician." Youth offenders are not tried in special juvenile courts, flouting international norms. "Prison overcrowding is a serious human rights problem," said Thierry Alliah, director of human rights at the Beninese ministry of justice. "That is why we will not stop making sure those in power are aware of the gravity of the situation - it could be a fatal blow to our country's image."

Why

According to Alliah the problems stem from the country's dysfunctional justice system. "Trials are not always fair... people awaiting trial are not always judged according to the nature of their crime," he said, and as a result prisoners may be given arbitrarily long sentences. Trials can drag on for years and can suffer interruptions of up to four years at a time, according to Alliah. Many of the prisoners languish for ten years or more without having a trial, he said. "There are more people awaiting trial than those tried in prisons... they haven't been tried because we don't have enough judges to try them," he said. "We need to... distinguish the guilty and innocent so we do not keep innocent people in prison," he said. There is no formal training available for judges in Benin and the few judges who do operate are often on strike demanding higher salaries and cost of living stipends, according to Alliah. And now clerks are following suit.

Government actions

The government has been aware of the problems for many years but has not prioritised it, according to Olatunde Cambopas, an independent legal adviser. A bill was passed in 2001 to install 28 civil courts around the country, but no action was ever taken to set them up, and as such "we are still working with the eight courts left over from the previous justice system," which dates back to the French colonial era, he said. There has been some progress however. In 2007 the Minister of Justice, Legislation and Human Rights conducted a tour of the country's detention centres to ascertain if conditions had improved since first being highlighted by Amnesty International in 2003. According to a December 2007 statement, "the results of the survey... found a significant improvement in conditions over the course of the year." Meanwhile in 2003 the government introduced a plan to recruit 30 additional magistrates annually, and to build 10 additional prisons by 2010. Alliah is optimistic that these plans will be realised. "You can't say the government hasn't done anything to address this situation, and hopefully in two years time we will have enough civilian prisons to decongest the current ones, and adequate numbers [of magistrates]," he pointed out.

Not enough

Amnesty International wants deeper and faster reform. Recruitment of judges must be sped up, judges should accelerate investigation and trial proceedings and should clearly outline fair custody periods, and court sessions should meet more regularly, and youth offenders should be given the benefits of special trials and separate detention quarters it says. But Campos looks to alternative justice mechanisms to settle the problem, and proposes setting up 'conciliation courts' where victims and offenders can meet to discuss and confront the crime committed thereby reducing the number of prisoners, particularly minors, who are detained. Whether or not the government will embrace such proposals remains to be seen but advocates are not giving up. "We must maintain permanent pressure on the authorities to change the situation we are in today," NGOs and human rights organisations announced in their report.

- **Ghana: Radio Journalist Attacked By Ruling Party Supporters: Media Foundation for West Africa (Accra): PRESS RELEASE: 30 July 2008.**

On 13 July 2008, Asafo Adjei Davidson, news editor of Success FM, a local radio station based in Goaso, a town in the Asunafo North Constituency in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana, was allegedly assaulted by a group of supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Davidson said he was slapped several times, his right hand was twisted and became swollen, and his clothes were torn. According to the 28 July issue of "Insight" newspaper, the incident occurred at a fund raising ceremony organised by Robert Safo Mensah, the local Member of Parliament. Davidson told MFWA's correspondent that the irate party supporters were outraged by his presence at their function because they claimed he has been criticising the party and the MP on a radio programme the journalist hosts. Davidson said he identified one of the perpetrators as Isaac Darko, popularly called "Mugabe". The journalist made a report to the police and Darko was arrested and charged with assault and causing bodily harm. When MFWA contacted the MP, he denied that the party supporters had attacked the journalist. He said he was informed that Darko fought with Davidson and that the court has dealt with him. On 22 July, the Goaso High Court convicted Darko of the offence. He was fined 200 GHc (approx. US\$200). Meanwhile, the management of the station has expressed their disappointment with the court's sentence, saying that the fine was not adequate punishment for the attack. Davidson was treated at Goaso Government Hospital and discharged.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Whites Did Not Steal Land From Blacks, Says Pik: Business Day (Johannesburg): 29 July 2008.**

WHITE settlers did not steal land from native inhabitants when they arrived in SA, said former apartheid minister Pik Botha yesterday. He was speaking at a conference on the Expropriation Bill as part of a multipronged effort to defeat the bill, which is now before Parliament. The Ad Hoc Committee For the Defence of Property Rights gathered historians, politicians and farmers to discuss the question: did the current owners of property obtain it unlawfully? Much of the discussion was focused on restoring a largely discredited history: that the land in SA was empty when settlers arrived. The history suggests that land was given in treaty to white settlers and that the land, in any event, belonged to the Khoi and the San people - these were nomadic people who were not settled; and that both whites and blacks (from which the Khoi and San were excluded) were settlers. The Expropriation Bill seeks to allow the government to expropriate private land with compensation but not necessarily at market value. Organisations present at the conference included AfriForum, the Afrikanerbond, AgriSA, commercial farmers organisation TAU SA and the Freedom Front Plus (FF+). Botha said, "The Voor-trekkers occupied areas where in general, at the time of the Great Trek, no settled black communities were to be found." Werner Weber, FF+ spokesman on land and agricultural issues, referred to specific treaties, such as the one signed between Voortrekker Piet Retief and Zulu King Dingaan in 1836, in which, he said, Dingaan gave Retief all the land between the Tugela and the Mzimvubu rivers in return for cattle which Retief had

recovered for him. Weber said land owned by white people in the "Transvaal, Natal and Free State was obtained in a friendly way". This version of history, standard fare in pre democracy textbooks, was dismissed outright by Prof Lungisile Ntsebeza of UCT in an interview yesterday. "That's rubbish," he said. "There is evidence in abundance that land was dispossessed from the indigenous people, violently in many cases." He asked why the settlers fought wars with African nations if the land was empty and people were not settled there. Historian and writer Louis Changuion put the land issue down to a "misunderstanding between the two race groups". This was because they "didn't have the same understanding" of land ownership. Boundaries were not recognised and there was no such thing before white people came to SA.

- **Zimbabwe: Press Institute Calls for Probe Into Journalist's Death: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.**

THE International Press Institute (IPI) this week wrote to South African president Thabo Mbeki asking him to press Zimbabwe to "clarify fully" the circumstances of the death in the country of a Northern Ireland photojournalist, Richard Mills, a fortnight ago. Mills, who was in the country on an undercover assignment, died on July 14 at a private address. He was a photojournalist for the Times in the UK and covered many dangerous assignments for the newspaper, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. David Dudge, the director of IPI, asked Mbeki to do everything in his power to ensure that the Zimbabwean authorities clarify Mills' "mysterious" death. The IPI is a global network of editors, media executives and leading journalists in over 120 countries. In his letter, Dudge said: "According to information before IPI, Mills died under unknown circumstances... Mills... was in Zimbabwe on an undercover assignment that included interviewing, on the day of his death, a white farmer who was attacked after speaking out against (President) Robert Mugabe." He said the photojournalist had planned to leave Zimbabwe on July 15. "Instead, his family was informed that he had died and that the cause of his death was asphyxiation by hanging," Dudge said. Harare has been abuzz with rumours of a love triangle involving Mills, a female colleague and another journalist. The IPI accused the Zimbabwe government of a notorious press freedom record, with local and foreign journalists having suffered countless attacks, both physical and judicial. "Such a record triggers profound doubt about the Zimbabwean authorities' claims as to the cause of Mills' death. We therefore call on you to raise this incident in future discussions with Zimbabwean authorities, and to ensure that it is investigated both thoroughly and openly," Dudge's letter read. Zimbabwe is considered to have some of the toughest media laws in the world. The hostile laws include the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Interception of Communications Act, the Broadcasting Services Act, the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, the Public Order and Security Act, and the Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act.

- **Lesotho: Communications Authority Asked to Rescind Radio Station's Closure: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 30 July 2008.**

Reporters Without Borders has written to the head of the Lesotho Communications Authority asking him to reverse his decision to close privately-owned radio Harvest FM for three months.

Percy Metsing Mangoela

Chairperson

Lesotho Communications Authority

PO Box 15896

Maseru 100, Lesotho

Paris, 30 July 2008

Dear Mr. Mangoela,

Reporters Without Borders, an organisation that defends press freedom worldwide, regrets your decision on 21 July to suspend privately-owned radio Harvest FM for three months as a result of a complaint by a police commissioner and a communications ministry official accusing the station of trying "to damage their dignity as individuals."The station, which would be allowed to resume broadcasting on 21 October, has received threats in the past because of its reporting, which its openly critical of the government.The closure of Lesotho's only privately-owned radio station is a serious violation of free speech. Suspending a news media because of what it has said or written does nothing to redress any defamation or offence that may have been caused. Harvest FM's closure, which has been widely condemned by local and international press freedom activists, will only cause polarisation and foster a climate of hostility between the government and the media. For all these reasons, we urge you to rescind your order and allow Harvest FM to resume broadcasting.We hope you will give this matter your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Ménard

Secretary-General

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.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Muslims Appeal Over Domestic Relations Bill: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.**

The Muslim community wants a review of the domestic relations bill to cater for their interests before it is finally considered by Parliament. Speaking on behalf of muslim women at the review of the domestic relations bill, Hajati Kezala Bakiya, said issues concerning women should be articulated in the proposed bill. The domestic relations bill was shelved following resistance from the Muslim community that it doesn't cater for their interests especially on polygamy.

- **Uganda: 'Church Can't Quit Politics': [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 27 July 2008.**

TORORO Archbishop Dennis Kiwanuka Lotte has attacked the Government for telling the church to stay out of politics. "There are many parts of the Bible which indicate that churches guide politicians on how to behave. Politics is part of human nature," he said on Saturday. Lotte was launching a Bible, which was translated into Samia by Principal Judge James Ogoola, at Lumino High School in Busia district. Citing Libyan President Col. Muammar Gadaffi, Church of Uganda Archbishop Henry Luke Orombi said people who want to destroy the Bible had "assaulted it". While celebrating the anniversary of the birth of Prophet Muhammad at Nakivubo Stadium in Uganda in March, Gadaffi described the Bible as a forgery. "Nobody has come out to respond to this attack. We have kept silent. That was an attack on the Bible," Orombi said.

- **Eritrea: Country 'Has Become One Big Jail,' Activist Says: [America.gov](#) (Washington, DC): 30 July 2008.**

Eritrea "has become one big jail," says an activist whose sister and brother-in-law have been imprisoned for speaking out against the current regime. Senait Yohannes is the sister of Aster Yohannes, who is married to Petros Solomon. Aster and her husband have been imprisoned for years for their role in seeking political reform and implementation of the Eritrean constitution. Neither has been heard from since they were taken into custody, and the four children they left behind are being raised by their grandparents, according to Senait. Senait was in New York City July 24 to help bring to world attention the plight of prisoners of conscience, both in her country and the world over. At a panel discussion hosted by the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, she was one of six panelists -- the others being from Belarus, Burma, Cuba, Syria and Uzbekistan -- to speak out on behalf of those who are not allowed to speak for themselves. In remarks to an audience of more than 120 diplomats, representatives of nongovernmental organizations and journalists, Senait said many of the people who fought so hard in the decades-long battle for Eritrea's independence from Ethiopia now find themselves in jail with no recourse and no contact with the outside world. "My sister's story is one of many thousands in Eritrea," Senait said. "The regime is extremely hostile to any democratic notion or rule of law." All private news media have been closed down, and many journalists arrested, she said. Senait's brother-in-law, who was a Cabinet minister, and 14 other colleagues (known as the Group of 15 or G-15) wrote an open letter to President Isaias Afwerki and the

Eritrean people regarding the need for political reform. The 11 who were in Eritrea at the time were rounded up and have been held incommunicado since 2001. On December 11, 2003, Senait's sister Aster returned home to Eritrea to be with her four children after studying for three years in Phoenix, Arizona. She was taken by security personnel from the airport to an undisclosed location and has not been seen or heard from since. In the years since her disappearance, the government of Eritrea has neither charged her nor given any reason for detaining her. Senait, who was born and raised in Asmara, Eritrea, left her country just as the 30-year war with Ethiopia ended in 1991. She traveled to Ethiopia and Europe before settling in Canada in 1994, where she is now a citizen. She has been seeking the release of her sister through www.FriendsofAster.org and publicly speaking about her family's suffering and the plight of Eritrean people and refugees. She currently is working to get humanitarian assistance to Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and Sudan. Senait is also a board member of St. Andrew's Refugee Association, an organization that provides resettlement assistance and helps sponsor refugees upon their arrival in Canada. At the U.N. event, Senait demanded that Eritrea allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit detainees, and she called for increased international pressure on governments keeping prisoners of conscience. Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on December 10, 1948, declares that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion, there are still governments that detain thousands of people because of their beliefs or political views. In June 2008, the United States and 63 other U.N. member states sponsored the U.N. Declaration of Prisoners of Conscience. That declaration calls on nations to work for the freedom of prisoners of conscience and to make the release of these prisoners an international priority. According to Ambassador T. Vance McMahan, U.S. representative to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, who moderated the July 24 panel discussion called "Courageous Voices," prisoners of conscience are "courageous men and women who have or continue to suffer from government repression for peacefully advocating change." McMahan called for all U.N. member states and nongovernmental organizations "to redouble current efforts to assist prisoners of conscience and their families and to put an end to all forms of persecution."

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- **Sudan: Al Bashir And the ICC: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): EDITORIAL: 31 July 2008.**

The President of Sudan, Omar Hassan Al Bashir, has made the dubious distinction of being the first sitting head of state to be accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes by the International Criminal Court, ICC. According to the court's chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the Sudanese president "bore criminal responsibility for alleged atrocities committed in the last 5 years" in the country's western region of Darfur. The specific accusations against Mr Al Bashir include alleged genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity which have resulted in the killing of members of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups through such acts as attacks on civilians and pillaging of towns and villages in Darfur. Some estimates have put the number of people

who lost their lives as a result of the conflict which has pitted the Darfuris against an alleged government backed militia at about 300,000. Over 2 million people who have been driven from their homes are now sheltering in internally displaced camps with some in neighboring Chad Republic.

Predictably, Sudan says it does not recognize the ICC or its decision. There have also been sharp denials and criticism of the court and its prosecutor by Sudan government officials and demonstrations on the streets of Khartoum. Mr Al Bashir himself has been busy showing that he has the support of his people, including those of Darfur, which he visited last week. For us somewhat removed from it all, we are concerned that this stance of the court is unlikely to improve the situation in the Darfur region of Sudan where thinly stretched peacekeepers, including Nigerians, have become targets of the warring sides who have been trying to maintain an uneasy ceasefire. It is also doubtful that the latest move could improve the chance of deploying a more muscular international peacekeeping force that could stabilize the region and help enforce the peace when the two sides in the conflict manage to agree to some sort of a peace deal.

So far the efforts of many African players like Nigeria and Libya to broker peace under the auspices of the African Union have come to nothing. There is also the risk of pitting Sudan as a country against the ICC, thereby making a bad situation even worse. Already world opinion is sharply divided on the indictment, with many Western countries in support while the Arab League has expressed support for Mr Al Bashir. On the African continent, the African Union has called on the United Nations Security Council to suspend the allegation. There are even those who argue that it is a case of double standard for the ICC to accuse the Sudanese president over what is happening in Darfur while it remains silent on the the leaders of the big Western countries that are seen to be involved directly or indirectly in committing similar atrocities in Iraq and the Occupied Territories. On the whole however, it may be argued that the seeming reluctance of the Sudanese government to address the Darfur crisis may have opened the road to the ICC indictment. It is now more than 5 years since the world first came to know of the raging conflict in Darfur. Rightly or wrongly, the Sudanese authorities have continued to stall on the deployment of more robust United Nations forces in the region, thereby fuelling the suspicion that it may have something to hide about the true situation there. It may be this approach to the Darfur crisis that may have made President Omar Hassan Al Bashir open to the accusations leveled against him by the ICC. However considering the way the Darfur rebels have also conducted themselves at peace talks, some of which were held here in Abuja, it is obvious that it is not just the government that seems reluctant about peace. The groups have since splintered so that today it is not just the Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM) and the Justice and Equality Movement, JEM, but also a number of other splinters that claim seats at the negotiating table with the government in Khartoum. Considering the way the ICC's indictment has now introduced a new element into the Darfur equation, we would urge caution in the way the whole matter is handled.

- **Uganda: Police Tortures Gay Rights Activist-NGO: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

RIGHTS groups have urged Uganda to investigate the alleged detaining and torture of a gay rights activist on trial for protesting against discrimination last month. Usaam Mukwaya and two other activists were charged with trespass last month after staging a protest during a global HIV/AIDS conference in Kampala to complain of discrimination. In a statement, the New York-based Human Rights Watch and two other rights groups, said Mukwaya was then picked up by police last Friday and taken to an undisclosed location where he was mistreated. "One of the women officers scraped his knuckles with a razor-like object. Later, the man (a police officer) tied him to a machine that stretched his arms," the statement said. He was then forced to strip to his underwear, asked if he was a man or a woman and made to walk around the room in his underwear before being freed, the rights groups cited Mukwaya as saying. "The abduction and torture of a Ugandan HIV/AIDS activist who faces trial for holding a peaceful protest reveals the danger to those who challenge the government's policies," the lobby group said. They also called on Ugandan authorities to "investigate the abduction and torture and sanction those responsible." They also said charges against all three activists be dropped. "Uganda's government promotes homophobia when it should be protecting its citizens against HIV/AIDS," said Scott Long, HRW's director for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights Programme. But Kampala police spokesman Simeo Nsubuga denied Mukwaya was tortured, accusing him instead of seeking publicity. "There is nothing to show the person in question was tortured by our officers," Nsubuga told AFP. "This is one case of an individual seeking attention by using allegations of torture. He instead took advantage of lack of research by those organisations to deceive the world," he added. As in much of Africa, homosexuality is illegal, and in Uganda it is punishable by imprisonment up to life.

- **Kenya: Violence Hit Women Most, Waki Team Told: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 1 August 2008.**

Post-election violence hit women most, with some being gang-raped and infected with the HIV virus, the Waki Commission heard on Thursday. Lawyer Anasthesia Otieno, who is also a gender activist and peer counsellor, told the commission, which is sitting in Nakuru, that many women were gang-raped and beaten by raiders as their spouses and children watched. She said after the ordeals, the same women had to bear the pain of seeing the spouses being killed. "After tearing the clothes of their victims and raping them in turns in full view of the entire family, the assailants would turn to their victims' husbands and kill them," said the witness. She said the post-election period was a very difficult time for women, saying they were not safe anywhere. They were raped in their houses, on their way to refugee camps and even in the camps. Some service providers in the camps, she said, took advantage of the situation and abused women.

Release stress

"Women were sexually and physically abused by all people, their tribesmen, the raiders and even service providers in the camps where they were perceived to be safe," said Ms Otieno. The witness said some of the rapists were engaging in the vice to "release stress". She said some women were beaten, rejected and forced to change their children's

names on the basis that they belonged to a community different from their husband's. She said women who were mostly affected were those in the low-income bracket and living in less secure estates. These were mitumba dealers, market traders or simple housewives. Ms Otieno said most of the rape victims were infected with sexually transmitted diseases and HIV, while others became pregnant. She said the victims were now suffering from depression and lower abdominal pains, among other ailments. "Apart from the ailments that these women have to contend with, some of them have been widowed," she said.

- **Tanzania: Official Defends Recent Raid On Radical Weekly Harassed By Government for Over a Year: [World Association of Newspapers](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 31 July 2008.**

For more than a year the radical weekly "MwanaHALISI" has been subject to government harassment and violence, belying the country's reputation for having liberal press policies compared to its neighbouring African countries. Over the past five years, the Tanzanian media has welcomed the creation of the Editors Forum, the Media Council of Tanzania and five new papers to the media scene. "MwanaHALISI" is the anomaly to this picture. The newspaper, which was launched in May 2006, has had impressive success with its legendary investigative journalism. In just over two years the circulation has grown from 7,000 to 60,000 copies per week. "It is the leading paper in the country in the fight against high level corruption," said editor Jabir Idrissa to RAP 21. With the paper's credo, "fight graft and agitate for good governance and rule of law," not all spheres of influence in Tanzania are thrilled. Idrissa said to RAP 21, "those who are responsible in pilfering public funds see us as the number one enemy." Idrissa told RAP 21 that after the paper published the opposition camp's "List of Shame," which revealed senior government officials and traders as thieves of the country's economy, the government has been targeting them. "Harassment has been the order of the day. In fact, from mid last year, we have received several letters from the information department asking us to explain why we published a certain story or feature. They even threatened to ban the paper if we continued to write what they claimed to be seditious stories against the President and the state." In January, two men threw acid on company director and managing editor Saeed Kubenea and professional advisor Ndimara Tegambwage and beat them with iron bars. Kubenea sought medical treatment in India at the government's expense; Tegambwage received 15 stitches. More recently, on 18 July, four uniformed police officers raided the "MwanaHALISI" newsroom after the National Bank of Commerce complained about articles that included bank data of some of their clients. With a warrant in hand, the police officers confiscated a computer and questioned Kubenea, who is still recovering from the previous attack. After, the police moved to Kubenea's house where another search was carried out. "This police intrusion into the offices of an independent newspaper is disturbing and surprising in a country where the press normally enjoys real freedom," said Reporters Without Borders (RSF). On 28 July, Information Minister George Mkuchika made a statement regarding the police raid on "MwanaHALISI". In sum, Mkuchika belittled the raid. In his statement, Mkuchika said: "The police have legal powers to search anybody when they believe they have justification. Anybody, not only journalists and newsrooms, but even members of parliament can be searched by the police." Furthermore, even if nothing is found the

police do not have to justify the search, according to Mkuchika. He continued to say, "In a normal constituency people always fall into police hands and are searched. [In this case] it is just because the search concerned journalists and their colleagues publicized the incident but it is nothing new." While the January attack continues to be investigated (two suspects were arrested) and little progress has been made to bring answers to last week's raid, Mkuchika has been boasting of the government's apparent support for the independent media since his appointment less than one year ago. "The government has not banned any newspaper or radio or television station," said Mkuchika. Rather, the government has deployed violent tactics in an effort to place limitations on published content. The staff at "MwanaHALISI" is standing unbowed to the police: "Normalcy has returned and we are in preparation for the second issue since the search," Idrissa concluded. The African Press Network for the 21st Century (RAP 21), a pan-African media network, was launched by the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) together with the Union of Publishers in Central Africa (UEPAC). Updates alerts on prior attacks and harassment of "MwanaHALISI":

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Rwandan Rebels Attack Human Rights Watch: Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information (Kigali): 29 July 2008.**

Rwandan rebels in DR Congo have dismissed accusations of civilian abuse made by Human Rights Watch instead inviting the campaign group to their jungle hideouts for a 'verification mission', RNA reports. Human Rights Watch said last week in a damning report that the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda - FDLR - were being aided by the Congolese army. The campaign body also claimed the rebel outfit - with members blamed in Kigali for Genocide, was abusing civilians. The rebels - for the first time - have hit back dismissing the categorization by Human Rights Watch that the top hierarchy are Genocide suspects. The FDLR was founded March 1 2000 and has nothing to do with the 1994 Rwanda Genocide, says the German-based rebel boss Dr. Ignace Murwanashyaka. However, the DR Congo government is in possession of a list of up to 6900 individuals in the ranks of the FDLR that Rwanda says have Tutsi blood on their hands. A deal reached in Kenya by the two neighbours - commonly known as the Nairobi Communiqué - lays out a plan under which the rebels will either surrender or are forced out. The rebels also dismiss the suggestion that they have working alliances with other Congolese militias - the mai mai and Coalition of Congolese Patriotic Resistance (PARECO). Contrary to confirmed reports by FDLR combatants that have laid down their arms that the Congo army units had provided them with arms, the Dr. Murwanashyaka says the group has 'never received help of any nature' from the Congolese. Dr Murwanashyaka however, told the BBC great lakes service last year that former President Joseph Kabila provided them with arms. Using the usual rhetoric of blaming all sorts of information accusing them on the authorities in Kigali, the rebels say Human Rights Watch is just acting out as member of the international 'lobby' group on behalf of Rwanda. Meanwhile Rwanda for its part is up in arms singling out Human Rights Watch Africa Division expert Alison Des Forges as using the organization for her 'own ends'. Justice Minister Tharcisse Karugarama said on state radio yesterday that Ms. Des

Forges, - the lead research of the length report last week was using her selfish ends against government. Apparently on her recent trip in Kigali, as Minister Karugarama put it, she was not able to defend her positions on Rwanda instead saying she gets the information from other people. The FDLR rebels also repeat the long held view that an independent investigation is conducted in the Kivu region of eastern DRC to determine the 'real authors' of the crimes that area. The United Nations has documented some 200 ceasefire violations since January 23, the majority between the forces General Laurent Nkunda and a loose coalition of combatants from the Mai Mai Mongol, the PARECO, and the FDLR. This is contrary to a standing agreement to end hostilities - to which the Rwandan militias are not party. Witnesses interviewed by Human Rights Watch reported that FDLR and PARECO combatants have attacked camps -more recently after United Nations' departure, killing at least one civilian and causing further displacement of the population. The rights group documented fighting involving the Rwandan militias in Bukombo of the Rutshuru area as well as the localities of Kirumbu, Busoro and Busiye - all in Masisi. The rebels say they were not in anyway involved. (End)

17. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Influx of Nigerian Girls Into Sweden Worries Envoy: Leadership (Abuja): 28 July 2008.**

Nigeria's Ambassador to Sweden, Dr Godknows Igali, has expressed concern over the influx of Nigerian girls into that country. The envoy told NAN yesterday in Abuja that the Nigerian girls were moving away from Italy to "these Scandinavian countries to carry out their trade". He said that the girls, who engaged mainly in prostitution, decided to relocate to the Scandinavian countries since the Italian authorities started cracking down on them. NAN reports that the Nigerian Ambassador to Sweden has concurrent accreditation to Denmark, Norway and Finland. He added that the Nigerian Embassy was doing everything possible to let those countries know that the average Nigerian girl was generally hard working and respected back home. "We are also encouraging and calling for the cooperation of the appropriate Nigerian agencies to rehabilitate these girls." "We believe that some of the girls are victims of some people who are out to exploit their innocence, hence the need to get them rehabilitated," added Igali. On advance fees fraud, otherwise known as 419, Igali said that those "who fall victims should purge themselves of their get-rich-quick mentality". "We are trying to let the people understand that Nigeria is a country where you have some of the best-trained manpower and best brains in the world." "This is helping us to douse the negative public perception of Nigeria as a country of fraudsters and that Nigerians are evil and crooked people," he said. The ambassador noted that a lot of Nigerians were coming to study in Sweden, taking advantage of the country's free education which "is extended to indigenes and foreigners alike". (NAN)

- **Guinea Bissau: Fishermen Turn to Trafficking As Fish Profits Drop: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 29 July 2008.**

As the profits to be made from fishing diminish with rising fuel costs and poor management of the sector, fishermen are increasingly turning to drug and people trafficking to boost their meager incomes, fishermen in Bissau and the Bijagos islands told IRIN. "Fishermen get involved [in drug trafficking] because they can earn more money from illegal activities," said Mody Ndiaye, special adviser at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Guinea Bissau. According to Ndiaye, large boats head from Latin America to the Bijagos islands, an archipelago of 90 islands 60 km off the coast from the capital, where they divide up their large hauls into many smaller fishing boats which proceed along the coast to unload their cargo in the Gambia, Senegal and Guinea-Conakry. Guinea Bissau has increasingly become a transit hub for organised criminal networks trafficking drugs from Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil through West Africa to Europe. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates several hundred kg of cocaine go through the country each week, while according to 2004 figures from the International Office of Migration, one million West and Central Africans head clandestinely to Europe every year.

"Ideal" trafficking environment

Bijagos archipelago is an "ideal" ground for disembarking large quantities of cocaine according to Ndiaye. "For traffickers the rule is to make a maximum profit with a minimum risk. This area is difficult for police to control because of its geographical configuration which make it a place from which drugs can be transported relatively safely." "Lots of my friends have left fishing to get involved in illegal activities such as transporting people or drugs," said Abdullah Dieng, a fisherman in the capital, Bissau. Other factors favouring illegal trafficking are the lack of judicial police units across Guinea Bissau, the low numbers of police patrolling the borders, and widespread corruption which means much of the trade is overlooked by the authorities, according to Ndiaye and the International Crisis Group. An ongoing armed rebellion in southern Senegal also fuels the trade. While fishermen "regularly" run at loss when fishing he said they can earn up to US\$720 for each person trafficked northwards up the coast to Senegal. "If you have a big boat you can take up to 60 people at a time and you're guaranteed a profit," Dieng said. "Transporting drugs can be even more profitable," said a fisherman who asked not to be named. "We know the sea very well so it's obvious they'll look to us to help them," the fisherman said. "I know there are risks but I think it's worth it to take them."

Fishing no longer pays

While fishermen stand to earn several thousand or more dollars to transport people and drugs, the income from fishing is inconsistent. Before setting out to sea fishermen must fork out up to US\$336 for the two tones of ice needed for a short trip, US\$86 for the required 60 litres of fuel which must be procured on the black market, as well as boat hire charges. If their catch is not good or much of it goes unsold as is "often the case," they may even run at a loss, "which happens more and more regularly," said Dieng. Fishermen tend to be contracted out to a manager who rents their boat, feeds and houses them, and pays them once a month. "We live a hand to mouth existence - I live on scraps of change

for cigarettes and drinks," said Ndiaye. One problem is no one is buying their fish. The lack of decent roads into the interior of the country combined with prohibitive fuel prices makes it too difficult for fish-sellers to transport fish any further than Bissau, creating a saturated market. Fishermen cannot increase the price of fish any further because people simply cannot afford to buy it at inflated prices. "Fishermen here have no financial power - they can't further increase the price of fish because no one will buy it," director general of the ministry of fisheries and maritime economy Cirillo Vieira told IRIN.

Temptation

For those who traffic, it's a different story. "If you want fast money and are willing to take the risk, that's the only way to get it," said Dieng. The UNODC is starting to work with the government to help it build up its security and justice system so that the authorities have a better chance of catching and punishing these traffickers. Some security forces patrol the seas for cargo, but they are few and far between and according to a fisherman on the island of Bubaque in the Bijagos, trafficking around the islands is on the increase. Vieira is taking a different tack. He hopes to tempt fishermen back to fishing by making the industry more profitable. He has received US\$1 million over two years from the European Union to improve management of the industry and market conditions. But even he knows his options are limited. The fishing ministry receives just 5 percent of the government's paltry annual budget, despite fishing bringing in 40 percent of the country's annual revenues, and most of this money can only cover staff salaries. "Fishermen face so many problems nowadays so there's a lot we need to do to give them more incentives," he said. For fisherman Dieng the temptation to traffic is always there. "Me, I am here to fish... if I have bad months the temptation is there, but I try to resist it," he said.

- **Côte d'Ivoire: Centre for Displaced Closes as Country Celebrates First Peace Anniversary: [International Organization for Migration](#) (Geneva): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.**

IOM's Centre for Assistance to Temporarily Displaced Persons (CATD) in the western town of Guiglo has closed its doors exactly a year after the official reunification of the country. The centre, which opened in December 2003, provided humanitarian assistance to thousands of mostly West African migrant workers who fled ethnic strife in 2002 and 2003. At its peak, it hosted up to 7,900 internally displaced people (IDPs), whom IOM subsequently helped to return and reintegrate in Western Cote d'Ivoire. "The closure of the centre symbolizes the success of the peace process in Cote d'Ivoire," says IOM Abidjan Chief of Mission Jacques Seurt. "IOM will continue to work with its Ivoirian and UN partners to strengthen reconciliation between communities of former displaced West African migrant workers and host communities," he adds. IOM's successful return and reintegration activities, which were carried out in coordination with national and local authorities, humanitarian agencies and partner NGOs, were funded by the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO), the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the Government of Norway. IOM is appealing for an additional US\$ 2 million to expand its

peace consolidation, return and community rehabilitation programmes in Cote d'Ivoire in 2008/2009.

- **Nigeria: 43 Died at Immigration, Prison Recruitments – Minister: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 30 July 2008.**

Forty-three persons died during the recently concluded the Nigerian Immigration Service and the Nigerian Prison Service recruitment exercises, the Minister of Interior retired Major-General Godwin Abbe has said. Abbe said yesterday at a ministerial press briefing in Abuja that 370,000 applicants turned up for just 7,000 vacancies in the two services. "We have set up a powerful investigative committee that will go round and give us the factual and truth of all that had happened during the recruitments exercise," he said. The minister said the deaths were caused by desperation of the unemployed. On the persistent restiveness in the Niger Delta for which Nigeria sought the assistance of the British government, Abbe said "the Nigerian government did not fail in its responsibility to provide internal security in the country rather the British government offered to give superior facilities to Nigeria that will assist Nigeria to fight the militants. This shows Nigeria is interested to get technical aid and superior facilities from foreign countries that will help Nigeria to improve its internal security."

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Mozambique: Zuma Apologises for South African Pogroms: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 30 July 2008.**

The President of South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC), Jacob Zuma, on Tuesday night apologised to Mozambicans for the anti-foreigner riots that shook South Africa two months ago. Dozens of migrants died in the riots, including at least 20 Mozambicans, and over 40,000 Mozambicans fled from South Africa. Zuma was speaking at a press conference at Maputo International Airport on his arrival for a three day visit, aimed to boost the longstanding ties between the ANC and Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party. "We would like to apologise sincerely", said Zuma, "We were very surprised by what we refer to as xenophobic attacks, because for many years there had never been any such incident or attack in South Africa". "For decades we have lived together with Mozambicans, Zimbabweans, people from Lesotho or Botswana", he added. "We participated with them in the struggle. Under apartheid many Mozambicans went to prison in South Africa". He noted that the riots had been so indiscriminate that many South Africans were also among the dead. (He was presumably referring to cases where South Africans who happened to speak the Shangaan language were wrongly identified as Mozambicans.) Zuma said the ANC was still investigating the causes of the pogroms. Crime had been a significant factor, he said, with gangs looting foreigners' possessions. He acknowledged that South African residents in the affected areas had complained of "poor service delivery, that they didn't have houses or water. But that's got nothing to do with foreigners". "We are very sorry about what happened, and we think it will not happen again", he stressed. Asked about the apparent breakdown of the talks over the future of Zimbabwe, Zuma insisted that a negotiated solution between the ruling ZANU-PF and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) was the only

way forward. He pointed out that, "in any negotiations talks can be deadlocked, and require the facilitators and the mediators to look at the issues"."The leadership on both sides", he said, "should realise that negotiations are a matter of give and take, and of compromise".Zuma did not believe that either the anti-foreigner pogroms or the Zimbabwean crisis posed a threat to the projected economic integration of the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region. "The question of integration is strategic for all SADC members", he said. He was convinced that, once the current crisis was solved, "Zimbabwe will be back on its feet".Asked whether his possible trial on corruption charges would damage the ANC, Zuma said "the trial will not affect the ANC at all. It will affect a citizen of South Africa who is not above the Constitution"."If there are charges that the state thinks need to be answered, no citizen can refuse", he continued. "If there are charges, I'm more than ready to defend myself and prove my innocence""Under the rule of law, we cannot say that there is any citizen who cannot be taken to court", Zuma added.Zuma also stressed the importance of strengthening relations between the ANC and Frelimo. In the SADC region, he said, "relations tend to be between governments, and the problem is that they are too formal, and you can't discuss the issues frankly as comrades"

- **Zimbabwe: Refugees Draining Botswana Resources: [SW Radio Africa \(London\): 28 July 2008.](#)**

The number of Zimbabweans seeking shelter in neighbouring countries is reaching unmanageable proportions, with the Botswana government appealing for international help with the influx of Zimbabweans - who it says are draining Botswana's resources.Foreign Minister Phandu Sekelemani told South Africa's SAfm radio station on Sunday that the influx of Zimbabweans into Botswana "is an issue to be dealt with" and he called on the international community "to help us because it is a drain on our resources". Sekelemani said the number of refugees keeps growing and that the government "cannot turn them back once they qualify for refugee status". According to government sources late last year, Botswana was playing host to an estimated 250 000 Zimbabweans - a number that was growing as conditions under Robert Mugabe's regime went from bad to worse.Meanwhile, many Zimbabweans who fled to South Africa are facing deportation after failing to apply for temporary South African ID cards. The group is among about 700 hundred foreign nationals that were forcibly removed from a refugee centre in Johannesburg last week - where they were taking shelter following the xenophobic attacks in South Africa earlier this year. They have since been removed to a repatriation centre where they face deportation, but South African media reported that many have taken to the streets in an effort to prevent being sent back home.Daniel Molokele from the Global Zimbabwe forum told Newsreel on Monday that the situation in Botswana is indicative of what he called an "international humanitarian crisis". He said it was "very important that the UN get involved" to aid country's hosting Zimbabwean refugees as well as the refugees themselves.He said pressure needs to be put on SADC leaders to "accept that there is a need for Africans to take responsibility for the crisis, because it is the direct result of the failure of Africa, in particular SADC, to intervene in the worsening Zimbabwean situation".Molokele added that he respects South Africa's changing policy on refugees but emphasised that "any form of deportations is an affront

to the situation in Zimbabwe". He said there should a complete stop to all Zimbabwean deportations "until further notice or at all" and that governments should invest in a "repatriation process" of all Zimbabweans seeking shelter from the violence in their home country. Botswana earlier this month urged other nations in southern Africa not to recognise Mugabe's re-election in last month's one-man poll. Sekelemani reiterated calls for Zimbabwe to be suspended from the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). He said that Botswana "as a country that practices democracy and the rule of law" does not "recognise the outcome of the presidential run-off election, and would expect other SADC member states to do the same".

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: IDP Resettlement Stalls Over Fresh Land Conflicts: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

Land conflicts are disrupting the resettlement of internally displaced persons in parts of northern Uganda and as a result, thousands have been forced back into camps, MPs have revealed. At a news conference yesterday, the Acholi Parliamentary Group led by Chwa MP, Mr Livingstone Okello Okello (UPC) said land conflicts in the region have put a halt to the resettlement programme. "Opportunists are using our people's situation to grab their land and thousands are now landless," Mr Okello-Okello said. "We have just completed a tour of Acholi sub-region and many IDPs have been pushed back to camps because some officials are interested in their land." Citing a recent incident, Nwoya MP, Simon Oyet said the 4th Division Commander Brig Charles Otema acquired about 40,000 hectares of land in Latooro village in Amuru District, leaving an estimated 100 families homeless, a claim he denies. "We cannot pretend that IDPs are returning home," Mr Oyet said. "In my constituency, resettlement has stalled because some army officers grab community land. If nothing is done urgently, we are going to see a new conflict. But in a statement to Daily Monitor yesterday, the Army spokesperson for northern Uganda, Capt. Ronald Kakurungu defended Brig Otema saying; "This is an absurd allegation by an MP [Oyet] because he clearly did not do research. He said the land in question is actually only 2,000 hectares and not 40,000 hectares. "It is in Pajemu village, Latooro Parish in Purongo, Nwoya county in Amuru," he said.

- **Somalia: IDPs Out of Food, More Clashes in Beletweyne: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 1 August 2008.**

Clashes between insurgents and government troops in Beletweyne, Hiiraan region of central Somalia, have created serious food scarcities in the town, hitting thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) hardest, locals said. "Already, two children are said to have died of hunger; many others are malnourished," a journalist, who requested anonymity, told IRIN on 1 August. "Most of the displaced are now resorting to eating fruit from the acacia trees - the only accessible thing." Although Beletweyne was calm, tension remained high as residents and IDPs continued to flee fighting between insurgents inside the town and Ethiopian-backed government troops believed to have surrounded the town. "The IDPs have become displaced again, this time they are heading

to the southern districts where there are no local and international aid agencies," the journalist said. Residents who depended on petty trade in the town now had no work and were finding it difficult to feed their families, he added. "Only a few business premises are open, the hospitals are, however, totally closed," the journalist said. Peter Smerdon, a senior public affairs officer for the UN World Food Programme (WFP), told IRIN the fighting had delayed trucks carrying at least 1,500MT of food. The rations were meant to have been distributed in July by CARE International. "Eight convoys are delayed en route to the region," Smerdon said on 1 August. The journalist said despite an agreement negotiated by local leaders urging both sides to withdraw their troops, shelling had been reported in parts of the town in the past week. At least 12 people died, most of them IDPs. Adan Abdi Isse, the mayor of Beletweyne, said plans were under way to remove Ethiopian troops from the town and replace them with local police. However, he declined to give more details. Since June, Beletweyne officials have appealed for urgent help for thousands of IDPs. "There are an estimated 15,000 IDPs in the town, with little or nothing to eat. Their situation is very desperate," Salah Mumin Muse, the district commissioner of Beletweyne, told IRIN on 25 June. "Most are from Mogadishu but we also have people who have lost their livestock and moved to the town in search of help."

Children paying highest price

Somali children are paying a heavy price for the ongoing violence, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said in a statement on 31 July. Last week, seven children were killed in fighting in the capital, Mogadishu. "The current environment of conflict, displacement and insecurity in southern and central Somalia has a seriously negative impact on children's and young people's long-term psychosocial welfare and healthy development," Christian Balslev-Olesen, UNICEF's representative in Somalia, said. UNICEF has received reports of at least 150 children killed or injured through indiscriminate shelling, bombings and crossfire during the past year alone, the agency added. There were also concerns about the recruitment of children and their participation in the conflict, which had led to children becoming suspects and targets. UNICEF recently announced it was scaling-up its nutrition programme after a survey found there had been an 11 percent increase in malnutrition in the past six months. Nearly 180,000 children in Somalia are acutely malnourished, with 25,000 severely malnourished, according to UNICEF. The areas where IDPs have taken refuge after fleeing the violence in Mogadishu are at greatest risk of malnutrition.

- **Somalia: Floods Displace 2,200 Families: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 29 July 2008.**

Up to 2,200 families have been displaced by floods at Afgoye Yarey village in Lower Shabelle region southwest of Mogadishu. This was after the Shabelle River that flows through Kuntunwarey District burst its banks. The coastal rain which falls around the sea coast in southern Somalia in June and July has precipitated more rain water this year, according to residents of Kuntunwarey. Mr Osman Ahmed Salad, a journalist based in the

area, told Daily Monitor that the flood waters affected a large area, damaging crops. Farmers who were looking forward to a good harvest have been left hopeless. George Abdirashid, the director of operation of Concern Worldwide, an NGO, said that his organisation had delivered 5,000 sacks to residents of Afgoye Yarey. According to Mr Abdirashid, the sacks are meant to be filled with sand to counter the floods. While some parts of the country are flooding, Central Somalia is reporting shortage of water. Hiran and Galgadud regions which are generally pastoral areas are most affected. Mr Mohamed Hersi Aden, a resident of Galgadud region said animals; especially goats had died due to thirst. "Weaker sections of the community, including the children and the elderly are becoming more vulnerable to the drought," said Mr Aden. "A drum of water costs about \$5," he added, urging the aid agencies to come to the rescue of the affected people.

- **Tanzania: Government Announces Massive Hunt for Illegal Foreign Workers: [Arusha Times](#) (Arusha): 26 July 2008.**

A countrywide crackdown on foreign nationals working in Tanzania illegally will start soon. That would be part of a fresh bid geared at barring foreigners from occupying jobs that can be done by Tanzanians, Labour, Employment and Youth Development minister Juma Kapuya told the National Assembly in Dodoma on Monday. He made the announcement when winding up debate on his ministry's 2008/09 budget estimates, the Guardian reports. "My ministry, in collaboration with respective organs and agencies, will carry out a massive hunt for foreign nationals employed in various sectors without following laid down procedures," Prof Kapuya pointed out. He said the government would hire consultants to make a thorough review of the procedures and guidelines being followed in employing foreigners. The consultants' recommendations would accommodate the views made by lawmakers during last week's debate of the ministry's budget, he noted. The minister also announced that the ministry would review the law governing the payment of compensation to people injured at workplaces, adding that bill seeking amendments to the law would be tabled in the House "soon". "It is true that the current rates used in compensating people injured while executing their duties at workplaces are very low. That is precisely why the government has decided to amend the law to make a review of the rates possible," he said. Prof Kapuya also told the House that the ministry was collaborating with the University of Dar es Salaam's Economic and Research Bureau in studying ways to make the minimum wage a more realistic incentive for improved productivity. He said the study's findings and recommendations are expected to be released next month.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Angola: Over 40 DRC Citizens Repatriated: [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 1 August 2008.**

At least 42 citizens from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), illegally residing in Kuimba district, northern Zaire province, were on Thursday repatriated to their country of origin, ANGOP learnt. According to a source of the local Migration and Foreigners Services (SME), those citizens were detained following a micro-operation carried out by

the Police over the last two weeks. Many citizens from the DRC and western African countries have been trying to enter in Angola.

18. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB)

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: FG to Ban Foreign Medical Treatment: [Daily Champion \(Lagos\)](#): 1 August 2008.**

Senator Gyang Dantong has said that Nigerians bent ongoing abroad for medical treatment might not be allowed to do so unless their foreign trip is approved by the Minister of Health. He assured that very soon a national hospital will be established to handle serious health related cases that might be referred from various teaching hospitals across the country, saying that a law being canvassed will deal with health workers who may be found misbehaving in hospitals. Senator Dantong who is also the Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Health said he felt fulfilled when he presented the Health Bill on the floor of the Senate. He said the bill prescribed certain punishment for health workers who misbehave and it also covered the issue of reinsurance. The lawmaker while speaking in Jos, Plateau state capital said the Nation's democracy is fast growing, adding that if democracy remained stable for another eight years, the problem of water and food shortage, bad roads and others would be addressed. Describing the 40 years of military rule in Nigeria as a wasteful period of non-progress and development, he said eight years of democratic governance has proved to be more fruitful in the country. He debunked the rumour making the round that each senator will be given the sum of N500m as constituency allowance, saying they were asked to identify projects of priority in their respective constituencies while the executive arm of government will execute them. According to him, none of the senators will collect one kobo from the presidency in the name of constituency allowance, describing the rumour as a product of some mischief makers who will want to lower the reputation of senators. According to him, Nigerians don't believe in pure legislation, stressing that "if we continue with democracy for another eight years, the people by then will be more enlightened such that they will not regard boreholes as the responsibilities of legislators". Senator Dantong disclosed that the last administration of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo introduced a wonderful health policy of building a health centre in each of the local government areas of the federation but the present administration of President Umaru Yar'Adua cancelled it on the basis that the last administration did not provide for their funding of the centres, adding that the development really baffled him as it denied the rural dwellers access to good health care. While commenting on the on-going constituency delineation in the state, he said his constituency contributed over 50 per cent of the total population of the state and as such deserved four additional federal and state constituencies.

- **Nigeria: Flu Kills 1,000 Birds in Kano: [This Day \(Lagos\)](#): 1 August 2008.**

Experts from the federal government in conjunction with officials of Kano state government have depopulated and disinfected birds affected by avian influenza after discovery of an outbreak in a farm at Fagen Kawo village of Dawakin-Tofa local government area, Kano state. THISDAY checks in Kano revealed that about one thousand birds had been lost in the farm at Fagen Kawo as a result of the outbreak, while the state government and the Federal government had moved in swiftly for intervention. A statement signed by Surajo Ibrahim Gaya, an official of the state Ministry of Information and made available to THISDAY said a team led by the Kano state Project Desk Officer, Animal Health Component, Dr Sarki B Mohammed, was conducting a detailed epidemiological investigation to trace the source of the outbreak in the farm and another affected farm in Katsina state. The statement added that a team set up by the federal government headed by Professor P. A. Abdul of the veterinary teaching hospital; ABU Zaria, in company of experts from Abuja office of Avian Influenza control project and other related agencies have visited the farm and some live birds market in Kano state. Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Dr Abba Sayyadi Ruma, in a press statement enjoined the general public to continue to practice hygienic behaviors and strict bio-security measures on their farms, in the markets and report any suspicion to appropriate authorities.

- **Nigeria: 4,000 Niger Deltans Benefit From HIV/Aids Initiative: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 31 July 2008.**

Two thousand eight hundred people have received HIV counselling and testing while 900 pregnant women have benefitted from Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV in the Niger Delta Region, a statement by members of the hospital advisory committee of the Niger Delta Response (NIDAR) has said. NIDAR which commenced operation in June 2007 was set up to prevent the transmission of HIV and mitigate the impact of AIDS in five states in the Niger Delta Region. The hospital advisory committee is made up of a representative each from the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, Family Health International and the hospital management boards of the five beneficiary states. The statement said: "The project has made HIV comprehensive care (HCC) services available in one hospital in each of five states-Abia, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Edo. About 280 patients enrolled into HIV/AIDS treatment and care during the period. NIDAR has particularly benefitted the rural population in the Niger Delta by increasing their access to services while strengthening the capacity of healthcare workers to manage and sustain HIV/AIDS services." According to the statement, a meeting of members of the hospital advisory committee will soon hold to review the performance of the initiative and take decisions on how to make it sustainable beyond the expiration date of October, 2008.

- **Nigeria: First Malaria Books Launched: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 31 July 2008.**

The First Malaria books for primary and secondary schools were launched last weekend in the capital city. Speaking at the event, the National Coordinator, National Malaria

Control Programme, Dr. (Mrs). Yemi Sofola, said the books have been published to provide appropriate knowledge of malaria control interventions to children. Sofola, who maintained that malaria was a major public health problem in Nigeria, noted that children were particularly vulnerable to malaria. "It is known that malaria is responsible for 3 out of every 10 deaths of under-five children in Nigeria. If a child is infected with malaria and recovers from illness, he/she risks suffering from re-infection, she posited, adding that "children who survive from malaria attacks may develop impairments to their cognitive developments and repeated absenteeism from school will also impact on their learning negatively". She said schools provide a good entry point for malaria prevention control, hence children can be educated on the dangers of malaria through reading books such as "I Need to know". Sofola charged schools to ensure that their grounds were not conducive to mosquito breeding sites by getting rid of standing waters and receptacles. The books were presented to the National Association of Proprietors of Private School (NAPPS).

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Namibia: Foot And Mouth Disease SOS in The Kavango: [The Namibian \(Windhoek\): 1 August 2008.](#)**

The Ministry of Agriculture stopped all livestock movements in all regions north of the veterinary cordon fence yesterday following an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the Kavango Region near Divundu. The temporary ban includes grass, thatch and "other plant material", which may also not be transported, and meat exports from the Oshakati abattoir have also been stopped until further notice. Four surveillance teams have been deployed and the results of laboratory tests are expected by Saturday. "The immediate area around Kamutjona village in the Mukwe constituency 16 kilometres south-east of Divundu has been designated as a containment zone," Andrew Ndishishi, Permanent Secretary in the Agriculture Ministry, said in a statement yesterday afternoon. "The outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) is suspected to have been transmitted from wild buffalo in the nearby Mohambo Game Park, which are long-term carriers of the FMD virus." Roadblocks have been set up in the area, where 15 cattle with FMD were detected at four homesteads on Monday. The area around Kamutjona village is home to about 900 cattle belonging to villagers. "A temporary but complete ban of livestock movement from region to region in the whole buffer zone has been imposed, which are the areas north of the veterinary cordon fence. The areas include the Kavango, Oshikoto, Oshana, Ohangwena and Kunene Regions," Ndishishi said. "Cattle in quarantine camps awaiting slaughter will be allowed to be processed at the Oshakati abattoir, but a moratorium on meat exports from there has been imposed," Ndishishi added. The restrictions were necessary to allow the Directorate of Veterinary services to fully investigate the extent of the FMD outbreak. A gradual lifting of the restrictions will be announced in due course. Due to an earlier outbreak of FMD in the Caprivi Region this year, livestock movements there have been stopped already and the abattoir at Katima Mulilo has closed down for the time being.

- **Swaziland: Circumcision Gives Men an Excuse Not to Use Condoms: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 31 July 2008.](#)**

There is a growing belief among men in Swaziland that circumcision provides complete protection against HIV, a perception that worries non-governmental organisations (NGOs) battling the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world. In recent years circumcision has been lauded by Swazi public health officials as a procedure that reduces the rate of HIV transmission by about 50 percent, but it is far from the silver bullet solution some men see it as. "The problem is not with the procedure, but the way it is abused by men, so that men think they are now immune from HIV contagion," said Siphilwe Hlope, an HIV-positive woman and founder of the support group, Swazis for Positive Living (SWAPO). Hlope said SWAPO members were becoming increasingly aware of an attitude that circumcision protected men from HIV infection, while also providing an excuse not to use condoms; something Swazi men have long loathed doing. Joy Magongo, a mother of two whose husband moved out to live with his second wife after the couple discovered they were both HIV-positive, told IRIN: "Men say, 'I've been circumcised. I don't have to wear a condom.' They get infected, and they give us HIV." "He [my husband] was circumcised and felt he didn't have to wear a condom. When we found we had HIV after testing, he blamed me. He said, 'You brought HIV into this house.' It was because I tested first, when I was pregnant with my second child," she said. "My husband did not believe he could be HIV-positive because he was circumcised. I did all I could to convince him to test, and he finally did. That was the end. He took another wife and left us," Magongo said. Polygamy is legally recognised in Swaziland. "AIDS in Africa has a woman's face," Hlope said. "People think the disease originates with women. Why? Because it is the women who are tested first, when they are about to give birth." She said Magongo's story was an unintended consequence of the circumcision campaign by the country's health ministry and AIDS NGOs. "Families blame women when HIV comes into the house, and it results in all sorts of abuse, from physical abuse to denial of spousal and child support, and loss of property rights." While not disputing the advantages of male circumcision in reducing the rate of HIV transmission, Hlope said the gender dynamics of Swaziland's culture should be taken into account. The incorrect belief that circumcision was a panacea for the disease was making life more difficult and dangerous for women.

Law of unintended consequences

"It's the law of unintended consequences," said a Zambian doctor who treats HIV/AIDS patients at government hospitals, and who declined to be named. "Introducing the procedure, there was insufficient attention given to cultural factors, attitudes and human psychology." Many of the men I speak with think circumcision is like an AIDS vaccine. It's not. It's a useful tool to reduce chances of infection at a time and place where few other tools are available, but you can still contract HIV and pass it onto a partner," he said. Many of the men I speak with think circumcision is like an AIDS vaccine. It's not. It's a useful tool to reduce chances of infection at a time and place where few other tools are available. Jackson Dlamini, 25, a strapping man taking a break from weight training at a local gym, told IRIN he was considering circumcision as a way to protect himself from HIV. "This AIDS is bad. Nobody admits they are HIV [positive], but so many people are dying. I don't want to give up sex, so I am getting circumcised," Dlamini said. When told that counsellors at Mbabane Government Hospital would advise him to carry on using

condoms even after the operation, Dlamini said, "It is painful to get circumcised. If I have to wear a condom anyway, what is the point?" HIV counsellor Henry du Pont is used to hearing men express similar sentiments. "The problem with male circumcision is not the procedure, but communications," he told IRIN. "We always end up against men's stubborn dislike of condoms." A recent study by the UN Development Programme found only 20 percent of Swazi men consistently used condoms, which Hlope said probably indicated that circumcised men did not stop using condoms after circumcision, but had never used them in the first place. Education about circumcision should stress a clear and consistent message that the procedure should be part of the HIV prevention measures, she said. "Until that happens, women will be infected with HIV this way, and ... male circumcision may do more harm than good if it is misused to deny women full protection."

- **Namibia: New Bill to Combat Killer TB: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 31 July 2008.**

GOVERNMENT is working on a bill that will provide for the isolation of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) patients until they are cured. Health Minister Dr Richard Kamwi told [The Namibian](#) this week that several other countries facing similar challenges posed by the XDR-TB had taken the same route to eliminate the deadly disease. It is not yet clear when the bill will be ready for tabling in Parliament. Detaining XDR-TB patients has become a hot issue in the southern African region, with the main question being to what extent hospitals can or should isolate XDR TB patients against their will or force them to take medicine. In South Africa the Cape High Court has authorised the isolation of XDR-TB patients to protect the health of the public. The court found that the isolation of patients with infectious diseases such as XDR-TB was universally recognised in democratic societies and that isolation was justified to protect the public, even though it intruded on the privacy of those involved. Two months ago Kamwi announced that eight cases of XDR-TB were being treated in Namibia. However, they had to wait for more than a month before all the necessary drugs arrived from India. Kamwi said all eight individuals remained in isolation as the Ministry tried to curb the deadly disease. Five women and three men between the ages of 29 and 45 have been isolated at Oshakati (2), Walvis Bay (2), Katima Mulilo (1), Okahao (1), Onandjokwe (1) and Outapi (1). XDR-TB is a severe form of tuberculosis and must be treated in a hospital in order to carefully monitor treatment and ensure that the highly resistant strain does not spread to other people. Kamwi said the Ministry was busy with renovations and alterations at various health facilities like the Oshakati State Hospital to meet international standards for patient isolation and infection control. XDR is the worst form of TB and has seriously limited treatment options and chances of cure. TB can usually be treated with a course of four standard, or first-line, anti-TB drugs. However, if the drugs are misused or mismanaged, multi-drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) develops and later progresses to extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB).

- **Mozambique: Health Ministry Orders Closure of Mineral Water Company: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 1 August 2008.**

The Mozambican Health Ministry has ordered the closure of the Montemor mineral water company, which operates in the district of Namaacha, on the border with Swaziland, after finding poor hygiene conditions on the premises, reports Friday's issue of the Maputo daily "Noticias". A Ministry press release said that an inspection of the factory found that there were several problems in how the water is stored, as well as poor hygiene among the workers, and in the room where the water is bottled. The document says that Montemor has not been meeting the regulations on the quality of its water. As an example, the Health Ministry says that there is no facility for disinfecting workers' feet when they enter the bottling section, and that the bottling of the water is done manually. "The room where the bottles are filled is completely flooded and water runs freely to the storage room", the document said. "There is no prior disinfection of the empty bottles or of the lids" The Ministry says that the factory can only resume its activities after a new inspection shows that it has complied with the health inspectors' recommendations. However, Montemor manager Alipio Fernandes denies all the ministry's allegations, saying that his company has no problem at all, and submits its products to regular inspections both inside and outside the country. "There is no problem with our water. The only thing the inspection team mentioned to us concerned problems with the walls of the building, but I do not believe that this justifies the closing of the company", he claimed. He added that another problem that the inspection found was the lack of benches in the workers' changing room. In all other aspects, Montemor met the required conditions, he insisted. Fernandes said that the company will resume operations by Monday. He said that the temporary stoppage had nothing to do with the Ministry of Health, but was because the installations were being painted.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: Study to Establish HIV Impact On Universities: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

A study aimed at establishing the HIV/Aids status on university communities in East Africa is set to start this October. The project will target 18 universities, six from Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya each, according to the officials of the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA). The Ugandan institutions earmarked for the study include Makerere, Mbarara, Gulu, Nkumba, Kampala International and the Islamic Universities in Uganda. Funded by the Swedish International Development Agency, the \$700,000 (about shs1120m) project will also involve the East African Community through the Lake Victoria Basin Commission. Dr Doreen Othero, the project manager said over the weekend that the study would last two months and will establish the severity of HIV/Aids pandemic in the targeted university communities. "The survey will provide relevant contextual information which will be used for determining intervention mechanisms for improvement in management of the problem in the university communities in all aspects of the pandemic," she said. Dr Othero further said the EAC seeks strategies to reverse the impact of HIV/ Aids in terms of prevention, treatment and care and mitigation throughout its institutions, partners and stakeholders. Prof. Chacha Nyaigotti-Chacha of IUCEA said worries abound that university communities, especially students and lecturers have been much affected by the HIV/Aids pandemic. He hinted that the project might later be

extended to other universities. And with the growing number of universities in East Africa, the number of people to be screened may run into tens of hundreds. IUCEA is a regional inter-governmental organisation whose mission is to encourage and develop mutually beneficial collaboration between universities in EA and between them and governments and other organisations, both public and private. Its main objectives include facilitating contact between the universities of East Africa, providing a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education and helping in maintaining high and comparable academic standards in the region.

- **Uganda: 97 Dead as Epidemic Ravages the North: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 1 August 2008.**

The government yesterday announced an emergency plan to fight the Hepatitis E epidemic in northern Uganda after the death toll from the preventable disease rose to 97. At least 25 people have died in the two weeks since July 17 when the Ministry of Health last issued an update, while the number of infected people rose from 4,829 to 5,779 in the last fortnight. Health Minister Stephen Mallinga told journalists in Kampala yesterday that the government was launching a Shs10 billion "accelerated emergency response plan" to contain the epidemic in Kitgum, Pader and Gulu districts. Hepatitis E is an acute viral disease that can cause liver failure. The virus is transmitted to humans through consumption of drinks or food contaminated with faecal matter. An infected person develops a fever, headache, general body weakness, muscle pains and eventually develops yellow eyes and passes urine of a deep yellow colour. Hepatitis E initially struck Kitgum District in October 2007, but has since spread to Gulu, Pader and Yumbe. The Health minister revealed that while it is not easy to get infected, the appalling hygiene in the affected districts - where many people displaced by the Lord's Resistance Army insurgency live in squalid conditions in camps - had fuelled the disease's spread. "You have to take in a substantial amount of faeces -- about one gram-- to be able to get Hepatitis E," Dr Mallinga said. "I don't think anyone intends to eat faeces but because of poor hygiene they end up consuming food with faeces." He added: "The main thrust of the accelerated response will be to break the transmission chain at individual and household levels where the problem originates." The emergency response will focus on teaching residents about proper hygiene, improvement of sanitation through construction of boreholes and pit latrines in internally displaced people's camps, and monitoring infected people to ensure they are treated. Dr Mallinga told a press conference yesterday that the ministry and other partners also plan to strengthen early disease detection and reporting by village health teams and community members. "The accelerated response will also reinforce case management through provision of medicines and supplies and increase the number of qualified health workers in some health facilities," he said. Gulu District Woman MP Betty Ochan said the epidemic has affected every sub county in the Acholi sub region with women being more prone. "The Ministry of Health should send film vans to carry out sensitisation because much as we are blaming the local leaders for not doing enough to sensitise the people, the people at the centre have also not done much," she said. "We need these technical people to tell us what interventions they have put in place." The Ministry of Health has also discouraged the use of clay pots to store drinking water, which they say were found to be harbouring the Hepatitis E virus.

Instead, the population is being urged to use chlorine to purify their water before drinking. Twenty-litre jerry cans will also be given to people in the affected districts to store their drinking water. The acting World Health Organisation representative, Dr Jean Baptiste Tapko, pledged more support to control the outbreak. "We are committed to supporting the government to prevent and control this outbreak. In this regard we are supporting training of village health teams," he said. Uganda has recently been hit by a string of epidemics including; Ebola, Meningitis, cholera, Bubonic plague in West Nile and yellow fever. A rare strain of cholera ravaged the eastern districts Pallisa, Tororo, Butaleja, Mbale and Manafwa in June, killing 28 people out of 350 who were infected.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Second Round of Anti-Malaria Spraying Set to Start: [Focus Media](#) (Kigali): 29 July 2008.**

The Secretary General in the ministry of health, Caroline Kayonga has announced that a fresh round of ant-malaria spraying is due to start in the second week of August. Last year the Minisante conducted the first Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) exercise with the support of the US President's Malaria Initiative. The exercise, which took place in August, was carried out in the three districts of Kigali City (Nyarungenge, Kicikiro and Gasabo), with the idea of repeating the campaign in other parts of the country. Which is exactly what will be done in August, when the districts of Kirehe in Eastern Province and Nyanza in Southern Province will be taken care of. More than 200,000 households are targeted, covering 36 sectors, 191 cells and 1499 imidugudu. Special attention will be paid to sectors located near wet-lands, rivers like Nyabugogo, Nyabarongo, Kajevuba and lakes, as well as hydro-agriculture projects like rice fields and dams-given that this is exactly where the mosquitoes thrive. Also, areas with a significant or vulnerable population such as boarding schools, health centers hospitals, military garrisons and prisons will be specifically targeted. Ms Kayonga also remarked that a total of 866 community health workers will be trained and deployed as spraying operators during the eight-week campaign. More than 300 local leaders will be involved in the supervision, and graduates in environment health from the Kigali Institute of Health (KHI) will serve as technical coordinators under the overall supervision of health ministry. The IRS will thereafter be gradually expanded to nine districts, and in the end to the whole of the country. The spraying campaign comes as a complement the use of insecticide treated nets given free of charge to the most vulnerable such as those living with HIV, pregnant women and children for malaria prevention.

- **Rwanda: Local Aids Survey More Valuable – CNLS: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.**

The National Aids Control Commission (CNLS) values the local Demographic House Survey (DHS) as the best way for updating data on HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country. The CNLS Deputy Executive Secretary, Antoine Semukanya, Wednesday said this while commenting on the 2008 United Nations programme on HIV/AIDS global report. "We still rely on our 2005 DHS data which put the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Rwanda at 3 percent," Semukanya insisted. The next DHS is anticipated in the year

2010. Semukanya was non committal on the new report by UNAIDS which indicates the rate of HIV infections to be declining in a number of countries. The report points out that the AIDS epidemic is not over in any part of the world and is gaining pace in some. It noted that the number of people living with HIV around the world has stabilised at around 33 million and that there is evidence that prevention campaigns played a role. The report also says that about 2 million adults and children worldwide died of AIDS related illnesses in 2007 but 2.7 million were newly infected; down slightly from 3 million in 2001. "This is not the time for complacency," Elizabeth Mataka, the UN special envoy on AIDS was quoted Tuesday by IRIN news agency as warning at the launch of the report in Johannesburg, South Africa. The epidemic appears to have stabilized in Malawi, Zambia and South Africa, has started to decline in Botswana and Zimbabwe, while it is reportedly rising in Mozambique. In East Africa, the epidemic in most countries is said to have receded or remained at its present rate of about 5 percent. The data shows that young women in many African countries are much more at risk of infection than young men. It singled out South Africa to have women accounting for 90 percent of new infections among people aged 15 to 24. "Reducing women's vulnerability to HIV would have to include tackling social norms such as inter-generational sex and tolerance of male promiscuity," Mataka noted. "I think the time has come for us to say, 'yes, culture is what defines us', but if culture is killing us, then we need to be bold enough to say that," Mataka urged. The international community has on several occasions hailed Rwanda for her efforts in the fight against the pandemic.

- **Cameroon: WHO, Government Caution About Tobacco Risks: [The Post \(Buea\): 31 July 2008.](#)**

Smoking has increasingly been said to be of risk to smokers and non-smokers. Scientists say that the majority of deaths in the world today are as a consequence of tobacco consumption. They have identified two types of risks; smoking that affects the smoker and also passive smoking that affects the person who inhales the smoke, the involuntary exposure to tobacco smoking. Global statistics show that about 1, 8 billion youths between 10 and 24, with more than 85 percent in developing countries, are involved in tobacco consumption. In Cameroon, for example, 37 percent of the population are victims of smoking. About 45 percent of school-going youths have already tasted tobacco. In the university milieu, 60 percent of tobacco regular smokers are about the age of 20, indicating that youths are increasingly exposed to the risks of smoking. It is due to this increasing burden that the World Health Organisation adopted the "WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, WHO FCTC," with the objective of improving health standards by adopting measures to pool away people from smoking. According to WHO, quitting smoking has immediate as well as long term benefits for the person and his/her loved ones. The Convention was developed in response to the current globalisation of the tobacco epidemic, which is facilitated by a variety of complex factors with cross-border effects of trade liberalisation, foreign direct investment, global marketing, trans-national tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, international contraband movement and counterfeit cigarettes. Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causing many diseases and affecting the health of smokers and that of those close to them in general. The Post learnt from the President of the Inter-Ministerial Task Force for

Tobacco Control who doubles as the President of Tobacco Control Commission for Africa, Prof. Muna Walinjom, that tobacco consumption has many unpleasant effects in the human body. He said smoking causes heart diseases, stroke, respiratory diseases, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and cancer. Prof. Muna explained that smoking during pregnancy causes health problems for both mothers and babies such as pregnancy complications, premature births, low-birth-weight infants, stillbirths, miscarriage and STDs. In women, he said, smoking increases the risk of sterility or infertility and pre-term delivery. Explaining the role of the government in controlling tobacco consumption, the Director of Health Promotion in the Ministry of Public Health, Daniel Sibetcheu, said Cameroon has ratified the "WHO FCTC", which defines strategies to reduce demand as well as supply issues of tobacco. He explained that the government has passed a Ministerial Order obliging tobacco producers to carry messages stating that "tobacco seriously damages your health and that of persons close to you" on 50 percent of the packets of tobacco products. He also stated that there is article 39 of law No 2006/018 of 29 December 2006 that bans the advertising of tobacco. He explained that smoking has been banned on public places, especially hospitals and that the prices of cigarettes have been increased to reduce demand.

19. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Country Loses N10 Billion to Unhealthy Environment Annually – Committee: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 29 July 2008.**

The Federal Government said it spends a whopping N10 billion annually on poor and unhealthy environment. Chairman House of Representative committee on Environment, Duro Faseyi, who dropped this hint at this year's National Environmental Sanitation Day in Abuja, said poor level of sanitation practices in the country is alarming. He quoted a world bank report as putting the environmental cost to the country of water contamination from improper waste disposal at N10 billion each year and those lives of about 40million Nigerians being at risk. Faseyi who was represented by Dr. Austine Uganwa reiterated that the above realities of poor level of sanitation in the country resulting from improper waste disposal are indeed destructive, to sustainable growth and development. He maintained that this makes it environmentally imperative for the adoption of national and international approach to sanitation. He noted that with increased rate of population, uncontrolled urbanisation, rapid industrialisation, growing consumption patterns and practices, waste generation have continued to be on the increase with municipal wastes remaining the most visible and grave environmental problem especially in the urban areas. Faseyi said: "Again, this environmental problem is evident in the refuse heaps that dot the street and deface the landscapes of most cities which results in environmental degradation, pollution, national resources depletion and adverse health consequences". He assures his Committee's support at ensuring the realisation of best practices in the country noting that, "there is still urgent and compelling need to work towards fashioning out a functional national policy and legislation on sanitation or waste disposal system for a greater result to be achieved in

this area".In his speech,Minister of Education, Dr. Igwe Aja-Nwachukwu, emphasised on the need for a healthy environment and maintained that a clean environment is an antidote to various diseases and a sanitary environment has a double benefit effect on families.The Minister who was represented by the Director Tertiary Education, Dr. (Mrs.)Jamila Su'ara, disclosed that education sector which anchors knowledge , best practices and positive attitudes will be critical to all environmental issues maintaining that, "the more the citizens are educated, the more they will appreciate their environment and strive to protect it."

- **Nigeria: Tsunami is a Possibility in Lagos – Expert: Leadership (Abuja): 28 July 2008.**

Chairman, Nigerian Environmental Society (NES), Abia chapter, Mr Ephraim Iroakazi, said yesterday that the possibility of a tsunami occurring in Lagos could not be ruled out.Iroakazi spoke to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja after receiving an award by the People State Resources 8th Development in Nigeria Merit Award (DINMA 2008)He was recognised in the category of persons who had distinguished themselves in public service.NAN reports that 180 people from different walks of life were honoured in this year's edition of DINMA."You cannot rule out a tsunami happening in Lagos at anytime because of the ocean erosion that is already occurring in the state."And you cannot also rule out that we can have flash flooding very soon going by the prediction of some environmentalists."All of us are experiencing climate change and we can no longer predict weather conditions as a result of this," he told NAN.Iroakazi noted that the politicisation of a lot of sectors had led to the non participation of professionals in government programmes."If we are able to insulate environmental matters from politics, professional will be able to move in and assist because environmental problems affect everyone", he said.He added that the NES was partnering with governments in areas of waste management, erosion control, flooding and desertification."We advise them where necessary, but they have the responsibility of taking decisions. Our role is strictly advisory," he added. (NAN)

- **Liberia: Government Puts Forest Reforms in Jeopardy: NGO Coalition for Liberia (Monrovia): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.**

The Government of Liberia is threatening its own reform process and putting the rule of law in the forest sector at risk. Some key decisions taken over the last few months, if not reversed, could undermine efforts to reestablish the rule of law in the sector and also plunge some communities into conflict when logging restarts. The NGO Coalition for Liberia warns that the forest sector is gradually slipping back into the old ways of doing business and if not checked the country will once again be exposed to widespread illegal logging.A briefing[1] released by the NGO Coalition for Liberia today summarizes a series of issues relating to the conduct of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), including the letting of logging contracts to companies of dubious financial capacity and contracting loggers to forest areas which are the private property of local communities. The National Forestry Reform Law (2006) explicitly forbids the granting of Timber Sale Contracts and Forest Management Contracts on private land[2]. The Government of

Liberia must address these issues to ensure that the rule of law is not compromised in its quest to reopen the sector by the end of 2008. The briefing reveals that many of the first thirteen (13) logging contractors do not have the capital that is required to implement the contracts for which they submitted bids. For example, two companies including one of the most visible companies in the country failed to demonstrate that they had sufficient funds to capitalize their investments. Ironically many companies submitted unrealistically high bids, thus raising concerns amongst experts that “there may be increased pressures to over harvest to pay the high land rental price, to not follow sustainable forest management practices or to ‘cut and run’[3]” before their contract is over. Allowing companies without sufficient capital into the sector presents a major risk for the future as they will be unable to fulfill their obligations to the government and the communities. Liberians will then once again lose our forests yet be denied the income the government expects from logging. The NGO Coalition calls on the FDA Managing Director, Hon. John T. Woods, and the Inter-Ministerial Concession Committee (IMCC) to make public the bid evaluation and due diligence reports for all bidders to enable members of the public judge for themselves the types of investment these investors are bringing into the sector. The Coalition is also concerned that the Government’s decision to allocate three contracts for forest in Bokomu and Gou Nwolaila Districts violates the rights of the communities in those districts. In a resolution[4] presented to county officials, in the presence of the FDA Managing Director and other senior official, a representative of the UN Mission in Liberia, as well as representatives of several logging companies, these communities made it clear that they would resist any attempt to log in their area without their consent. By refusing to address the communities concerns, the FDA is creating a situation that will pitch the communities against the companies that have been granted contracts in the area. This is a dangerous precedent and could backfire with serious consequences, including conflicts between the loggers and those communities.

Editor’s Note:

The NGOs Coalition for Liberia is an informal network of organizations working to promote sustainable management of natural resources in Liberia. The Coalition comprises of fifteen (15) organizations working on a range of issues relating to natural resource management and conservation.

[1] Reform in Jeopardy: reflections on the forest sector reform process in Liberia, July 31, 2008

[2] Sections 5.3b(ii) & 5.4b(ii) of the National Forestry Reform Law (2006) of Liberia

[3] UN Panel of Experts on Liberia, Report S/2008/371, 12 June 2008

[4] This resolution, signed by all the local government officials in the two districts, the traditional leaders of those communities, and a cross section of the citizens from the two districts was presented to the Gbarpolu County leadership on July 15, 2008. More than 100 persons attended the meeting to develop and present this resolution. Almost all of

them had walked for several hours, some for as many as sixteen (16) hours simply to make their case to the FDA.

- **Ghana: Newmont Commits Itself to Safe Use of Cyanide: [Public Agenda](#) (Accra): 1 August 2008.**

The use of cyanide compounds in mining is frequently becoming a controversial issue; environmental groups often focus on the acutely toxic properties of many cyanide compounds to humans. Mining companies have received a lot of criticisms from environmental groups in Ghana on the use of cyanide and its associated problems. But the mining industry has argued that the dilute cyanide concentrations employed, the methods of use, and the rapid decomposition of these compounds make cyanide extraction a very safe alternative. In order to solve these associated problems the International Cyanide Management Institute established a code which ensures that mining companies comply with the best principles and practices in their use of cyanide in their operations. The good news however is that Newmont Ghana Gold Limited (NGGL) Ahafo Operation has been fully certified as fully compliant with the International Cyanide Management Code (ICMC) by the International Cyanide Management Institute as part of its effort to ensure the good use of cyanide in their operations. According to Newmont Ghana's Regional Vice President for Environment and Social Responsibility, Mr. Nick Cotts, the mine was initially certified as compliant in March 2008. In a statement in Accra, the Vice-President said in order to become certified as fully compliant by the ICMI, Newmont Ghana completed both the pre-operational and operational certification process using independent auditors to ensure compliance with the Code requirements. It said the process began with the International Cyanide Management Institute (ICMI) receiving and accepting a Detailed Audit Findings Report of Newmont Ghana's Ahafo Operation. The Detailed Audit Findings Report, which was prepared by an independent third-party auditor, involved evaluating Newmont's Ahafo Operation in line with the ICMI's Verification Protocol. According to Mr. Cotts the mine was found to be in full compliance with the Code's Principles and Standards of Practice after the detailed Audit Findings Report. "The Ahafo Operation will be subsequently re-audited every three years to evaluate the Mine's continued compliance with the Code. Our Operations team has worked hard to meet the strict procedures required by this Code and their efforts have been rewarded with Code certification and we recognize their efforts," he said. The International Cyanide Management Code, also known as the Cyanide Code, is a voluntary program adopted by the gold mining industry to promote responsible management of cyanide which is extensively used in gold mining.

- **Liberia: Firestone Linked to Pollution And Abuses: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 31 July 2008.**

The Firestone Rubber Plantation Company in Harbel, Margibi County is making claims of gains it is making in its activities since the sitting of the Ellen-led government, such as housing and education, but a local environmental group thinks otherwise. Save My Future Foundation (SAMFU) says the company is abusing its workers and also polluting the Farmington River. Allegation of abuse and pollution of the Farmington River is not

extraordinary as far as the operation of the company is concerned, as most organizations such as Green Advocates have been saying, but the management from time to time rubbished those allegations. However, SAMFU said it has conducted investigation and documented plethora of abuses being carried on by the company. Among other things, the group in a document released last Thursday claimed Firestone is not doing enough to stop the pollution of the Farmington River in Owens Grooves, Grand Bassa County as well as bad labor practices. The group also noted in its documentary that the government has failed to take legal and any punitive action against the Firestone Rubber Plantation, adding "it appears that the company is above the law". Releasing the report on behalf of SAMFU at a launch ceremony, Project Officer Robert Nyahn said the environmental conditions at the Firestone have not changed and that wastes are still affecting the citizens of the area, something he urged the Firestone Management to handle as speedily as possible. That besides, the SAMFU official said Firestone is underpaying its employees. "In 2004, Firestone reaped over US\$7.2 billion as profits but was awarded by an American organization as the "worst and most underpaid company of the year," he recalled. Mr. Nyahn noted that while it is true that the company has improved its housing sector and has increased the construction of schools in the various divisions, he noted that many of the locals who have worked in the Plantation for the rest of their life are still living in terrible conditions. He pointed out that the pollution of the Farmington River does not only affect the inhabitants of the area, but the species of the river as well. He said "Firestone is not environment friendly. What they are doing now will affect the river over the next ten years, if nothing is done to stop the bad environment habits. Also speaking at the program, a resident of the Owens Grooves Community, Robert Benson said they are considering firing a lawsuit against Firestone Management for what he called "the manner in which they are treating them". He said they're consulting with political leaders, which include representatives, superintendent and other relevant government officials before taking the action. When the Public Relation Manager of the Firestone Plantation, Mr. Rufus Karmoh, was contacted, he declined to comment on grounds that they have not received any copy of the report.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Progressive Climate Change Strategy Announced for Country: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 29 July 2008.**

South Africa is making moves to become a low-carbon economy, says Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Marthinus van Schalkwyk. The minister announced on Monday that a progressive policy on climate change had been agreed upon by Cabinet that would help ensure that the country was helping prevent global temperatures from rising a further two percent. The world is currently experiencing a mean global temperature rise of 0.7 percent above pre-industrial levels, measured from about the year 1750, this allows about 1.3 percent of leeway in which to make concerted efforts to halt the global rise of temperature. One of the solutions is the possibility of a carbon tax being imposed on business. At the moment South Africa's per capita output is about nine tons of carbon dioxide, said Mr van Schalkwyk. The country is a relatively large emitter of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, largely because 90 percent of the country's energy comes from burning its large coal deposits. The Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, introduced

the country's first carbon tax in his Budget Speech in February. And now, Cabinet has mandated the National Treasury to study a further carbon tax as a potential option. Carbon capture and storage (CCS) is likely to become mandatory for all new coal-fired power stations, said the minister. While this technology is still in development, all new coal-fired power stations will have to display a readiness to implement this technology, reporters heard. Alternative market mechanisms besides a carbon tax or carbon storage options are also being studied. Under the scenario planning presented by the minister, which is the result of more than two years of work by his department, South Africa will see its greenhouse gas emissions gradually increasing over the next few years before reaching a plateau of about 550 megatons of carbon equivalent. Once a plateau of about 100 megatons carbon equivalent above the current level (measured in 2003) of 446 megatons of carbon equivalent is reached there will be a decline, towards a low-carbon economy, if action is taken now. And this will not cost the country any jobs, said Mr van Schalkwyk. Studies by his department have shown that there will be no net loss of jobs for the economy as it undergoes a transition to a low-carbon economy. Certain traditional jobs will be shed, but new jobs in the industry will be created. The minister described the overall approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation adopted by government as "progressive, ambitious and far-reaching". The scenario outlined by the minister points to a ceiling of a maximum of two degrees Celsius in temperature rise above pre-industrial levels, around the year 1750, that government is working with. Mr van Schalkwyk said greenhouse gas emissions must peak, plateau and decline for the country to survive the onslaught of global warming. "This means it [greenhouse gas emissions] must stop growing at the latest by 2020-2025, stabilise for up to ten years and then decline in absolute terms," according to the department. South Africa is taking strong steps as a developing country, which it is not obliged to do as in terms of international protocols. It is seen as a developing country with concurrent voluntary deviations from baseline emissions encouraged. However, the country believes that "substantial" deviations below business-as-usual baselines [emissions] are required by developing countries. For the developed world, South Africa is insisting that 1990 levels are the required baseline for their mandatory reductions in greenhouse gases, with greater action on emissions reduction expected particularly from the United States, said Mr Van Schalkwyk. Citing the International Panel on Climate Change report, the minister said that avoiding dangerous climate change requires developed countries to reduce their emissions compared to 1990 levels by 80 per cent to 95 per cent by 2050, and by 25 per cent to 40 per cent by 2020. South Africa, for its part, will continue to strive towards usage of renewable energy and nuclear energy, while preventing new coal-fired power stations from going ahead without the requisite technology to minimise the damage the cause. Nuclear energy remains a central plank of South Africa's energy planning. "As government we strongly believe in the potential of nuclear [energy] to be part of the solution," he said, adding that government is keen to scale up the use of renewable energy sources as well, as long as the cost-gap between renewable, coal and nuclear energy production could be reduced.

- **Angola: Environment Ministry to Design Climate Changes Adaptation Programme: [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 29 July 2008.**

The drafting of National Programme on Adaptation and its respective action plan constitutes one of the premises of the Angolan strategies for the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climatic Changes and the Kyoto Protocol. The strategy, approved in June this year by the Cabinet Council and published in the State gazette, is a recommendation from the Conference of the Convention of the parties concerned. According to Lucas Miranda, who was speaking on behalf of the Ministry of Urbanisation and Environment, in the framework of the First National Workshop on Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climatic Changes, the changes in climatic parameters are evident at world level, hence the need for measures that allow an adaptation to the alterations. The creation of human, legal and material bases for the inventory of sources of emission of greenhouse effect gases are also part of the strategy. It will serve as a simplified and direct channel of communication and information on urgent and immediate adaptation needs in Angola. It also aims at building a national capacity of Angolan experts in the field of vulnerability and adaptation to climatic changes, by securing a favourable environment for the implementation of the said convention, as well as capacities to prepare the national communication on the matter. By ratifying the Convention in 2002 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2007, Angola got committed to fulfilling what is outlined in these two international juridical instruments. The strategy also aims at establishing the framework for the country's intervention in legislative, technical and human domains, so as to contribute for the stabilisation of the sources of emission of greenhouse effects gases and the Angolan technological development. The I National Seminar on Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climatic Changes gathered national technicians and officials from various ministries to assess the vulnerability and adaptation to the effects caused by climatic changes. The workshop was held in two sessions. The first session was technical and took place last week and the second one, at high level, was attended by various government entities, among them, the ministers of Planning, Ana Dias Lourenço, and Territory Administration, Graciano Domingos. With the holding of the seminar, the Ministry of Urbanisation and Environment (MINUA) intends to promote a greater networking among the various participating technicians and politicians in the areas of planning, natural resources management, environment, territory administration and calamities management. The seminar was lectured by Angolan and foreign experts from Sierra Leon and El Salvador, and handled such topics as "Sustainable Development and Adaptation in Africa" and "Incorporating adaptation to national and local policies".

- **Namibia: Focus Turns to Environmental Rehabilitation As Farmers Lose Out: [Namibia Economist](#) (Windhoek): 1 August 2008.**

Namibia's tourism conservancy areas, although generating sizeable income, have not fully benefited the communities because they are not being run in an economic and sustainable manner. NNF Executive Director Chris Brown and Dr Kalumbi Shangula, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, after signing of the CPP-MoU this week. UNDP Resident Representative to Namibia, Simon Nhongo, witnesses the occasion. This was the view of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative to Namibia, Simon Nhongo, who said that three quarters of the country's population was dependent on communal land, with most not being able to use the land sustainably. Nhongo was speaking in Windhoek this week at the

launch of the Country Pilot Partnership (CPP) programme in which the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) is set to receive US\$346 000 for capacity building projects to curb land degradation and encourage proper and economic land use in the country. The CPP programme is a joint venture between the government, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the UNDP. It will run for the next five years in different regions of the country. A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the NNF Executive Director, Chris Brown, and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism's Permanent Secretary, Dr. Kalumbi Shangula. Nhongo said a number of environmental rehabilitation programmes have been prevented by land degradation, leaving many communal farmers at the receiving end. "For example, Namibia's income from conservancies has steadily grown from nothing in 1994 to almost N\$20 million in 2005. However, on a global scale, these economic benefits are more than offset by damage and degradation amounting to between US\$350 and US\$870 million a year," said Nhongo. Grootberg Lodge is the only example of a well-run conservancy in Namibia. Situated in the Kunene Region, the N\$4.5 million lodge is run by the #Khoadi //Hoas community. About 3 200 people live in the conservancy, which is 90 km west of Kamanjab. A partnership agreement to run the establishment was signed in 2005 between the conservancy and some private investors. An income of about N\$300 000 was expected to be generated in its first year of operation. The recent spate of floods and droughts has exposed Namibia's vulnerability to global problems such as the effects of climate change, lessening food yields and eventually, land degradation.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: Lake Victoria Degradation Threatening Livelihoods: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 1 August 2008.](#)**

A few years ago, Charles Kyagaba used to sell up to 300kg of fresh fish at the Gaba landing site near the Ugandan capital of Kampala each day, but now the situation is markedly different. "These days, you sometimes go out there and come back empty-handed," he said. "My income has declined by over 70 percent and the impact on my family's livelihood is serious. I am struggling to make ends meet, trying to establish other businesses to balance the situation." Generally, Kyagaba said, there was now less fish in the lake. "I have had to change my children's schools to ones that I can afford," he told IRIN. "The fishing business is no longer sustainable and many of my friends feel frustrated. I am thinking about selling some of my assets to diversify my options; I am beginning to fail to provide some essential needs for my family." Kyagaba is not alone. According to environmentalists, over-fishing, pollution and other human activities along Lake Victoria as well as climate change are threatening to destroy Africa's largest freshwater lake resource. Lake Victoria is the second-largest freshwater lake in the world, covering nearly 68,800 sqkm. It is shared by Kenya (6 percent by area), Uganda (43 percent) and Tanzania (51 percent). Its basin, according to specialists, has the fastest-growing population in East Africa - more than 30 million people. Much of this population derives its livelihood directly or indirectly from the lake.

Pollution

Frank Mulamuzi, an environmental advocate and executive director of the Ugandan NGO, the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), said the lake was mainly threatened by pollution. Across the three East African nations, the lake had become a reservoir for excessive untreated effluents, including sewage, industrial waste and other chemicals. "Pollution is a serious problem," he said. "This has been brought about by carelessness of both the communities and governments along the lake. We don't know how long it will go on because we have talked to everybody who could listen, but the authorities are more interested in development." Uganda, Mulamuzi added, had deficient sewage and industrial wastewater plants, small-scale workshops that were polluting the lake with waste oil from parking lots and car-repair garages. The sewers in Kampala drain into the lake "but information indicates that only 10 percent of the sewage gets treated". Fred Mukisa, Uganda's minister in charge of fisheries, told IRIN that apart from pollution, over-fishing was depleting the fish reserves, with the apparent decline in fish harvests forcing some processors to close shop. Those remaining were operating at less than 50 percent capacity, due to reduced stocks. "The problem is huge," the minister said. "We have many players licensed to go fishing by local governments. To mitigate this, we are planning to again centralise licensing because local governments are more interested in the revenue not conservation." Meanwhile, earnings from fish exports keep declining. "We were earning over \$150 million from fish exports in the past years but I don't think that we shall even earn \$90 million this year," Mukisa added. Jackson Wadanya, acting head of the fisheries department, blamed a policy he described as a "free-for-all" in the fishing sector. Up to 55,000 fishermen with an estimated 1,000 fishing boats were operating on the Ugandan side of the lake without restrictions on new entrants. "Anybody attracted by the huge demand available on the market can get his boat and line up his gear to start fishing," he said. "This has created a lot of pressure on the lake and the fishing gear used is not the best to allow the resource to renew." The department, he added, could not determine how soon the situation could be reversed, but a community management programme has been drawn up, geared towards educating the population about proper fishing methods. "We also plan to promote the use of fishing gear that [allows] the fish to grow as mostly young fish are being caught currently," he said. On pollution, Wadanya said the landscape around the lake was being destroyed, as agro-chemicals were entering the lake. "The flower factories are all located along the lake in all three countries and they use a lot of chemicals that end up in the lake," he said.

Water levels

A recent report by the UN Environment Programme listed Lake Victoria as among African water bodies whose water level is falling due to environmental degradation and climatic changes. It noted that the loss of trees and wetlands, which form the Lake Victoria water catchment, was partly to blame for the receding shoreline. "Over 75 percent of the wetlands have been significantly affected by human activities and 13 percent are severely degraded," UNEP noted. Water levels, it added, had started dropping considerably in 2002. Other experts blame Uganda's two power dams at the Owen Falls for at least 55 percent of the decline in water levels, arguing that they routinely release twice the permitted water volume. As a result, the water level reached an 80-year low in 2006. Experts also blame rapid population growth, estimated at 7 percent within 100km of

the Lake Victoria catchment area, saying this reflected a growing dependence and pressure on the lake's resources."Population growth around the continent's largest lake is significantly higher than the rest of Africa," the UNEP report stated. "If they are not managed properly, the continent's lakes face loss of sustainability for future generations."The lake surface also has an algae mass, which looks like green paint. Specialists say this is because of increased pollution from human and industrial waste. The main reason for the spread of algae on the surface is the presence of increased nutrients, such as phosphates and nitrogen, substances that algae feed on.Chemiphar, a Belgian laboratory with a branch in Kampala, tested the algae on the lake water and said it was toxic. "From the preliminary results, cyanobacteria like Anabaena were found in the water samples. These can be very toxic for plants and animals, including humans, because of the toxin microcystin," it said."They can accumulate in the fish tissues, liver, intestines and gallbladder, which means that secondary contamination by eating toxic fish from an infected pond or lake is possible."

Fish stock

According to the regional Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation (LVFO), the annual fishery yield from the lake is estimated at about 800,000-1,000,000 tonnes, valued at US\$350-400 million.However, while the total catch from the lake has been increasing over the years due to more intense fishing, changes in the contribution of different species have been observed. The Nile perch stock, according to LVFO, was estimated at 40 percent of the unexploited level but "Dagaa" is considered underexploited. However, the Nile Tilapia, which is one of the more popular fish types, appears to be fully exploited.As a result, it is proposed to prohibit fishing within 200m of the lake shore to create a buffer within which to monitor the tilapia.

- **Tanzania: Government Told to Stop Lake Natron Project: [East African Business Week](#) (Kampala): 26 July 2008.**

The Lake Natron Consultative Group (The Group) has urged the Tanzania government to ensure that no further processes related to the proposed soda ash project are undertaken before the Integrated Management Plan for the Lake Natron Ramsar site is completed.The Secretary of the Group Mr. Ken Mwathe, urged Tanzania government last week that the plan should be preceded by detailed studies, including the ecology and breeding behaviour of the lesser flamingos and cost benefit analysis. The Group was responding to a statement by the National Development Corporation (NDC), the co-investor with Tata Chemicals Limited (TLC) of India in the proposed \$ 500 million soda ash project on L. Natron, Northern Tanzania.In its statement the NDC says the project was given "negative publicity", and NDC was concerned about the environment and has responded by shifting the project site to 32 kilometres away.NDC also said it had commissioned a new Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and Integrated Management Planning process for the Ramsar site. The Group maintains that NDC being a player in the process, is not in a position to determine the fate of the proposed project and that the woes now facing the project were largely attributable to NDC for its failure to advice the government on the need to follow the due process as

prescribed by Tanzanian laws. Following this, the ESIA report was faulted by the Technical Advisory Committee of the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) on Nov 2, 2007 and was overwhelmingly rejected during the public hearing on January 23, 2008.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Wood Processing - Four Clandestine Industries Suspended: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): 28 July 2008.**

In order to put an end to illegal exploitation of the forest, the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife last Friday, July 25, suspended the activities of some wood processing industries in Obala for failure to present documents authorising them to carry out the trade. The concerned companies include FOTRAB, SFEES, ENTRECOTE, ANGE BOIS, WEMA and Roboterie Nono Geremie. FOTRAB and SFEES had the authorisation to function but their wood was impounded because they failed to state the origin of the wood they were processing. Stamps were placed on wood to deter them from selling it. The other four companies saw their wood seized because they had no authorisation to function. According to the chief of the National Control Brigade, Yadjé Belo, the suspensions fall in line with government's policy to cleanse the forestry exploitation sector which started in Douala last February. Before the closure of companies in Obala, Mr Yadjé Belo said there had been a sensitisation mission to the area calling on the saw mill owners to regularise their situation or face eventual closure. Only companies who failed to heed to this call were closed. According to the chief of the National Control Brigade, the seized wood will be put on auction sale. Meanwhile, M Noah Leopold, owner of ENTRECOTE saw mill, attributed his clandestine activities to administrative bottlenecks. He said he had presented his papers to the Ministry of Forestry and Wild Life and paid all the financial dues, yet he has been unable to obtain the documents to function. According to the ministerial decision, these companies cannot have any document approving the processing, transportation and exploitation of wood. However, the companies will be reinstated, should they regularise their situation.

20. ENERGY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Shell Foresees Oil Shortage After Militants' Attack: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 30 July 2008.**

The Anglo-Dutch oil giant Royal Dutch Shell said yesterday it may not be able to meet some supply contracts at its major Bonny terminal in Nigeria after militants attacked its pipeline on Monday. Shell declared a "force majeure" for the remainder of July, August and September, allowing it to suspend contract obligations due to exceptional circumstances. It did not indicate the quantity of crude involved. Global oil prices rose on Monday as the oil giant cut output in the Niger Delta region, after militants sabotaged at least two of its pipelines supplying crude. Militants from the Movement for the

Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) claimed that "heavily armed" of their men attacked two Shell pipelines in the main oil producing region in the region. A Shell spokesman confirmed damage to the Kula pipeline but was unable to confirm the militants' claims of an attack to a second pipeline. It is the second time in two months that Shell has been forced to declare force majeure, having cut production June 20 at its offshore Bonga oilfield because of an attack by the same militant group. It resumed full production only on July 9.

- **Nigeria: NNPC's \$12 Million Payment to Niger Delta Militants: Vanguard (Lagos): 2 August 2008.**

When news broke last Tuesday, July 22, that the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) paid \$6 million monthly to militants to protect oil pipelines in the Niger-Delta, it has all been disquiet not just in the militants' frontier but in the Presidency as well. Not even the later denial by the Group Managing Director of the NNPC, Engr. Abubakar Lawal Yar'Adua that he never told the House of Representatives Committee on Finance investigating remittances into the Federation Accounts by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that \$12 million was paid to militants to protect the Chanomi Creek crude pipeline when repairs were effected on it, last year, has calmed tempers. Yar'Adua was quoted to have told the Committee that, "The price we pay is very high. It is difficult to get expatriates to work in the Niger-Delta. We paid militants \$12 million in two months because we are losing \$81 million to the problem of Chanomi pipeline in Delta State".

MEND denies Yar'Adua's claim

Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND) was the first to respond to the NNPC averment some hours after the session with the House of Representatives Committee. It said in a statement signed by its spokesman, Jomo Gbomo that the MEND "disassociates itself from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) payment claim of \$12 million to militants for pipeline protection as stated by its Group Managing Director, Abubakar Lawal Yar'Adua." MEND, however acknowledged that huge payments have been made to some criminal gangs in Delta State as protection fee, adding, "This gang is not a genuine part of the Niger Delta agitation. They can not be labeled as militant freedom fighters. From our knowledge, the NNPC disbursed over \$25 million for the scam, which was shared by the top commanders of the military Joint Task Force, senior government officials in the Delta State Governor's office, top management staff in the NNPC and the Presidency." MEND will never sell its birthright for a bowl of porridge when the impoverished masses in the region continue to live in abject poverty. It is for refusing such bribes that Henry Okah is still being held captive today. To prove that we are not a part of this deal, the Chanomi Creek pipeline and other major pipelines will be destroyed within the next 30 days," he stated. But NNPC in a counter reaction by its Group General Manager (Public Affairs), Dr. Levi Ajuonuma, said Yar'Adua was quoted out of context, and that the contract that was awarded for the security of the pipeline was not to a militant group but to a community-based company based on the proposal of the communities. His words: "We did not pay MEND or any militant group. All we did was

to award the pipeline repairs contract to a community-based company and some community group who assured us that they can protect the lines were also engaged by the corporation."The denials and counter denials are said to have prompted President Musa Yar'Adua to quietly direct that his office be furnished with the actual details of what happened in the Chanomi pipeline repairs.It has also forced the Ijaw Youth Leadership Forum (IYLF), the umbrella group of Ijaw youth leaders and activists in the militant wing, last weekend, to constitute a five-man committee to probe the claim and counter-claim of the NNPC and MEND that \$12 million was paid to militants or otherwise and also verify the actual statement made by the NNPC boss.

Saturday Vanguard's findings

Investigations by Saturday Vanguard, has however shown that there is more to the NNPC story. It was gathered that the company that actually did the security and construction job on the Chanomi crude pipeline is Fenog Nigeria Limited and it was paid \$105,000 per month for the three months that it executed the contract and not \$6 million per month.The company is owned by a Niger-Deltan from the Urhobo ethnic nationality. The firm did a lot of public relations for youths and communities in the area to allow them do their job and there was no friction throughout its stay. In fact, the job was expected to be finished in six months but the company performed in three months and received accolade from the NNPC.It was, nevertheless, learnt that the contract was sublet to Fenog by another company. A source said that the NNPC had earlier paid out \$12m to unknown people or company to do the job but it was not executed before the contract was awarded to FENOG."The details should be in the handover notes to Engr. Yar'Adua by his predecessor. He should check and find out who collected the money and for what. But if you are talking about the repairs of the Chanomi crude oil pipeline, I am aware that Fenog was paid \$105, 000," a source said.

\$12 million fee is a scam

According to the source, "This \$12 million thing is a deal between some top officials of the NNPC and some people who claimed that they would protect the pipelines. The government should probe and find out what actually happened to the money because the money was paid out to people who did not do any job during the regime of the former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.It was not paid by Engr. Yar'Adua. He does not know anything about it. But because he is now the head of the NNPC, he should find out who the money was paid to in the first contract that was not done and let Nigerians know."If it is a militant leader that collected the money, Nigerians want to know. They want to know if he came to the NNPC to collect the money in cash, or a cheque was issued to him, which bank did he cash it and what for?"

EFCC should take over

"The searchlight is not on the NNPC alone. They should ask the people that handled the matter at the Petroleum Products and Marketing Company (PPMC) questions and hand them over to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) once the culprits

are identified because this is clearly a scam," he added. The informant, nevertheless, stated, "It is a company that did the job, not a militant group. There is no way a contract can be awarded to a militant group, that is very clear. Whoever collected the money did so in the name of a company." A Gbaramatu community leader contacted by Saturday Vanguard said that two pipelines, one conveying gas and the other crude oil, were damaged by militants in 2006 at the wake of the attacks by the MEND, that year, and since then, repairs could not be effected due to insecurity in the region. Both the Warri Petrochemical and Refinery Company and the Kaduna Refinery were out of production then. As a result of the rupture of the crude oil pipeline, Engr. Yar'Adua was saddened by the situation, which was not remedied by the past administration. He, therefore, embarked on measures to repair the crude oil pipeline and luckily for him, the present governor of the state, Dr. Emmanuel Uduaghan, had been able to create an enabling environment for the NNPC to access the damaged pipelines and discuss with the host communities.

Community denies \$12 million deal

The community leader explained that, "When tension died down, the NNPC approached the communities- that they wanted to effect repairs. One of the oil companies and the NNPC had even gone to some other places and paid money to secure the pipeline before they came to the communities." "When they came to us, we told them that they should go and settle with the militants who blew up the pipeline in the first instance so that they would not come again when they would be repairing it. We are only host communities. We did not see \$12m. They should identify those the money was paid to." Saturday Vanguard was told that a company known as De Wayles handled the repairs of the gas pipeline, belonging to the Nigeria Gas Company (NGC) while NNPC promised additional generators to the one supplied by the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) to the communities. "As for the crude oil pipeline, it was Julius Berger that was to do the repairs but because the company had refused to do a road contract in the creek, which the communities wanted the Delta State government to award to it, some aggrieved youths insisted that they would not allow the company to carry out the repairs on the pipeline if it would not handle the road project." "It appears that Fenog was brought in by another company. I can't remember the name of the company that was to do the job. Fenog must have done a job for the NNPC and because they were satisfied with its performance, the firm was awarded a contract to carry out the repairs. The company cooperated with the communities and it had no problem whatsoever in doing its job. They did not hire houseboats, as some companies do. They lived with the people in the communities where they were working and they made the villagers to like them," he said.

Delta govt denies NNPC deal

Also, a source close to the Delta State government said it was funny to link the state government to the sharing of money with militants and NNPC officials when it is common knowledge that the state government inaugurated the Delta Waterways Security Committee (DWSC) to ensure security on the waterways within the first few days of

assumption of office by Governor Uduaghan, and the committee has performed creditably."When some Indian workers were kidnapped by a criminal gang in the state, a staff of the Niger-Benue Transport Company (NBTC), Mr. Daniel Tishene was abducted. The DWSC intervened and ensured their release without paying ransom to the kidnappers. It has also facilitated the return of companies to the state and helped the Joint Task Force (JTF) on the Niger-Delta in recovering the weapons seized from its men by a militant group, the Underdogs, without paying money to the group," he added. The official said it was ridiculous to say that some officials of the state government shared \$25 million with the NNPC under the guise of payment to a criminal gang to protect pipeline when it was already clear that the policy of Governor Uduaghan is that ransom would not be paid to militants. The commander of the Joint Task Force on the Niger-Delta, Brigadier-General Nanven Rintip also dismissed the allegation that the task force shared \$25 million with the NNPC.

MEND stands by its story

MEND spokesman, Jomo Gbomo, in a response to an electronic inquiry by Saturday Vanguard on the award of the security contract to a firm and not a militant group said, "The fact is that the GMD of the NNPC gave the true detail of what happened. Any other statement after that by the NNPC is damage control. Using a company as a cover is not new in perfecting a fraud in Nigeria." Responding to a question on why he referred to the group in Delta State, also known as MEND, as criminals when the group is known to have carried out the struggle in the past, but, only simmered down to allow the state government and the Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (DESOPADEC) to perform, he said, "As for the group we referred to as criminals, they are not MEND. We are aware they have usurped a legitimate struggle and turned it into an enterprise. There is so much to be done other than expecting some generators in a community or other myopic expectations. Our agitation is bigger than that," Jombo explained.

We are not criminals, a militant leader

But a militant leader in the state said, "We started the struggle and we are still in the struggle. Don't mind them when they say or do anything they like in the name of MEND. That is what landed Henry Okah in trouble. I am, however, telling you that we are the same. The matter will be sorted out. You know that when the Yar'Adua government came in, there were discussions with the militant groups, through the Vice President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, including Henry Okah." The peace process is still on, even though the IYLF had pulled out for the second time because of the secret trial of Henry Okah and other breaches by the Federal Government. It is just that some people are claiming to know about the struggle more than the others, otherwise, we are fighting for the same thing. It is very wrong to say that a group in Delta, which is known to be in the struggle, is criminal. It is an uncharitable statement," the source said.

- **Gambia: Energy SoS Warns Against Illegal Connections, Wind Energy System for Batokunku: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 1 August 2008.**

Ousman Jammeh, the secretary of state for Energy, has warned against illegal electricity connections, saying that Nawec, the national water and electricity company, will enhance its surveillance capacity to detect this malpractices, expose and prosecute the culprits. The Energy secretary of state also disclosed that Nawec is embarking on a massive introduction of pre-payment meters to minimise the problem of unpaid bills. These statements were contained in a speech delivered on behalf of SoS Jammeh, yesterday, by Babucarr Jallow, the permanent secretary at the Department of State for Energy, during the official commissioning of Batokunku Wind Project, funded by a German engineer, Peter Weissferdt and his wife Gitta Weissferdt. "The development of energy infrastructure is an expensive business and Nawec needs the financial resources to maintain and expand its services to deserving people of The Gambia," said SoS Jammeh, while appealing to Nawec customers, including the people of Batokunku to honour their dues to Nawec. According to him, the Batokunku Wind Project marks the beginning of a new innovation, as the project consists of single wind turbines capable of generating 150KVA for the whole village. "Eighty (80) compound have been connected to the distribution grid of the project and will be supplied with electricity generated from the wind turbine. The excess energy will be sold to Nawec through its grid," he said. SoS Jammeh highlighted the significance of the project, as it utilises a natural resource that is "renewable and undepletable". He emphasised that under the dynamic leadership of President Jammeh, energy and renewable energy in particular, has been given the priority it deserves. "This is because the government of The Gambia is aware of the benefits of utilising all forms of renewable energy for the socio-economic transformation of our country. We cannot rely on the petroleum resources alone to meet our development challenges in the energy sector," he said. For his part, Alagie Gaye, the director general of the Public Regulatory Authority (Pura), said the occasion marks an important milestone, which started some time ago with an initiative by the residents of Batokunku to bring energy to their community using renewable energy. According to him, his institution received an application for a license to distribute electricity at Batokunku in Kombo South in December 2007. He thanked NAWEC for their cooperation, noting that the wind energy will go a long way in boosting the morale of the village. Peter Weissferdt, a German engineer and the man behind the whole initiative, said the project started in 1999 and a 150KVA wind converter with a total height of 40 meters and 27m in diameter was shipped to The Gambia. "The basic idea was to produce green electricity with the wind converter, supplying its energy more or less free of charge to the people of the village," Mr Weissferdt emphasised. Other speakers at the ceremony included Water Klotz, the task force leader of Nawec, Alagie Fafa Jatta, the Alkalo of Batokunku and Alex Dacosta, the senior communication officer of Pura, who chaired the ceremony.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Petrol, Diesel Prices Likely to Drop, But Paraffin to Rise: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 1 August 2008.**

THE minerals and energy department is widely expected to announce decreases in petrol and diesel prices today, but paraffin may go up, according to industry forecasts yesterday. The expected increases in paraffin prices will worsen the financial burden on the poor, many of whom still rely on the product for cooking and heating. According to forecasts on energy group Shell's website, the petrol price could drop next Wednesday by as much as 10c/l and diesel by as much as 3c/l. But paraffin users should brace themselves for an increase of between 18c/l and 21c/l. The wholesale price of paraffin last month increased by 54,4c/l. Central Energy Fund figures show that the average daily prices of petrol and diesel over-recovered in the period between June 27 this year and Wednesday this week. Paraffin over the same period continued to underrecover, dashing hopes of a reprieve for users. In its update, the fund showed that petrol had overrecovered by 31,7c/l, while the 0,05% and the 0,005% diesel versions overrecovered by 19,3c/l and 20,6c/l respectively, raising the likelihood of a price drop next month. Paraffin, on the other hand, underrecovered by 0,3c/l. Minerals and energy department spokesman Bheki Khumalo said this week the department was concerned about the plight of millions of mainly poor paraffin users who would bear the brunt of the product's soaring price. "We are not oblivious to that reality. There are government interventions to cushion the poor from the rising paraffin price," Khumalo said. "For instance, there is no VAT charged on paraffin." He said the department would "soon" invite bids for the development of a new pricing mechanism for paraffin. "The way that paraffin is priced will come under review," he said. The department's deputy director-general for hydrocarbons and energy planning, Nhlanhla Gumede, also said overpricing would be looked at. He said consumers paid more than the wholesale price determined by the department. "It is a concern to us. We cannot monitor the spaza shops. We do not have the capacity to do that," Gumede said. This week, the Paraffin Safety Association of SA, during hearings on the National Energy Bill, told Parliament it wanted the bill to regulate price increases for paraffin. It said the price of paraffin had increased 54% from December to June, which made it expensive for poor communities. The objective of the bill is to ensure an uninterrupted energy supply.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Oil Refinery to Be Built This Year: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 30 July 2008.**

A one-square kilometre oil refinery will be built in Kaiso-Tonya wildlife reserve, Hoima district before the end of the year despite concerns by environmentalists. This was disclosed by Peter Javis, a senior manager of Tullow Uganda, after energy state minister Kamanda Batarigaya recently toured the area proposed to house the early production

scheme. The tour was organised ahead of a public hearing on the environmental impact of the project. The oil extraction scheme is pending approval from the National Environment Management Authority, expected by end of August. Bataringaya said the refinery would help to add value to oil, from which diesel, paraffin and electric power of 85-100 Mega Watts will be produced. "We find this more viable because it has four wells," Bataringaya said. "It is not cost effective to take the refinery far from the production wells." He was speaking to a team of environmental officials led by Maria Mutagamba, the environment minister, who was accompanied by MPs from the natural resources committee. Officials of Tullow Oil said the refinery would cover one square kilometer, although the total area of operation is equivalent to the size of 15 football fields. Mutagamba wanted to know whether the expansive areas around the oil wells devoid of grass could be restored. NEMA boss Dr. Aryamanya Mugisha said the oil company was working with his agency and the energy ministry to minimise pollution. "There was harmful waste that was produced during exploration, which Tullow was required to incinerate at Nakasongola." Mugisha said the company had hired field experts to monitor the environment and work with local communities to guard against environmental destruction. But Achilles Byaruhanga, the executive head of Nature Uganda, protested the establishment of the oil refinery inside the park, saying it would undermine the ecology in the park and it was illegal. Isaiah Onzi of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature also said the ecological implications of locating the refinery in the park were being underplayed. "The Government and the developer are over-emphasising the economic benefits and not paying attention to the ecological impact on the park." The tour turned dramatic when about 500 locals from the nearby fishing village turned up with containers expecting to be given free oil. They were told to wait for about a year when extraction begins. The permanent secretary in the energy ministry, Kabagambe Kalisa, said oil exploration had covered less than 20% of the area that is suspected to be containing the resource. He said more exploration was expected to continue around Lake Albert up to Nimule in West Nile region. A report on the environment impact of the project indicated that water would remain safe, fish harvests would not be affected and that the air would remain pure. The report, compiled by researchers, however, noted that some animals may move away because of the noise and fewer tourists would visit the area. The researchers recommended that Tullow works with the Uganda Wildlife Authority and other groups to develop a conservation management plan.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: REMA Bans Harmful CFC Gas: [The New Times \(Kigali\)](#): 31 July 2008.**

The Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA), Tuesday reached a resolution of putting a ban on the importation and usage of Chloro-Fluoro Carbon gas (CFC) in the country. In a statement to the press, the director of REMA's Dr. Rose Mukankomeje explained that the ban of the gas was timely. "We have resolved to ban the Chloro Fluoro Carbon gas from the country because of the potential danger it poses to the environment and definitely to the people. This gas weakens the ozone layer which results into sun rays scorching the earth's surface, affecting production and proper livelihoods," said Mukankomeje. She said the decision was reached after recognising the dangers the

gas causes to both the environment and people. The gas is normally used in refrigerators, automobiles, industries, and in hospitals. REMA together with a committee responsible for regulating harmful gases first assessed both the advantages and dangers of the gas, and found the dangers far outweighed the benefits. CFC gas damages and weakens the ozone layer which directly impacts on the environment. It is also known to cause cancer of the skin and eye disease.

- **Cameroon: AES to Invest FCFA 135b in Kribi Power Company: [The Post](#) (Buea): 31 July 2008.**

One of the world's largest global power companies, AES Corporation, says it is investing a circa FCFA 135 billion for the production of energy in Kribi, South Province. The President of the Corporation, Paul Hanrahan, made the revelation in Yaounde on July 24. The visiting AES Chief Executive Officer sealed a deal with government on the creation of the Kribi Power Development Corporation (KPDC). The government of Cameroon represented by the Minister of Finance, Essimi Menye, and the AES corporation boss signed the KPDC shareholder's agreement. Speaking during the ceremony at the Yaounde Hilton Hotel, Hanrahan said his company would embark on the production of energy especially the drilling of gas wells. He thanked government for creating the enabling environment for his company to invest in Cameroon. To him, the project will enable AES to continue to call the shots in energy production in Africa. He said the Kribi project would employ some 50 Cameroonians for a start. For his part, the Minister of Finance said the signing of the agreement marked a turning point in the realisation of the Kribi Power Development Corporation. He said the company is expected to begin producing gas by the first semester of 2010. The KPDC is currently a single member company with a registered capital of FCFA 10 million by AES. There are plans by the end of the year to increase its capital with Cameroon taking a stake of up to 44 percent and AES 56 percent. The purpose of KPDC, according to AES authorities, is to develop, construct and operate any type of generation facilities. It will equally be involved in the generation, transmission, operation, import and sale of electrical energy. The main project of the company includes gas fired heavy fuel oil projects at Dibamba (88 MW) and Kribi (150 MW). The General Administrator of the company is Naveed Manazir while Frederic Mvondo, Jeremie Bitanga and Tham Nguyen are deputy administrators. With operations in 29 countries on five continents, AES Corporation's generation and distribution facilities have the capacity to serve 100 million people worldwide. In an audience with President Paul Biya, the AES boss unveiled the ambitions programme of his company in Cameroon and in Central and West Africa regions. Paul Hanrahan, 50, visited Cameroon for the second time since 2005.

21. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: IMFB Introduces Islamic Banking: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 1 August 2008.**

The Integrated Micro Finance Bank has introduced Islamic banking in its financial and investment products. Speaking in Lagos, Wednesday, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Bank Mr. Simon Akinteye said one of its products which is shariah compliant is the Ijara. This, he said will be based on daily contribution from the leased products and the bank, as well as the investor's share in the profit. He said it is leasing without interest but that the interest will be shared into three parts and the bank will take just one part while the customer takes two parts. The other two Islamic products are: Musharaka Marana and Musharaka Nasat which would be the contribution of 12 weeks. He said on this, the investor would be giving double the amount to invest and subsequently the profits would be shared with the bank and him. He said the products would cater for Nigerians who wouldn't want to do conventional banking. The bank also said it is deepening the capacity and finances of the over 70 million poor Nigerians most of which are women and youths. She said women particularly are impoverished in Nigeria even though hard working, hence the need to improve their finances. Launching the products, the Speaking on another new product that was launched, Mr. Akinteye said: "The Business equipment Leasing Account (BELA) product would be useful to anyone who is ready create economic value to the least income generating assets like wheel barrows, generators, refrigerators, hair dryers, barbing saloon complete kit, vulcanizing machines grinding machines etc." He explained further that: "We are doing what the conventional commercial banks cannot do. We are really going down to the basics, to providing equipments to people to generate funds. They are going to be paying back gradually over a period of time. Repayment is as small as N200 per day, some N500 and others would pay on weekly say, a thousand naira" adding that "after they have fully paid, the equipments become theirs."

- **Nigeria: Shell Urges FG to Provide Security in Niger Delta: Vanguard (Lagos): 1 August 2008.**

SHELL Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) has pleaded with the Federal Government to assist the firm in its oil exploration and exploitation activities in the Niger-Delta region by restoring peace, providing security, maintaining law and order in the region and also funding the Joint Venture. But the Federal Government thinks the oil company should do more in the area of social amenities to the people and, therefore, charged the firm to provide more development projects for the peoples to tone down their negative feelings about oil multinationals operating in the region. Minister of Special Duties in the Presidency, Elder Godsay Orubebe gave the charge in Port-Harcourt while inspecting the mobile clinic facilities embarked upon by the SPDC in partnership with Enacel Boat Yard, Port-Harcourt. SPDC's Vice President in charge of infrastructure and Logistics, Mr. Babs Omotowa had, ostensibly, due to the attacks on the facilities of the company by militants and kidnap of oil workers stated that the firm needed massive support from the Federal Government in the area of restoring peace to the region, maintenance of law and order, security and funding. He disclosed that the SPDC's operational area covers about 3,000 communities and the company was doing everything within its means to spread development projects such as health centres, laboratory equipment for schools, roads and even scholarships to the people. The Minister of Special Duties who expressed President Yar'Adu's position enjoined all stakeholders in the oil

and gas industry in the region to come together and key into the what he called the "new thinking" of the administration of the government towards alleviating the many developmental challenges facing the people of the area."The desire by the Shell Petroleum Development Company to partner with private hands to reintroduce the mobile clinic scheme in the Niger Delta is a welcome one which President Yar'Adua will appreciate", he said."This is the reason all other multi-national oil and gas companies should emulate the good gesture of the SPDC by setting up their own mobile health scheme so that health care delivery will be carried to the door-step of riverine Niger Deltans".Elder Orubebe who recalled how, as a child, he was excited to see mobile clinics and doctors come around the riverine communities to treat people of various forms of ailments and even carried out minor operations said the SPDC's idea of wanting to rejuvenate this was a step in the right direction.Continuing, the Minister explained that the Federal Government alone could not handle all the questions begging for answers all alone and "that is more reason Mr. President and indeed, the Federal Government believes that there is need for everyone to come together to discuss who and who will do what and what and what and at what time frame, a kind of division of labour in order to achieve better and urgent results".He commended the SPDC for its gesture but advised that they still have a lot more to do in order to assuage the negative feelings of the people.While inspecting the facilities of Enacel Boat Builders and two water ambulances at the EPENAL Boat Builders in Marine Base, Port Harcourt, Elder Orubebe commended the management of the boat building company for meeting up to government's new policy of local content, saying, "Your good works must have gone a long way in conserving large sums of money that government and organizations would have used in importing these kinds of boats".He said that activities of Enacel Boat yards type in the Niger Delta is what the Federal Government intends to encourage when the President finally rolls out his agenda for the region. The minister reiterated President Yar'Adua's commitment to enthroning lasting peace in the Niger Delta and urged stake holders to be a little patient with the administration.

- **Ghana: Country Needs Better Terms of Trade – Isser: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 1 August 2008.**

A RESEARCHER, at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Legon, Dr. Peter Quartey, has said that Ghana does not need more aid, but rather, better terms of trade, that would ensure that the country adds more value to its products for export.He lamented that Ghana depended heavily on aid, to the extent that, it seemed nothing would work in the country without the support of aid from donors, which often came with foreign policies attached.According to him, there was the need for the country to develop its own policies, which would be owned by the people, stressing, "Development strategies must be country-owned to reflect what is right for us, and not borrowed policies."He made this known at a workshop for journalists, organized by the Center for Democratic Development (CDD), on the theme, "Promoting Issue-based Media Reporting," in Accra on Monday.This was to provide journalists with the requisite information and resources, which would enable them promote issue-based campaigns, in the run up to the December elections.Dr. Quartey, who is also the Coordinator of the ISSER Short Courses, noted that there was also the need for production to be made key in

the economy, to minimize importation, especially, of cheap and inferior products. Further, he indicated that Ghana's economy had remained agricultural-base for a long time, and that it was time for the country to completely mechanise agriculture, and shift from it being a family business. He added, "we must move away from the use of the hoe and cutlass," and as well stop exporting products in their raw form, stressing that this was necessary, because food security had become a major challenge. He pointed out that the country's growth had been fluctuating, particularly recording negative growth when the country experienced instability, adding that though poverty had declined, "not everybody gained." He believed that what was needed at this time was how to redistribute the growth attained, by promoting south-south trade, saying, "We have traded with the West for too long." In addition, he said ahead of this year's elections, politicians must be able to tell the electorate, how they intend to bridge the gap of inequality, in terms of development in the country. Also, he observed that there was the need for Ghanaians to cultivate the culture of saving and investing in the economy, since "Ghana's culture of savings is low by African standards." He lamented that savings and investment were currently more towards attracting foreign investment, which was a form of discrimination against local people.

- **Nigeria: Reps Pass N2.647 Trillion Amended Budget: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 1 August 2008.**

The House of Representatives yesterday approved the total sum of N2,647,492,865,643.00 as 2008 amended Appropriation Bill, as the Senate is expected to pass the bill when it reconvenes for an emergency session on Wednesday. Also an attempt by Speaker Dimeji Bankole to bring the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill to the floor of the House for deliberation yesterday hit a brick wall as the lawmakers refused to consider it on the ground that its presentation did not follow due process. The Appropriation Bill as amended was passed by the House before it proceeded on a five-week holiday on Thursday, to resume in September. Out of this sum, N162.6 billion is for statutory transfers, N372.2 billion is for debt service while the sum of N1.327 trillion is for recurrent (non-debt) expenditure. The balance of the sum of N785.1 billion is for contribution to the development fund for capital expenditure of the government of the federation. The lawmakers had, on several occasions, thrown out the FOI bill. During yesterday's plenary session, before introducing the bill, which was the first business of the day, Bankole had pleaded with his members to put aside all sentiments and debate the bill as he has been under pressure from the press and other Nigerians to consider the bill. "The first order of the day is a controversial one. I am pleading with you that we do justice to the bill at the consideration stage. Let us not throw away the baby with the bath water. We need to take a second look at it." "We are going on holiday today, let us go in peace. We have in this House in the last eight months exposed more corruption than anybody without the FOI bill. We have in this House built capacity for members in this House. For us to move faster and achieve more, we need freedom of information". Hon Patrick Ikhariale pointed out that the House was not against passing the bill but was turning it down because of the lack of due process in scheduling of the bill on the order paper, saying that it was a violation of the House's rule because it was not published on the notice paper as the rules of the House state. Bankole made desperate attempts to get the bill discussed but stiff opposition from members frustrated his commitment to the

passage of the bill, forcing Hon. Ita Enang (PDP, Akwa-Ibom), who was to present the bill for debate, to withdraw the bill in the spirit of due process. It will be recalled that the FOI bill has been rejected about five times by the lawmakers. Each time it was slated for debate, they voted against it.

- **Nigeria: Nupeng Threatens to Cripple Oil Sector: [Leadership \(Abuja\): 1 August 2008.](#)**

Warri zonal council of National Union of Petroleum And Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) yesterday threatened to cripple both the downstream and upstream of the sector if Globestar / Acergy failed to urgently address what it described as slave treatment of its members. Comrade Williams Akporeha, Warri zonal council Chairman of NUPENG, said yesterday in Warri, Delta State, that the Union would not hesitate to call all its members to put down their tools to protest the anti-labour and anti-human activities of Globestar / Acergy. According to him, the slave labour activities of Globestar / Acergy must be stopped forthwith. Akporeha said that Globestar/Acergy, an oil company, has been operating in the Niger Delta Region for the past 20 years with a workforce of about 250 workers. But he lamented that the workers, who have been on the pay roll of the oil company for about 20 years, were being treated as slave workers. "Our members in Globestar/Acergy are working without a working condition of service. This situation is an aberration as far as oil operations are concerned in Nigeria," the Union leader said. According to him, in spite of the unacceptable position in the operation of Globestar / Acergy Oil Company, the situation was made worse by the continued denial of the workers rights by management of the company. The oil company, he stated, has been keeping the workers in perpetual status of casual workers for over 20 years now, adding that the workers work in the offshore operations for a continued period of three months with just one period of time off. "This is compounded by the fact that the workers are not even paid in their period of time off, after three months of hard work in the sea," he said. Akporeha said that; "The Globestar offshore workers of NUPENG are already on strike and we are asking that the management come to the aid of the workers and start meaningful discussion with the union, otherwise the zone shall be constrained to mobilise its numerous members to go on strike in solidarity with our enslaved members. The strike is going to cut across the informal and the formal sector of the Union, by that, we are talking about the downstream and the upstream which involves petroleum marketing and even at this point, we might ask that production should be tampered with."

- **Ghana: Gold Fields Ghana Signs Agreement With Damang Farmers: [Ghanaian Chronicle \(Accra\): 1 August 2008.](#)**

Gold Fields Ghana Limited, Damang Mine, has finally entered into an agreement, with a group of farmers at Damang, whose farming activities fall within the company mining areas. The agreement was signed on Monday. The Secretary of the Damang Farmers Association, Mr. Michael Ankaah, disclosed this to the Western File, and added that they were happy that at long last, the company had reasoned with them, to compensate and resettle them. They were also happy with the package in the agreement. The Community Affairs Manager, Mr. Robert Siaw had earlier told this reporter, that within a period of

two months, the farmers would be compensated for lands taken. It would be recalled that this File broke the story, about how the local farmers were pursuing Gold Fields for compensation and resettlement, after taking over their farm lands. The farmers had also expressed concern over poor and bad roads, the company had constructed for them, which had had culminated in pupils of school-going age dropping out of school.

- **Sierra Leone: ICAO Wants Aviation Industry Supervised: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 1 August 2008.**

President of the international civil aviation organisation council (ICAO) Thursday called on the government to rigorously supervise the civil aviation industry if it were to meet international standards. Speaking at a press conference held at the Kimbima Hotel in Freetown, Robert Kobeh Gonzalez said the civil aviation authority of Sierra Leone has the onus of making sure that air transport meets international standards. He said ICAO has signed a communiqué with government to establish a joint programme for the attainment of and compliance with the international aviation standards. Gonzalez said he was in the country to establish safety air transport adding that that could only be done with the political will to collaborate and implement recommendations necessary to improve the air transport in the country. He noted that the ICAO would work with the government to cooperate and re-establish the transport services as soon as possible. Gonzalez added that he was prepared to assist the country to achieve greater compliance with international requirements regarding the level of safety oversight. Transport and aviation minister Kemoh Sesay said the aviation sector is faced with serious challenges in respect of the state's inability to comply with international standards in terms of both regulatory oversight and operational safety compliance. He mentioned the lack of adequate resources to ensure a sound and sustainable safety oversight system and investment in aviation infrastructure as one of the main reasons for the poor state of the aviation sector. Sesay said he would pursue the reform initiative of the aviation sector in the country, while he appealed for more technical support from ICAO. Director of civil aviation George Gbongbor said since the establishment of the department in 1966 the sector has encountered tremendous constraints including effective autonomy, sustainable financial capability, sufficient and well qualified personnel, and adequate premises.

- **Nigeria: Medical Tests for Heavy Vehicle Drivers: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 31 July 2008.**

HARDLY a day passes without Lagos, the commercial and industrial capital of Nigeria, being in the grips of time-wasting traffic hold-ups caused by a tanker on fire after spilling its contents - a container falling, scattering its cargo and blocking an expressway. Where that does not happen, a trailer deposits its container on another vehicle, just to mention a few of the innumerable incidents involving such vehicles. Conventional wisdom would limit the search for solutions to bad roads and ageing vehicles. To be sure, the condition of our roads contributes a great deal to accidents. More indisputably, the corruption pervading the road-worthiness agencies in all the States of Nigeria adds significantly to the problem of road accidents, especially those involving heavy vehicles. One aspect we have so far failed to address is the health and mental condition of the drivers of these

vehicles. They criss-cross long distances to deliver their goods under conditions that would task the healthiest individuals. Perhaps, if we view the problem from a different perspective we might realise the need to take the health of the drivers seriously. We must appreciate the fact that these drivers have in their hands the power of life and death over others, both road users and even innocent by-standers. A recent accident involving a tanker which burst into flames, roasting other road users, burning vehicles on the road as well as setting houses nearby on fire should serve as warning to all of us that nobody is safe when heavy duty vehicles are around. Again, majority of the drivers are among the least educated and they exhibit the worst discipline of any category of Nigerians. Their frequency of places of ill-repute to consume liquor and other illicit drugs as well as other vices already render the drivers accidents waiting to happen somewhere. It is doubtful if any driver, on his own, would consult a medical doctor for check up unless pressed to the extreme. Thus, hidden cases of high blood pressure leading to sudden heart seizures or diabetic spasms, while in motion, must necessarily contribute an indeterminate number to the volume of accidents involving these drivers. Super Eagles striker Obafemi Martins lost his mother in last week's incident in Lagos that claimed 10 lives. The National Assembly and the various states legislatures therefore should consider this as a matter of uttermost importance and pass bills making it mandatory for drivers of articulated vehicles to undergo annual medical check-ups including eye tests in order to reduce accidents caused by the ill health of the drivers. At the rate these accidents occur in Lagos in particular, the government would be derelict in its duties if it takes no steps to control this menace on the state's roads. There is no hope of these accidents abating, as the roads, in the absence of the rails, remain the only means for transporting the heavy goods these vehicles bear. Government has to act before these incidents get out of hand.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa: SADC Free Trade Becomes a Reality: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 1 August 2008.**

THE long-awaited free trade area (FTA) for southern Africa will be launched on August 17 during the annual summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). It will be preceded by a comprehensive information campaign across all 14 member states. Launching the information campaign for Namibia in Windhoek yesterday, Mvula ya Nangolo, special advisor to the Information Ministry, said the removal of import and export tariffs and trade barriers among the SADC countries would bring regional economic integration a huge step further. Reading the speech of Information Minister Joel Kaapanda, who could not attend the event, Ya Nangolo said the FTA would bring more opportunity to market goods and the removal of tariffs would increase competition and make them more affordable for customers. "People at all levels of our society will be affected by the trade and business activities during the implementation of the FTA and the freer flow of goods will enable larger variety of choice, although the new economic order will require knowledge and skills to enter the larger market area of the sub-region." By August 17, 12 of the 14 SADC member states will have established the FTA. This creates a regional market worth US\$360 billion with a total population of 170 million and includes economies growing by up to 7 per cent a year such as Mozambique. Angola and the DR Congo are set to join the FTA later, adding a further

US\$71 billion and 77 million people to the SADC market. South Africa, Botswana and Namibia already removed most tariffs in 2000. Middle-income countries such as Mauritius have gradually reduced their tariffs each year until this year. For least developed countries such as Mozambique and Zambia, tariff reductions have generally been introduced during 2007-08. After the launch on August 17, producers and consumers in the 12 SADC countries will pay no import tariffs on an estimated 85 per cent of all trade in goods. The SADC regional integration programme includes the establishment of the FTA by 2008, a customs union by 2010, a common market by 2015, a monetary union by 2016 and a single currency by 2018.

- **Zimbabwe: Outcry As Reserve Bank 'Bribes' Judges: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 1 August 2008.**

Civil servants, teachers, doctors and most workers in Zimbabwe are failing to make ends meet because of poor salaries, but the so called cash strapped Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe has found the money to splash out on top of the range vehicles, generators, televisions and satellite dishes for sitting judges. The Herald newspaper said the RBZ donated a fleet of new Mercedes Benz E280 vehicles and other goods to the judges, to improve their conditions of service. Political commentator Professor John Makumbe said the government is unashamedly bribing the judges, as there are many cases pending in the courts involving MDC members on dubious charges. He believes this is a blatant attempt to ensure the judges hand favourable judgements to ZANU PF. The outspoken political commentator said this is also a clear case of misplaced priorities. The Master of the High Court, Charles Nyatanga, told the Herald that apart from the top-of-the-range Mercedes-Benz, the judges have also been given utility vehicles, which include Toyota IMV and Isuzu trucks, courtesy of the central bank. In a clear case of undermining the independence of the judiciary and the misuse of state funds, the state mouthpiece quotes Mr Nyatanga saying; 'It was not desirable for judges to drive Mercedes Benz in rough terrain going to their farms.' He also commended the RBZ for donating generators to the judges 'at a time the country was experiencing severe power cuts.' In recent weeks government sponsored thugs started a campaign to pull down satellite dishes at the homes of suspected MDC supporters. Professor Makumbe said: "Perhaps they have stopped the 'operation pull down dishes' and I think they are going to start the 'operation put up the dishes now,' but only if you are the right person, like a judge, the police or the army." It is not clear if the measures being taken by the Reserve Bank, at a time when political parties are negotiating a power-sharing government, are legal. But the commentator said even with the slashing of the zeros at this particular time Gideon Gono is behaving like he is the "Vice President" of the country.

- **Zimbabwe: New Currency Introduced As 10 Zeros Disappear: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 1 August 2008.**

Ten zeros were removed from all monetary values on Friday, resulting in Z\$10 billion being re-valued to one dollar. The measures were announced Wednesday by Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono during his 50 page, half year monetary policy statement. The new currency will co-circulate together with the family of bearer cheques currently

in use. However the bearer cheques will be scrapped at the end of this year. Cash withdrawal limits were also increased from Z\$100 billion to Z\$200billion, now re-valued to Z\$200. The move has been seen as significant in terms of convenience for people as the numbers were becoming incredibly difficult to handle but economic analysts say the removal of the zeros will not make much difference to the overall economic problems, especially the availability of foreign currency and shortages of basic commodities. The Mugabe regime blames the economic crisis on measures imposed by western countries, but economist John Robertson lays the blame squarely on the disastrous policies initiated by the government. He said; "The connection between the politics and economics is that "the politics of the past have totally destroyed investor confidence and have destroyed a lot of the capacity in this country to actually function." Analysts predict inflation, which has already smashed world records at more than fifteen million percent, will continue to skyrocket as the government fails to balance the new currency measures with meaningful reforms. But those who kept their worthless coins, may find they will get something for them as the new currencies kick into place. The 10 cent piece is now worth the equivalent of the old Z\$1billion, but Robertson said it won't be long before they're back in the boxes where they have been sitting for the past seven years. Meanwhile pity the poor supermarket teller who is trying to make sense of the two currencies, which will run side by side until December.

- **Namibia: Union to the Defence of the Homeless: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 1 August 2008.**

ALL Windhoek residents who have lost their homes because of their inability to pay water and electricity bills have been requested to contact the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW). The NUNW approached the City of Windhoek last week complaining about recent tariff hikes, and announced yesterday that a meeting held on Wednesday resulted in the start of dialogue on a number of issues affecting residents. NUNW Secretary General Evilastus Kaaronda said the union was especially concerned about the recent tariff hikes announced by the City, and the repossession of houses belonging to "the poor and indigent" as a result of the City's controversial credit control policy. "Please note that the people we are looking for are those whose houses were repossessed and auctioned on account of their inability to pay their water and electricity bills. These could include retrenched employees, old-age pensioners, people who solely depend on State welfare programmes and other indigent people," he said. The letter written by the NUNW to the City last week attacked the City of "flying in the face" of all efforts being implemented by Government to ease the pressure on poor communities who are suffering increasing economic pressure. "How can you provide basic services to those whose houses you have auctioned due to their inability to afford your astronomical price hikes?" the union stated, referring to the theme of the City's budget, 'Provision of Basic Services', which was announced in June. The union also referred to the recent exposé of prominent business and political figures who have been allowed to run up high municipal debts without action taken. "We have noted with deep concern and grave disappointment the inherently discriminatory manner in which the City of Windhoek has handled its debt collection process," the union said. "Even more disheartening is the knowledge that State institutions like yours that should protect the poor and vulnerable are somehow ironically

out to systematically force the same people into perpetual poverty and marginalisation," the letter further reads. The union called on the City to cancel the tariff hikes announced in June, to take back all houses auctioned off because of its credit control policy, and to build or buy houses for those who have lost their homes because of it. City of Windhoek spokesperson Elizabeth Sibindi confirmed yesterday that the City had entered into talks with the union. She said further comment from the City on the issue would follow at the end of the talks. Former homeowners who have lost their property are requested to supply the union with as much documentation as they can to strengthen their case.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: EAC Begins EPA Talks: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.**

The East African Community (EAC) has begun talks dedicated to negotiating the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). The EAC Director General for Customs and Trade, Peter Kiguta, said that each member state is to present its position in regard to broad aspects of economic and development issues. "This session will provide a final report which will be forwarded to the EU for its inputs before the two blocs meet in mid September," he explained. All five EAC countries; Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda are represented at the 4-day meeting taking place at Hotel Novotel Umubano in Kigali. Kiguta asked states' representatives to draw heavily on the EAC development strategy for 2006-2010 as part of the working document. He added that the report will not only build a strong regional framework for the EPA negotiations on development, but also serve as a mechanism for future use in engaging partners on developmental issues. Kiguta further explained that the negotiations are fulfillments of the last EAC and EU technical officials' meeting. Recommendations on several issues were agreed upon. The official said that the meeting held in Brussels, in April this year agreed on broad areas of cooperation as a guiding framework for the development of the full text. Some of the specific areas of cooperation pointed out include; supply side constraints, private sector development and agriculture. It is important for member states to come up with negotiation positions that would allow the EAC comfortable fall backs.

- **Kenya: End of an Era as Phone Firm Takes on New Name: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 1 August 2008.**

Today marks a new beginning for Celtel Kenya, barely four years after the name hit the Kenyan market. As with all other 15 African subsidiaries, Celtel Kenya, will rebrand to Zain, taking on the brand name of its Kuwait-based parent company. "Africa deserves a global brand," Zain Group's CEO Dr Saad Al-Barrak said on Tuesday, as he jetted in the country for the re-launch today. "All our companies in the World will have one brand name." The company was launched in 2000 under the brand name Kencell, then 40 per cent owned by Sameer Group and 60 per cent by Vivendi Telecom International. In May 2004, Celtel International brought out Vivendi Telecom International, renaming the company Celtel Kenya. A year after, May 2005, Mobile Telecommunications Company (MTC) bought 85 per cent stake in Celtel International. Last year, MTC rebranded to

Zain, as the company set to take on an international brand name. It, however, retained the Celtel brand in Africa, which it now seeking to re-brand. "It is very important that the name reflects our values and our strength. This is what we hope to achieve with Zain," Mr Al-Barrak noted. On acquiring Kencell, Mr Marten Pieters, Celtel International's chief executive officer, said: "This is a very important acquisition for Celtel. As the operator with the largest footprint in Africa, we bring a broad understanding of the trends and challenges of mobile telephony; the perfect complement to KenCell's successful experience in Kenya."

Unable to replicate

Celtel International was, however, unable to replicate its African and Asian market successes in Kenya. "Contrary to most of the other markets, the second operator, Celtel, not only failed to narrow its lag behind Safaricom in terms of market-share, but lost subscribers in the second-half of 2007," research by Renaissance Capital, an international research firm says. It has only managed to double its customer base from the 1.2 million customers it acquired from Kencell in 2004 to about 2.5 million in 2007. That fades away in comparison to its competitor, Safaricom, which has been able to grow its subscriber base to 11.5 million from 1.7 million customers in 2004. An equity research report by Morgan Stanley, a US-based investment company, released mid last month, puts Celtel's subscribers at 1.7 million after losing ground to Safaricom in second-half of 2007. The poor performance has been attributed to a high management turnover. "Safaricom has benefited from low turnover in its senior management team, in our view," the report by Morgan Stanley states. Over the eight years in operation, the company has had four chief executives, with the fifth appointment of Mr Rene Meza last month.

- **Uganda: Inflation Hits 13.7 Percent in July: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

JULY'S inflation rate has risen to 13.7% up from 12.5% due to high demand for food from neighbouring countries and the ever-rising global fuel prices. "This is the highest inflation in three years. It was last at 12.6% in April 2005. We are at the peak of the harvesting season for a number of food items but the prices have remained high due to high transport costs and high demand from southern Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo," Ronald Ssombwe, the senior price statistician at the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, said. "We have imported inflation from Kenya where our imports pass. Also, border charges are incurred by the products, thus causing an increase in their prices," Ssombwe said while releasing the monthly Consumer Price Index on Thursday. He said inflation was likely to rise in the coming months unless the demand for food in the neighbouring countries reduces and global fuel prices stabilise. Ssombwe said consumers should prioritise their expenditures, while employers should consider raising salaries and wages so that employees buy the same goods and services they used to purchase. "Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania will face high inflation even if we integrate because our imports sometimes pass through Kenya and Tanzania, while their demand for food from Uganda remains high," he said. The Annual Core Inflation (underlying), which excludes food, fuel, electricity and metered water, also rose to 12.8% from 12.1%. He said the finance

ministry should curb the rising inflation because it would affect working out macro and micro-economic policies for the economy.

- **Uganda: Oil to Attract \$500 Million Investments: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

THE oil and gas sector will attract over \$500m (sh820b) in direct investments by the end of this financial year, the energy state minister has predicted. "While \$250m (sh410b) has been invested in the sector in the last 10 years, by the end of this financial year, investments in this sector will have exceeded \$500m," Kamanda Bataringaya said. "Oil had been discovered in six places in Hoima (Mputa, Waraga, Kingfisher, Taitai, Ngege and Karuka) and one gas discovery has been made at Nzizi," he said while presenting the National Oil and Gas Policy at a public hearing for the proposed early production scheme that will take place at Kaiso-Tonya in Hoima. Bataringaya said the discovery of oil poses new challenges that have to be addressed through a new policy. "A new oil and gas policy has, therefore, been formulated through an extensive consultative process." "The consultative process involved local government, civil societies, community and cultural leaders in the Albertine Graben." "The policy's goal is to use the oil and gas to eradicate poverty and create a lasting value to society," Bataringaya said. The policy includes transparency, environmental protection, efficient management, cooperation and capacity building. He said biomass constitutes over 90% of the energy supply mix, while hydro-power and imported petroleum products constitute 1% and 6% respectively. "This decade has seen the highest oil prices in history, rising from as low as \$10 per barrel in 1990 to over \$140 currently. This takes a sizeable portion of Uganda's export earnings."

- **Uganda: Arab Traders Eye Ugandan Foods: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

UGANDAN foodstuffs scored highly in the exhibition arranged for the Arab-African Business Conference at the Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala last month. Many items impressed delegates from the 57 member countries of the Organisation of the Islamic Countries. The new foodstuffs included jackfruit jam and dried bamboo powder, which were produced by the Food Science Department at the Islamic University in Mbale. Others were citronella- flavoured shea butter, refined peanut oil and aloe vera juice with honey. Britania Industries also displayed 14 types of Splash fruit juice. The display demonstrated that Uganda's produce can be processed into internationally marketable products.

- **Tanzania: Canadian Firm Acquires Uranium Property: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 31 July 2008.**

VIPR Industries Inc. of Canada has completed its acquisition of the Manyoni Uranium Property, which it described in a statement yesterday as highly prospective. The company said surveys have established strong potential for significant uranium mineralization at the property in Singida Region. Its president and chief executive officer Mike Gerstner said the property demonstrates excellent potential for significant uranium

mineralization."VIPR Industries is developing a growing portfolio of high quality, high value mineral prospects in Tanzania, a country with low political risk, mining-friendly investment policies and abundant mineral resources," he remarked.VIPR acquired the property along with the Singida Gold Property as an asset purchase for 5,543,000 pre-split restricted shares from Kinti Group Inc., a Toronto, Ontario, and Tanzania-based private company. VIPR is leveraging Kinti Group's local area expertise, network of contacts and portfolio of quality assets.Earlier this week, it announced the acquisition of the Singida property saying exploration drilling has identified an indicated resource of 543,000 ounces of gold valued at an estimated \$500 million at current prices. Other companies actively exploring for uranium in Tanzania include Atomic Minerals Ltd. and Mantra Resources Ltd. Companies targeting uranium in Africa also include Deep Yellow Ltd and Denison Mines Corp., while Paladin Resources Ltd is developing its 3.3 million pound per annum Kayelekera Uranium Project in neighboring Malawi."Demand for uranium from accelerating nuclear power generation is outpacing mine production, creating a widening supply gap. We look forward to implementing our aggressive exploration plans for the Itigi Manyoni uranium prospect in order to meet this rising demand," Mr Gerstner notes in the statement.Demand for uranium, the fuel for nuclear reactors, is increasing dramatically. Nuclear power generation is expanding around the world as countries look to reliable, emissions-free nuclear power to manage rising energy demand and reduce greenhouse emissions.As of April this year, 439 nuclear reactors in 31 countries were generating more than 16 per cent of the world's electricity supply. Worldwide, 35 new plants are under construction, 91 are planned, 228 are proposed, and many existing plants are expanding capacity, according to the World Nuclear Association.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Seed Association Calls for Agricultural Bank: [The Post \(Buea\): 31 July 2008.](#)**

The Cameroon Seed Trade Association, ACOSEC, has called on the government to ensure the speedy creation of a bank specialised in the provision of loans for agricultural activities.This was one of the resolutions adopted at an ACOSEC meeting in Douala on July 17, aimed at finding concrete solutions to the rising cost of living in the country.Chaired by ACOSEC President, Guy Blaise Gatsa, specialists in the trade of improved seedlings stated that one of the main impediments to the setting up of many large-scale agricultural activities in the country is the lack of funds. They noted that the financial constraints have continued to force a bulk of farmers in the country to remain on subsistence farming.The ACOSEC members also noted that lately, there has been a lot of hot air about government's determination to increase local food production.But they argued that for farmers, as well as those of them involved in the trade of improved seedlings, to be able to expand their operations to large scale, they would need finances.The ACOSEC members explained that not only is it very difficult to obtain loans from the commercial banks in the country, but also that the conditions under which the loans are granted do not suit investment in agricultural activities.The association noted, for example, that if a rice importer and a rice farmer go to a commercial bank for loans, if the banks accept to grant the loans, the conditions would be the same - short-

term basis and high interest rates. They further observed that whereas the trader would in two months time have imported his/her rice and sold it and thus can repay the loan with ease, the story would be different for the rice farmer. ACOSEC asserted that if there is an agricultural bank specialised in providing loans for agricultural activities, such a bank would not only grant loans at low interest rates, but also for reasonable periods of time. Meanwhile, in another resolution, it called on the government to implement the official regulations for the business in seedlings in the country. ACOSEC urged the government to set up a fund which would assist people dealing in large-scale seed multiplication in the event of a natural disaster. Another resolution called on the authorities concerned to strive to ensure that government subventions for agricultural activities should effectively get down to the field and to the right people.

Improved Seedlings, High Yields

The ACOSEC members appealed to all farmers to strive to go for improved seedlings, which they say have all been tested and proven to give high quality yields. They, however, admitted that there were lots of problems with some imported seeds in the past like maize seeds commonly called "agric corn." These seeds were imported and given to farmers to plant without any research as to whether the soil in Cameroon suited that specie of maize. Farmers, especially in the Northwest where much of the imported seeds were planted, soon realised to their dismay that the imported specie was not good. The Littoral Provincial Delegate of Agriculture, Djolla Djolla, noted that IRAD has carried out intensive research on many types of maize grown across the world and have five different types selected from the research as suitable for Cameroon.

- **Rwanda: U.S. Funding Criteria Under Scrutiny, Country Expresses Dissatisfaction:** [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.

President Paul Kagame on Thursday questioned the criteria used by the U.S. government when allocating funding from the Millennium Challenge Corporation - MCC, RNA reports. "Four countries that have been rated as doing well in Africa for the last like three years by different institutions including even ones in the same donor country (U.S.) - are Rwanda, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania", Mr. Kagame told a press conference. "But after this rating by different agencies, the MCC turns back to approve funding for only three - leaving out Rwanda." "I have not bothered. I have not cared", Mr. Kagame emphasized. The Millennium Challenge Corporation is a U.S. government initiative bankrolling poor countries whose governments 'rule justly, invest in people, and foster development through enterprise and entrepreneurship'. Rwanda now part of the forty countries that are to get their portions of different amounts from the Account in 2008. These are countries that have showed progress in reform assessed on 17 policy indicators. A high-level delegation from the Corporation was in Kigali last week making arrangements for the signing of an agreement for the \$24million that Rwanda is scheduled to get next month. However, Rwanda will tap from the Million Threshold Program - meaning it has not yet qualified for the final stage, but is said to have 'demonstrated a significant commitment to improve its performance' - a step worthy

recognition. But President Kagame does not seem to be amused with the way things stand. "Interestingly they decided to select other countries that do not meet any of the criterion used. Which means what they call criterion is not the basis but other considerations as I had always suspected", he told his audience in a mixture of Kinyarwanda and English. "It is just that they have another way of deciding that I don't know. Why should I care when I have no influence on the Process". The President repeated that he was 'not bothered' as to whether the Corporation will recognize Rwanda or not because 'what I am sure is that Rwanda has passed the threshold'. "I have previously told the U.S. Ambassador here and other officials that I have nothing to do with all that because I do not work for the MCC but the interests of Rwandan", he said. In the assessment that makes Rwanda qualify for the Threshold Program but not the Compact shows that the country is scoring high corruption controls, very high immunization rates and sound fiscal discipline. However, as far as political rights are concerned, government scored significantly low. Civil liberties is another element on which Rwanda did not make convincing progress. Although school enrollment in Rwanda is ranging high, the rising number of girls dropping out remains of concern - it scored just 15%, according to the Millennium Challenge Corporation assessment. The U.S. does not also seem to be convinced that the authorities in Kigali are doing enough to curb raging inflation. The Economist Intelligence Unit has actually raised its inflation forecast for this year and the next - blaming it partly on shaky fiscal policy.

22. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

WEST AFRICA

- **Liberia: TRC Trains 42 Female Traditional Leaders: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 1 August 2008.**

Forty two Female Traditional Leaders from all political sub-divisions of Liberia have been trained to sensitize and encourage traditional women to come to the TRC. Under the aegis of Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Women Campaign International (WCI) Women's project, the three days training sessions provided the traditional women basic knowledge and skills of how to encourage their compatriots to come to the ongoing TRC process and detail their experiences. Held at the Traditional Women Peace Village in Dudu Town, Brewerville, outside Monrovia, the 42 female traditional leaders engaged in interactive sessions with facilitators and recounted experiences of what happened to them during the civil war. The women were trained to utilize traditional methods of communication to encourage women's participation following their return to their respective towns and villages, TRC Commissioner with oversight for Women and Gender Issues, Madame Massa A. Washington said. During the discussions, facilitators lectured the participants on reparation for women, prosecution and amnesty in the TRC Process. Facilitators included TRC Commissioner John H. T. Stewart, Madame Maima Sirleaf-Kanneh of the Women Development Association of Liberia (WOC DAL), Liberia's Cultural Ambassador Julie Endee who is assisting the TRC implement the projects and Ralph Ambiem of UNMIL's Human Rights Section. The sessions were preceded last week by the training of 15 psychosocial/Trauma Counselors

to provide follow-up psychosocial treatment to women who have given testimonies to the Truth Commission. Meanwhile, simultaneous Zonal Workshops for male partners of women wanting to access the TRC will commence next week in the capitol, Monrovia. During the workshops, 200 spouses and partners of women will be trained around the country to support their female love ones wanting to access the TRC and also those who have come to the TRC. Husbands and partners of women will be sensitized on the importance and benefits of cooperating and supporting their partners coming to the TRC. 400 male are expected to be trained at the end of this session which will also convene simultaneously in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Gbarnga, Bong County and Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County. These activities are preludes to the ensuing Women's Thematic Hearings slated for the Centennial Memorial Pavilion in Monrovia. Throughout the hearings the women population will receive special attention as women's organizations, groups and special interest category will formally present the experiences of women covering the period of the TRC mandate. The hearings will be climaxed by a National Conference for Women, where final set of recommendations will be adopted by the women and forwarded to the TRC for inclusion in the commission's final report. The recommendations are expected to focus on reparation, amnesty, prosecution and various kinds of institutional reforms. Funded by Women's Campaign International (WCI), the women's project is organized by the TRC Women and Gender Committee headed by Commissioner Massa Washington. WCI is an organization that works throughout the world to remove political, social and economic obstacles that limit women's active involvement in decision-making processes. WCI's programs increase the number of female elected officials, ensure their effectiveness once elected, and build the capacity of advocacy and civil society organizations to improve the lot of women and their families. The organization is based in Philadelphia, PA, the United States of America.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Sanctions, Land, Violence Sticking Points in Talks: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.**

LIFTING of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, addressing the land question and restoring the rule of law are some of the challenges a government to come out of the on-going talks for a negotiated political settlement to the country's decade-long crisis between Zanu PF and the MDC will face. The agenda of the talks being facilitated by South African President Thabo Mbeki has a number of issues the protagonists should find solutions to before the negotiations' August 4 deadline. These include the rule of law, which implies the need to stop the prevailing culture of violence and impunity, upholding property rights and free political activity, and reforming state organs and institutions. Many of the state institutions have been militarised and the army is now interfering with civilian affairs to the extent of threatening to refuse to salute elected officials. Respecting the principle of the separation of powers, including an end to interference in the judiciary, would be a major challenge for the new government. The new government would also have to address the chaotic land reform programme which has sabotaged agriculture and precipitated the current economic meltdown, while spawning starvation. The new government would also have to stop the persecution of political opponents, ethnic minorities and other weaker groups which have borne the brunt of state brutality for

years. Zimbabwe has been plagued by repression, violence and corruption since 1980. The sanctions by the United States and the European Union are linked to these issues and they would be difficult to remove unless underlying problems are first addressed. Political analysts argued that it would be difficult for sanctions imposed by the United States, Britain and European Union to be lifted overnight even if a political solution to the crisis is found. Sanctions, especially those imposed by the US, would take longer to be removed because they were imposed by Congress through the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001. The Act would have to be repealed, the analysts said. In the memorandum of understanding signed between Zanu PF and the two formations of the MDC, the parties agreed to find solutions aimed at restoring economic stability, revisiting the land question, and promoting equality, national healing and the rule of law. They also agreed to find a solution on how to deal with institutional reforms, among them the demilitarisation of parastatals and government departments. Most of the issues on the agenda, analysts observed, would take a long time to deal with. Meanwhile, the Morgan Tsvangirai-led MDC has denied instigating the imposition of US sanctions on 17 Zimbabwean entities propping up President Robert Mugabe's government arguing that the matter was a bilateral issue between the southern African nation and the super power. The US last week slammed Zimbabwean companies with sanctions, among them parastatals, linked to Mugabe's regime. Acting MDC spokesperson Tapiwa Mashakada said his party neither played a role in the imposition of the sanctions nor benefited from them despite Zanu PF accusations that they were behind the embargoes. Tsvangirai however has been on record as supporting targeted sanctions against top Zanu PF officials and supporters. Mashakada said: "The MDC is a political party and the sanctions are a government to government affair. The MDC has nothing to do with that, the sanctions are a dispute between two independent governments and it's up to them to solve the disputes." "If we were in government we would have a say in as far as sanctions are concerned, but we are not. Zanu PF has blamed us on the sanctions but that is just propaganda." He said instead of looking at the sanctions, people should think broader and find out why they were imposed. "The debate should focus at the causes of the sanctions. These need to be looked at and solved. We are not beneficiaries of the sanctions but we want to be beneficiaries of a functional government." US President George Bush last Friday signed a new Executive Order that expanded sanctions against the "illegitimate government" of Zimbabwe which he said perpetrated politically-motivated violence. The US passed a sanctions law on the country in 2001, the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA). The objectives of the ZIDERA were to support the people of Zimbabwe in their struggle to effect peaceful democratic change, to achieve broad-based and equitable economic growth and restore rule of law. The Zimbabwe government argued that the sanctions were hurting ordinary people and were meant to effect regime change in the country. US ambassador to Zimbabwe James McGee this week said the US had nothing against the ordinary people and that the recent sanctions were meant to force Mugabe to respect the will of voters as expressed in the March 29 elections. Tsvangirai out-pollled Mugabe in the presidential election but failed to garner the required votes to assume the presidency. The opposition leader withdrew from a presidential run-off that was set for June 27 in protest at escalating political violence against his supporters, but the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission went ahead with the poll arguing that his pull-out had no legal effect. "Ordinary Zimbabweans clearly stated a

desire for change in the March 29 elections and the US wants to see the will of the Zimbabwean people respected," McGee said in written responses to questions from the Zimbabwe Independent. "Pursuant to that goal we have sanctioned those people responsible for thwarting the will of ordinary Zimbabweans." McGee said the new sanctions built upon existing embargoes put into force in 2001 and 2003 against more than 100 individuals in the inner-circle of the Zimbabwe government who have contributed to the undermining of democratic processes and institutions in the country. "These are targeted sanctions that focus on the regime and its supporters not on the people of Zimbabwe or the broader economy. American businesses are free to do business with any Zimbabwean, individuals or companies that are not on the sanctions list," McGee said. "The US is committed to provide humanitarian assistance for as long as it is needed by the people of Zimbabwe," he said. "In addition to this assistance, the US government committed up to \$2,5 million from the US emergency refugee and migration assistance fund to assist Zimbabwean refugees and asylum seekers who have been displaced due to the ongoing violence in the country." The 17 entities designated on July 25 by the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (Ofac) include the Minerals Marketing Corporation of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Mining Development Corporation, the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company, the Agricultural Development Bank of Zimbabwe, the Industrial Development Corporation of Zimbabwe Ltd, the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe, Zimre Holdings Ltd, ZB Financial Holdings Ltd, ZB Bank Ltd, Intermarket Holdings Ltd, and Scotfin Ltd, among others.

- **Zimbabwe: Talks Hit Deadlock Over Mugabe-Tsvangirai Roles: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 31 July 2008.**

South African brokered talks between Zanu PF and the MDC have reportedly hit a brick wall because the ruling party insists Mugabe should lead any unity government. Party insiders have dismissed the optimism expressed by South African President Thabo Mbeki that talks are progressing well, stating instead that Zanu PF negotiators are not willing to budge on Mugabe's position. It has also been made clear by Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa and Labour Minister Nicholas Goche that their mandate at the talks has to fall in line with instructions from the Zanu PF politburo. On Tuesday Tsvangirai flew to South Africa to meet Mbeki, in the first clear sign the talks had reached a deadlock. On Wednesday Mbeki travelled to Harare to meet Mugabe and tried his best to hide the collapsing initiative. 'There are naturally some matters which require the negotiators to come back to consult. That's why they are all here in Harare today,' he told journalists. Mugabe's role in any new government remains a polarizing issue a diplomatic source told Newsreel. 'Any chance of these talks succeeding will be riding on the back of how much Tsvangirai is willing to compromise,' the source said. On Thursday Tsvangirai arrived in Senegal for a meeting with President Abdoulaye Wade, in what some are already seeing as attempts to pile up the diplomatic pressure on Mugabe. A Senegal Foreign Ministry statement said Tsvangirai was in the capital Dakar to 'learn the position and get the advice' of Wade. A similar trip to Angola and other African countries is said to be on the cards, an ominous sign the MDC might be preparing a plan B, should the talks fail. On Wednesday Mbeki insisted the talks will resume on Sunday, but an air of uncertainty now

hangs over any chances of a breakthrough. During an interview with British TV Channel 4 Tsvangirai struck a conciliatory note, arguing Mugabe should be allowed an 'honourable exit.' The MDC President insisted the talks should result in a transitional government that will run the country for not more than 2 years. The behind the scenes deadlock has not appeared to faze Tsvangirai who told journalists in Senegal that the 2 week timetable for the talks was flexible and could be adjusted as the process moves forward.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: 32 MPs Demand Prime Minister's Resignation: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 31 July 2008.**

Somali lawmakers in the country's southwestern town of Baidoa, where the parliament sits, have called on Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein to resign during a meeting on Thursday. A document, signed by 32 Members of Parliament, was handed over to parliament leaders today. MP Nasro Abdisalam, who read the document to journalists in Baidoa, accused Prime Minister Nur Adde's government of "constitutional violations," "misuse of government funds" and "interfering with the Central Bank's affairs." The 32 MPs reached the decision after reading a memo from the Somali parliament's finance subcommittee, which detailed government revenue and expenditure since the Prime Minister's appointment in November. The lawmakers' document called on interim President Abdullahi Yusuf to accept the Prime Minister's resignation, should Nur Adde decide to resign. Government sources in Baidoa tell Garowe Online that "many" of the MPs calling for Prime Minister Nur Adde's resignation are seen as allies of President Yusuf.

23. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Court Stops Bakassi Handover: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 1 August 2008.**

A Federal High Court sitting in Abuja yesterday stopped the Federal Government from ceding the disputed Bakassi Peninsula to the Cameroonian authorities pending the determination of the substantive case pending before it. The Federal Government had said it would hand over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon on August 14, 2008 in line with the judgment of the International Court of Justice following the dispute that raged between the two countries for nearly two decades over the peninsula's ownership. At the resumed hearing of the suit brought before the court by some indigenes of Bakassi to restrain the Federal Government from ceding the oil-rich area, the trial Judge, Justice Mohammed Umar said, "The position of the court is that all parties involved in this matter should maintain the status quo so that the res (substance) of the matter will not be destroyed". The judge added, "It is hereby ordered that parties should

maintain the status quo and should not take any step pending the hearing of all applications." He adjourned further hearing of the matter till October 20, 2008. It could be recalled that Nigeria and Cameroon signed a "Green Tree Agreement" under which the Federal Government agreed to cede the Bakassi peninsula to Yaounde after the International Court of Justice at The Hague ruled that the territory belonged to Cameroon. In the agreement, which was signed in New York City on June 12, 2006, Cameroon was to assume full sovereignty over the peninsula from August 14, 2008. The Cross River Government, represented in the court by its Deputy Director of Civil Litigation, Mr. Bassey U. Bassey, while reacting to the order of the court, said the state government will not obey the order and will go ahead to cede Bakassi to Cameroon. Bassey said, "This order is not capable of being obeyed because this court cannot sit as an appellate court on the judgment of the International Court of Justice at The Hague. All the issues in this case as well as the final cession of Bakassi are fallouts from the judgment of the ICJ". Mr. Kayode Fasetire, counsel representing the Bakassi Indigenes, said the suit was not to challenge the judgment of the ICJ but the modalities for its implementation. He said, "We know that we are bound by the judgment of the ICJ. The Presidency did not submit the Green Tree Agreement to the National Assembly for ratification while the legislature also failed in its oversight functions to call the President to order. We are challenging the Agreement and we are surprised that the President has said he would go ahead to hand over in the face of it. Nigeria has not done what it is supposed to do before implementing the Agreement." The plaintiffs, led by two former chairmen of Bakassi Local Government, Chief Emmanuel Etene and Mr. Ani Esin, are seeking N456 billion as compensation before the cession. They also want the court to order the Federal Government to resettle their people in a place of their choice before the cession and they called for the amendment of the 1999 Constitution to reflect the cession and their relocation to a new home. The Bakassi people told the court that they have rejected the resettlement of the affected people in the newly created Bakassi, saying that, "New Bakassi is already inhabited by people other than Bakassi people and the inhabitants are hostile to the Bakassi refugees". The New Bakassi, they said, was landlocked and ideal for farmers but not fishermen like them. They therefore sought an order of the court "directing the respondents to resettle them at Nsutana Iyata in Cross River or any other area or location in the state where they might choose by way of plebiscite or referendum". The plaintiffs contended that the 206,000 citizens of Bakassi are entitled to be protected and catered for by the Federal Government, alleging that the Cameroonian authority, in whose hands the Federal Government has left their fate, has a history of imposing undue taxes, molesting, assaulting and killing Nigerian citizens in Bakassi. Respondents in the suit are President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the National Assembly, the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), the Governor of Cross River and the Cross River State House of Assembly, the National Boundary Commission, the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Central bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission. Reacting to the court ruling yesterday, Chief Press Secretary to the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Taye Akinyemi told Daily Trust that, "what the court said is that status quo be maintained on the Bakassi issue". The spokesman said the government will comply with the order of the court, but added that the AGF had not seen a copy of the court order. He said, "If he sees it and government studies it carefully, it will be then that the Federal

Government will know whether to appeal against the Judgment or to comply with the order of the court not to cede Bakassi to Cameroon". He said government is bound by the rule of law and as such will obey the order of any court.

- **Côte d'Ivoire: AU Communiqué: [African Union](#) (Addis Ababa): PRESS RELEASE: 24 July 2008.**

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 143rd meeting held on 24 July 2008, received a briefing on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the Additional Agreements, from the AU Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire, Ambassador Ambroise Nyonsaba. Council also received a statement from the Representative of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. Council noted with satisfaction the progress made, concerning the funding of the electoral process. Council encouraged all concerned actors to do their utmost to resolve the logistical problems, in order to enable the presidential election to take place by the 30 November 2008 deadline. Council encouraged the Ivorian parties, as well as their partners, to address, with the same determination, other aspects of the peace process, including the provision of the necessary financial resources to assist the process of disarmament, demobilization and re-integration, as well as the effective functioning of the national civic service, essentially to avoid a pre-election and post-election crisis. Council renewed its gratitude to all actors, both Ivorians and representatives of the international community, for their commitment to the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire, and in particular, pays tribute to His Excellency President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, Facilitator of the Direct Inter-Ivorian Dialogue and current Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

- **Nigeria: No Going Back On N/Delta Summit –FG: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): 1 August 2008.**

Federal Government yesterday debunked rumours that it has abandoned its proposed Niger Delta Summit, saying the plan remains intact on President Umaru Yar'Adua's administration as one panacea to help move the region's development forward. Bayelsa Governor, Chief Timipre Sylva also said his government had put in place strategies that would eliminate militancy in the state in the next one year. Information and Communication Minister, Mr. John Ogar Odey, while responding to questions from journalists yesterday in Yenagoa during a courtesy call on Governor Sylva, said there was no truth in the rumours that the federal government had finally abandoned the idea of the summit. He said what happened was that the government felt that there were several issues involved in the proposed summit that required step-by-step attention and discourse that were ongoing and ultimately would lead to the summit eventually. "All that is required is the understanding of the media and every Nigerian." As far as this administration is concerned, we cannot abandon dialogue on any of the issues that need dialogue; nonetheless a summit on the Niger Delta that we know will move us forward. Of course, there will be summits to move us from one level to the other on issues of peace and national development. Meanwhile, Governor Sylva says that his administration has put in place a new strategy that would ensure that the state is free of militants within

the next one year. In order to address the various concerns of the people, his administration, he added, Bayelsa has adopted a strategy of triple E: Engage and empower the youths as well as enforce the law. He added that his government would next week invite one of the biggest militant groups for a dialogue as a step to making the state free of militants in the next one year. The governor who noted that though there were some levels of agitation in the Niger Delta due to a long period of neglect, Bayelsa had the least record of crime in the country. He said, "It is unfortunate that the picture being painted about this state, most times does not reflect the truth about us; there are certain people just bent on presenting this state in a very bad light. But you have seen for yourselves that this is the oasis of peace in the Niger Delta, Bayelsa is one of the most peaceful states if not the most peaceful in the country. We record the least crime rate in Bayelsa but it is exaggerated beyond belief. We are gradually getting used to that now but we are certain people will gradually begin to come and they will see what is exactly on ground. That is why we encourage this kind of event that will bring people into the state to see that we are not in a war zone at all." He maintained, "Since I came in, we have adopted a strategy of engaging and empowering the youths and it is actually yielding results. Between this week and next, we are looking at mobilizing one of the biggest militants. After that, other militants will follow and in the next one year, or less than that, Bayelsa will be completely free of militants. The militancy is not actually here, it is very, very far away in the creeks, they don't really come to disturb anybody, people come to Bayelsa freely and of course, even in the creeks, they don't really disturb anybody. We have not had any form of kidnapping in Bayelsa for a long time, whatever you hear about, it is not here in Bayelsa but whenever people say Niger Delta, people tend to think that it is Bayelsa because Bayelsa is the epicentre of the Niger Delta. Kidnapping has not happened here for at least one year now." The governor stated that his government was in full support and has keyed into the Niger Delta Master Plan initiated by the federal government, and is at present programming all its development plans into the overall Niger Delta Master Plan.

- **Côte d'Ivoire: Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Operation to 31 January 2009 : United Nations (New York): DOCUMENT: 29 July 2008.**

The Security Council today decided to keep United Nations and French peacekeepers in Côte d'Ivoire through 31 January 2009 to help stage free and fair elections set for late November, emphasizing the importance of the international community's continuing support in helping the West African country strengthen its electoral systems and processes. Acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1826 (2008), by which it decided to renew the mandates of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and of the French forces which support it, "in particular to support the organization in Côte d'Ivoire of free, open, fair and transparent elections". Also by the text, the Council expressed its intention to review by 31 January the mandates of UNOCI and its French support unit, as well as the Mission's troop levels, in light of the progress achieved in implementing key steps of the peace and electoral processes. It requested Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to provide a report in that regard three weeks before that date, including benchmarks for a possible

phased drawdown of UNOCI troop levels, “taking into consideration the electoral process and the situation on the ground, and in particular the security conditions”.The Council went on to “strongly encourage” the defence and security forces of Côte d’Ivoire and the Forces nouvelles jointly to develop a comprehensive plan for the security of the elections, in close coordination with President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, Facilitator of the Inter-Ivorian dialogue, and with the technical and logistical support of UNOCI and the French forces. Further by the resolution, the Council urged the Ivorian political parties to comply fully with the Code of Good Conduct for the elections, which they signed under the auspices of the Secretary-General, and the Ivorian authorities in particular to allow equitable access to the public media. The text also stressed the importance of ensuring equal protection of and respect for the human rights of every Ivorian as they related to the electoral system, and in particular of removing obstacles and challenges to women’s participation and full involvement in public life. By other terms of the text, the Council encouraged the Ivorian parties to make further concrete progress, particularly in removing the remaining logistical obstacles impeding the identification of the population, the registration of voters, the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the unification and restructuring of defence and security forces, and the restoration of State authority throughout the country. The meeting began at 10:10 a.m. and ended at 10:15 a.m.

Resolution

The full text of resolution 1826 (2008) reads as follows:

“The Security Council,

“Recalling its previous resolutions, in particular resolutions 1739 (2007), 1765 (2007) and 1795 (2008), and the statements of its President relating to the situation in Côte d’Ivoire, and resolution 1777 (2007) on the situation in Liberia,

“Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and unity of Côte d’Ivoire, and recalling the importance of the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference and regional cooperation,

“Recalling that it endorsed the Agreement signed by President Laurent Gbagbo and Mr. Guillaume Soro in Ouagadougou on 4 March 2007 (“the Ouagadougou political Agreement” S/2007/144), and the following Supplementary Agreements, as recommended by the African Union,

“Recalling that it welcomed the announcement by the Ivorian authorities of the organization on 30 November 2008 of the first round of the presidential elections (S/PRST/2008/11) and that it encouraged the Ivorian parties to redouble their efforts to meet this commitment, and the international community to bring continued support to this effect,

“Expressing again its appreciation to President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso (“the Facilitator”) for his continued efforts to support the peace process in Côte d’Ivoire, in particular through the Ouagadougou Political Agreement follow-up mechanisms, commending and encouraging the continued efforts of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (“ECOWAS”) to promote peace and stability in Côte d’Ivoire, and reiterating its full support for them,

“Stressing again the importance of the international consultative organ participating in the meetings of the evaluation and monitoring committee, as an observer, and recalling that it may be consulted at any time by the Facilitator,

“Reiterating its strong condemnation of any attempt to destabilize the peace process by force, and expressing its intention to examine without delay the situation after any such attempt, on the basis of a report by the Secretary-General,

“Having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General dated 10 July 2008 (S/2008/451),

“Noting with concern, in spite of the sustained improvement of the overall human rights situation, the persistence of cases of human rights violations against civilians, including numerous acts of sexual violence, stressing that the perpetrators must be brought to justice, and reiterating its firm condemnation of all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Côte d’Ivoire,

“Recalling its resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict and the subsequent conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict pertaining to parties in the armed conflict of Côte d’Ivoire (S/AC.51/2008/5),

“Recalling also its resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security, and its resolution 1674 (2006) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, condemning any sexual violence and encouraging the Secretary-General to mainstream a gender perspective in the implementation of UNOCI’s mandate,

“Emphasizing the importance of the continuing support of the United Nations system and the international community for strengthening the capacity of the Government of Côte d’Ivoire and of the electoral bodies to organize the electoral process,

“Determining that the situation in Côte d’Ivoire continues to pose a threat to international peace and security in the region,

“Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

“1. Decides to renew the mandates of the United Nations Operation in Côte d’Ivoire (UNOCI) and of the French forces which support it, as determined in resolution 1739 (2007), until 31 January 2009, in particular to support the organization in Côte d’Ivoire of free, open, fair and transparent elections;

“2. Requests UNOCI, within its existing resources and mandate, to support the full implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and its Supplementary Agreements, and in particular to contribute to bringing the security needed by the peace process and by the electoral process and to provide logistical support to the Independent Electoral Commission for the preparation and the holding of the elections;

“3. Strongly encourages the Defence and Security Force of Côte d’Ivoire and the Forces nouvelles to jointly develop a comprehensive plan for the security of the elections, in close coordination with the Facilitator, with the technical and logistical support of UNOCI which is supported by the French forces;

“4. Encourages the Ivorian parties to make further concrete progress, in particular in removing the remaining logistical obstacles that impede the identification of the population, the registration of voters, the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the cantonment and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the unification and restructuring of defence and security forces and the restoration of State authority throughout the country;

“5. Urges the political parties to comply fully with the Code of Good Conduct for elections which they signed under the auspices of the Secretary-General, and in particular urges the Ivorian authorities to allow equitable access to public media;

“6. Calls upon all concerned parties to ensure that the protection of women and children is addressed in the implementation of the Ouagadougou political Agreement as well as the post-conflict reconstruction and recovery phases, including continued monitoring and reporting of the situation of women and children;

“7. Stresses the importance of ensuring the equal protection of and respect for human rights of every Ivorian as they relate to the electoral system, and in particular of removing obstacles and challenges to women’s participation and full involvement in public life;

“8. Invites the signatories of the Ouagadougou political Agreement to take the necessary steps to protect vulnerable civilian populations, including by guaranteeing the voluntary return, reinstallation, reintegration and security of displaced persons, with the support of the United Nations system, and to fulfil in this regard their commitments in accordance with the Ouagadougou political Agreement and their obligations under international humanitarian law;

“9. Expresses its intention to review by 31 January 2009 the mandates of UNOCI and the French forces which support it, as well as the level of troops of UNOCI, in the light of the progress achieved in the implementation of the key steps of the peace process and of the progress of the electoral process, and requests the Secretary-General to provide to it a report in this regard three weeks before this date, including some benchmarks for a possible phased drawdown of the troop levels of UNOCI, taking into consideration the electoral process and the situation on the ground and in particular the security conditions;

“10. Reiterates its full support to the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Côte d’Ivoire, recalls that he shall certify that all stages of the electoral process provide all the necessary guarantees for the holding of open, free, fair and transparent presidential and legislative elections in accordance with international standards and reaffirms its support to the five-criteria framework elaborated by the Special Representative and referred to in document S/2008/250;

“11. Recalls that the publication of the electoral list is a crucial step in the electoral process, calls upon the Independent Electoral Commission, the technical operators, the authorities of Côte d’Ivoire and the political parties to redouble their efforts in this regard and requests the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to certify it explicitly;

“12. Welcomes the financial assistance provided by donors to the Independent Electoral Commission, which made it possible to finance the electoral process;

“13. Calls upon the donors to increase in particular their financial support to the cantonment, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants and militia and to the redeployment of State administration throughout the country;

“14. Commends the Representative of the Secretary-General for his efforts to facilitate the reinsertion of former combatants through the launching of one thousand micro projects, and encourages donors to contribute to their financing;

“15. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to take the necessary measures to ensure full compliance in UNOCI with the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuses and to keep the Council informed, and urges troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including predeployment awareness training, and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of such conduct involving their personnel;

“16. Recalls the importance of the provisions of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and of the Supplementary Agreements, including paragraph 8.1 of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and paragraphs 8 and 9 of Supplementary Agreement number 3, and urges the Ivorian political forces to rely on the mediation by the Facilitator, for any major difficulty concerning the electoral process;

“17. Commends the Facilitator for continuing to support the process to settle the crisis in Côte d’Ivoire, and requests UNOCI to continue to assist him and his Special Representative in Abidjan, Mr. Boureima Badini, in the conduct of the facilitation, including by helping the Facilitator, as appropriate and upon his request, to carry out his arbitration role according to the provisions of paragraph 8.1 of the Ouagadougou political Agreement and paragraphs 8 and 9 of Supplementary Agreement number 3;

“18. Requests the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed of the situation and of the preparation of the electoral process, including the process of the establishment of the

electoral list, and notably by providing to it a report in this regard no later than 15 October 2008;

“19. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.”

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Sarkozy Calls Mediation Efforts Courageous: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 27 July 2008.**

French President Nicolas Sarkozy called South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki mediation efforts in Zimbabwe "bold and courageous" for bringing the two Zimbabwean political leaders together for talks. "We wholehearted support the courageous mediation by President Mbeki and back the idea to give him more time," the French President said following the European Union/South Africa Summit held in the French city of Bordeaux. He appealed to the international community to support President Thabo Mbeki's mediation efforts in Zimbabwe. Mr Sarkozy, whose nation holds the rotating European Union (EU) Presidency, said Mbeki will continue to get support from the EU in his mediation efforts. Both Presidents, in a joint-statement released at the end of the summit, expressed their concern at the prevailing situation in Zimbabwe and its negative impact on the sub-region. Mr Sarkozy said while he had plans to speak to Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, the EU had no intention to interfere in the mediation of a negotiated solution to Zimbabwe's political crisis. President Mbeki was mandated by the 14-member Southern African Development Community last March to mediate between Zimbabwe's rival parties. Under Mbeki's mediation efforts, last week, the two parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Harare where they agreed to commit themselves to a dialogue and they have subsequently started formal talks in a secret place in South Africa's capital Pretoria. Mr Mbeki said negotiations among Zimbabwe's parties were going well in Pretoria, adding that the talks should be concluded with urgency. "The talks are proceeding well. They'll aim to be concluded in two weeks time," said Presidential spokesperson Mukoni Ratshitanga. The talks are aimed at finding a lasting solution to the country's problems, such as those discussed between African leaders at the African Union (AU) Summit in Egypt. One of the summit's resolutions was that a government of national unity be formed. The EU recalled its earlier view that a transitional government should be established in Zimbabwe. The EU had favoured sanctions to pressure Mugabe to share power with the opposition but South African President Thabo Mbeki has argued against them. The EU said it respected fully the will of the Zimbabwean people as expressed on March 2008, with a view to the organisation of early free, fair and democratic elections. They called on the Zimbabwean parties to act with urgency and cooperate in good faith towards the successful conclusion of the negotiations. In light of the negative reports by SADC, the AU and the Pan-African Parliament observers on the run-off election held on 27 June 2008, they further stressed the need to create an environment conducive for democracy. South Africa stressed the need for all to respect the right of the Zimbabwean people to determine their future free of outside interference and that the most urgent task now is to assist the leadership of Zimbabwe across the political divide to negotiate an agreement that will help Zimbabwe solve its challenges. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, leader of the ruling party

ZANU-PF, was declared the winner of the Presidential run-off held on June 27 and was immediately sworn in for a new five-year term. He was the only candidate as Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the bigger faction of the opposition MDC, withdrew. Mr Tsvangirai refused to accept Mr Mugabe as the fair winner. Mr Mugabe has not appointed a new cabinet or sworn in a new Parliament.

- **Zimbabwe: Women's Coalition Hails Talks: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.**

WOMEN'S Coalition of Zimbabwe has hailed the ongoing talks between Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations, describing them as a welcome development towards solving the current economic challenges besetting the country. Addressing a Press conference in Harare on Wednesday, the chairperson of the non-governmental organisation's co-ordinating committee Mrs Emilia Muchawa said a successful outcome of the talks would help get women and the rest of Zimbabwe out of the current economic situation. "As women, we are the worst affected by the current crisis in the country, hence we take this opportunity to remind all the parties to the negotiations that women have been uniquely disproportionately affected by the Zimbabwean crisis and, therefore, their concerns need to be articulated specifically," said Mrs Muchawa. She urged parties to the negotiations to speed up the process, saying as a women's organisation they are rallying behind the Memorandum of Understanding. "As the women of Zimbabwe, we are keen to see a speedy resolution of the crisis as its effects have seen women and girls in the country failing to access essential social services such as health care, education, shelter and food, which are all fundamental human rights." The coalition called on the negotiating parties to adhere to United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 of October 2000 which provides for the inclusion of women in nation building initiatives. In addition, Mrs Muchawa said the MoU, signed on July 21 2008, must make reference to gender specific issues. "In particular as Zimbabwean women we urge the negotiating parties to recognise the special needs of women and girls in the resolution of this crisis," she said.

- **Zimbabwe: Pact Shames West – Sata: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 26 July 2008.**

ZAMBIAN opposition leader Mr Michael Sata says the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Zanu-PF and the two MDC formations has "shamed the West". The West had for a long time been accusing the SADC-appointed Zimbabwe mediator, South African President Thabo Mbeki, of failing to bring Zanu-PF and the MDC formations to the negotiating table, Mr Sata, leader of the Patriotic Front, said. The Post of Zambia, quoted Mr Sata, whose stance against the West's interference in African countries internal affairs is well known, expressing his confidence that the MoU and the ongoing talks would yield positive results. "When I said the West should stop demonising (President) Mugabe, the West and its puppets criticised me. They called me all sorts of names. But what I meant was that the only way to solve the political crisis in Zimbabwe is by using a similar political formula as I did with (Zambian President) Levy (Mwanawasa)." Just the other day, I was vindicated when the political leaders agreed to

end the political crisis by signing the MoU. Indeed, I've been vindicated," he said. Mr Sata reiterated his position that the West should leave Africa alone to handle its problems.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: Security Council Terminates Mandate of United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea: United Nations (New York): DOCUMENT: 30 July 2008.**

The Security Council today terminated the mandate of the eight-year-old peacekeeping force monitoring the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea and requested UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to explore further with the two Horn of Africa countries the possibility of a United Nations presence in the area. Unanimously adopting resolution 1827 (2008), the Council decided to end the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) when its mandate expires on Thursday, 31 July, and called on the two sides to cooperate fully with the world body in the process of liquidating the operation. It also demanded that Ethiopia and Eritrea comply fully with their obligations under the Algiers Agreements, "to show maximum restraint and refrain from any threat or use of force against each other, and to avoid provocative military activities". The Council emphasized that the termination was without prejudice to Ethiopia's and Eritrea's obligations under the Algiers accords, by which both countries agreed that the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission would be final and binding, and that their respective forces would respect the integrity of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). Expressing regret that Eritrea's obstructions towards UNMEE had "reached a level so as to undermine the basis of the Mission's mandate and compelled [it] to temporarily relocate from Eritrea", the Council commended efforts by the Mission and its military and civilian personnel to accomplish their duties despite the difficult circumstances, and expressed also its deep appreciation for the contributions and dedication of troop-contributing countries to UNMEE's work. The Council also expressed strong support for the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General and the international community to engage with Ethiopia and Eritrea to help them implement the Algiers Agreements, normalize their relations, promote stability between them, and lay the foundation for a comprehensive and lasting peace between them. It urged both countries to accept the Secretary-General's good offices. By other terms of the text, the Council took note of the Secretary-General's letter to the Council, dated 28 July 2008, which reports on the Secretariat's consultations with the parties, based on the following options, which were outlined in his earlier report: (a) a small military observer mission in Ethiopia; (b) a small political and military liaison office in Ethiopia; and (c) a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General based in New York. The Secretary-General notes that, while those options were designed as conflict-prevention measures aimed at demonstrating the international community's continued commitment to a peaceful resolution of the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea pending the establishment of an environment conducive to the normalization of their relations, "both parties have rejected the options put before them". While welcoming the parties' earlier declarations that they had no intention of restarting the 1998-2000 war, the Secretary-General nevertheless believes that the risk of escalating tensions in the border area and of

a resumption of hostilities, “by accident or design, following the withdrawal of UNMEE, remains a reality”. He also remains concerned about the destabilizing effect for the Horn of Africa of the continuing crisis and its negative impact on prospects for the region’s economic development and the welfare of its people. Following the Council’s vote, Jan Grauls (Belgium), the resolution’s main sponsor, underlined that the border dispute remained and the United Nations was withdrawing without having been able to assist Ethiopia and Eritrea. Neither the good offices of the Secretary-General nor constructive proposals by Council members had been able to achieve their objectives. “The work of UNMEE is coming to an end -- not because its mandate has been implemented, but because it has become impossible for [the Mission] to implement it.” Recalling that Eritrea had restricted the Mission’s freedom of movement to the point of leaving the buffer zone it was supposed to monitor, he said its mandate had also been restricted by Ethiopia’s refusal to implement the decision of the Boundary Commission. “The responsibility for the current impasse falls on the parties and on the parties alone.” Only they could now decide to exit the vicious cycle by choosing the path of dialogue, and the international community remained ready to assist them. Belgium, like most other members of the Council, would have preferred to maintain a United Nations presence on the ground as a tangible symbol of its preparedness to seek a lasting solution, but the two countries were refusing its presence. It was to be hoped that once tension around UNMEE and its future had settled, a climate more conducive to dialogue would emerge. In other business today, the Council paid tribute to Marcello Spatafora, outgoing Permanent Representative of Italy, who said after accepting the Council President’s best wishes, that his experience had been “very rewarding”. While there had been many positive achievements during his tenure, there had also been frustrations, especially those arising from lack of success in meeting the expectations of the suffering on the ground. Indeed, there were ever increasing calls for a more effective Security Council. To answer that call, the Council must strengthen its “listening culture”. It must be more open and receptive to the feelings and values prevailing among the wider United Nations membership and the overall international community. He went on to say that the Council must work harder to inspire the broader international community’s ownership in its proceedings. Without such a feeling of ownership, it would be difficult at the end of the day to ensure implementation and compliance. Further, Council members must make every possible effort to understand each other, which was a sign of strength, not weakness. The Council must never lose sight of the fact that, at the end of the day, its goal was to make a difference on the ground. At stake was the Council’s credibility and relevance.

The meeting began at 10:20 a.m. and ended at 10:40 a.m.

Resolution

The full text of resolution 1827 (2008) reads as follows:

“The Security Council,

“Reaffirming all its previous resolutions and statements of its President pertaining to the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea,

“Stressing once again its unwavering commitment to the peace process and to the full and expeditious implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000 (S/2000/601) and the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000 (S/2000/1183) (hereinafter referred to as “the Algiers Agreements”) as a basis for peaceful and cooperative relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea,

“Considering that Ethiopia and Eritrea bear a shared responsibility in the implementation of the Algiers Agreements, in which they agreed that the delimitation and demarcation determinations of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) shall be final and binding and that their forces shall respect the integrity of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ),

“Reaffirming that the primary responsibility for achieving a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the border dispute and normalizing their relations rests with Ethiopia and Eritrea, and that the Security Council stands ready to assist them in addressing the underlying fundamental issues, taking into account the interests and concerns of both countries,

“Regretting that Eritrea’s obstructions towards the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) reached a level so as to undermine the basis of the Mission’s mandate and compelled UNMEE to temporarily relocate from Eritrea, stressing that this relocation was without prejudice to the Algiers Agreements and to the integrity of the TSZ, and recalling the Security Council’s previous condemnation of Eritrea’s lack of cooperation,

“Commending the efforts made by UNMEE and its military and civilian personnel to accomplish its duties, despite the difficult circumstances, and expressing its deep appreciation for the contribution and dedication of the troop-contributing countries to the work of UNMEE,

“Having considered the special report of the Secretary-General of 7 April 2008 (S/2008/226), the letters from Ethiopia and Eritrea dated respectively 17 and 18 June 2008, in response to the letters of the President of the Security Council of 10 June 2008, and the letter from the Secretary-General of 28 July 2008 (S/2008/496), in response to the letter of the President of the Security Council of 3 July 2008,

“1. Decides to terminate UNMEE’s mandate effective on 31 July 2008, emphasizes that this termination is without prejudice to Ethiopia and Eritrea’s obligations under the Algiers Agreements and calls upon both countries to cooperate fully with the United Nations including in the process of liquidation of UNMEE;

“2. Demands Ethiopia and Eritrea to comply fully with their obligations under the Algiers Agreements, to show maximum restraint and refrain from any threat or use of force against each other, and to avoid provocative military activities;

“3. Strongly supports the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General and the international community to engage with Ethiopia and Eritrea to help them to implement the Algiers Agreements, to normalize their relations, to promote stability between them, and to lay the foundation for a comprehensive and lasting peace between them, and urges again Ethiopia and Eritrea to accept the Secretary-General’s good offices;

“4. Requests the Secretary-General to further explore with Ethiopia and Eritrea the possibility of a United Nations presence in Ethiopia and Eritrea in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security;

“5. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Council regularly informed of the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea and to make recommendations as appropriate;

“6. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.”

- **East Africa: Urgent Need for Dialogue After Departure of Unmee, Says Analyst: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 1 August 2008.**

Tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea are unlikely to escalate immediately following the departure of UN peacekeepers, but a mechanism should be found to quickly engage the two neighbours, an analyst said. The Security Council terminated the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) on 31 July. "The decision is basically a formalisation of the reality because UNMEE has really not been on the ground," Fouad Hikmat, Horn of Africa director for the International Crisis Group (ICG), told IRIN. Ethiopia and Eritrea have both said a return to conflict is unlikely, but other analysts fear an accidental trigger or clash could ignite the situation, leading to a flare-up in the absence of a buffer. "Both countries do not want to go to war, but the situation is very sensitive and the troops are close to each other," Hikmat added. "Hopefully the two will now try to engage." UNMEE has begun removing its equipment and assets, including 320 military personnel, in Ethiopia. "The mission was sent at the request of both countries to keep the peace after a two-year war claimed at least 70,000 Ethiopian and Eritrean lives," UNMEE's acting head Azouz Ennifar, said. "It was a difficult mission in geographically harsh locations, but the men and women who served ... did not flinch." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon regretted the decision, saying both parties had rejected options for a possible follow-on presence that had been suggested at the request of the Council. "[The Secretary-General] expresses hope that the parties would be able to break the current stalemate and create conditions necessary for the normalisation of their relations, which is key to peace and stability in the region," he said. Hikmat called for the appointment of an international envoy to kick-start an engagement between the two. "There is no clear mechanism for engagement at the moment," he told IRIN on 1 August. "A special envoy could energise the process of engagement." Responding to the Council decision, Ethiopia said dialogue

was the best way to resolve the stalemate, but added that Eritrea had frustrated UNMEE and retained a "provocative" stance. "Ethiopia has a firm stand that the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea ought to be solved through peaceful means," an information ministry statement said. Eritrea said UNMEE's termination was "overdue". "UNMEE's presence was really symbolic, it was not a peace enforcement force, it does not have the capability of deterrent - so it's not going to have any impact," spokesman Yemane Gebremeskel told the BBC. "Legally Ethiopia's occupation of Eritrea is untenable - it cannot be accepted by the international community - I think our focus has been on the legal end and the diplomatic dimensions of the issue," he added.

Border tensions

The two countries fought a bloody war from 1998-2000 over their 1,000km border. A peace accord signed in Algiers in 2000 set up an independent commission to defuse tensions by defining the border. The commission issued a ruling in 2002 placing Badme, a symbolic border town over which the war had broken out, in Eritrea. Physical demarcation of the commission-defined border on the ground never took place. Amid rising tensions, a 4,200-strong UN force was deployed to monitor the cessation of hostilities and to help ensure the observance of security commitments by both parties. But relations between Eritrea and UNMEE deteriorated, forcing an end to military operations. UNMEE helicopter flights were stopped and fuel supplies cut. Without enough fuel, the force found itself unable to transport personnel, generate electricity and refrigerate food or medical supplies.

War risks

In June, the ICG warned that the border impasse carried serious risks of a new war and was a major source of instability in the Horn of Africa, most critically for Somalia. "Both regimes have used it as an excuse to enhance their domestic power at the expense of democracy and economic growth, thus reducing the attractiveness to them of diplomatic compromise," it warned in a report, *Beyond the Fragile Peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea: Averting New War*. "They support the other's domestic rebels, and each is convinced that the fall of the other's regime is imminent and the only real solution to the border dispute." ICG called for a virtual demarcation of the border, transformation of UNMEE into a more mobile, faster-reacting tripwire mechanism and the appointment by the UN of a special negotiator to manage an alternative forum for dialogue. "The immediate priority is to persuade Ethiopia to withdraw its troops from all land the [border commission] awarded Eritrea and for Eritrea to pull its army back from the TSZ [Transitional Security Zone]," the ICG warned.

- **Somalia: AU Condemns Killing of AMISON Peacekeeper By Anti-Personnel Mine: [African Union](#) (Addis Ababa): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.**

The African Union has today lost one of its peacekeepers killed in the explosion of an anti-personnel mine planted and triggered by insurgent elements opposed to peace and

stability in Somalia. The peacekeeper was killed while on a routine road sweeping check for explosive devices. The African Union unequivocally condemns this cowardly and barbaric act perpetrated against an AMISOM peacekeeper deployed in Mogadishu to safeguard Somali lives. This act aimed at undermining the peace process in Somalia will not deter the African Union, the people of Somalia and the United Nations in their determination and commitment to intensify their efforts towards peace and stability, in line with the recently concluded Agreement in Djibouti.

- **Sudan: Mandate of UN-African Union Mission in Darfur Extended By One Year: [United Nations](#) (New York): 1 August 2008.**

The Security Council tonight extended by one year the mandate of the joint United Nations-African Union (AU) peacekeeping mission in the strife-torn western Sudanese region of Darfur. With [14 votes in favour and an abstention by the United States](#), a resolution was adopted to extend the mission known as UNAMID – which was authorized by the Council exactly one year ago – for another 12 months to 31 July 2009. The current mandate expires tonight. "The United States abstained because language added to the resolution would send the wrong signal to Sudanese President [Omar al-Bashir] and undermine efforts to bring him to justice, US Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff told the 15-member panel after the vote. Earlier this month, Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo of the International Criminal Court (ICC) announced that he is seeking an arrest warrant for Mr. Bashir for "criminal responsibility in relation to 10 counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes." Since taking over from an AU peace monitoring mission at the start of this year, UNAMID has just under 10,000 uniformed personnel in place, far short of the approximately 26,000 troops and police officers expected when the force reaches full deployment. A report by a group of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) this week found that the peacekeeping mission faces critical shortages in troops, other personnel, helicopters, equipment and logistics. UNAMID chief Rodolphe Adada said he concurred with the report and called on the international community to help out with the shortages so that the mission can carry out its mandate. A spokesperson for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon echoed those remarks today, saying it was vital that UNAMID be given the helicopters and other necessary capabilities. The mission reported today that the security situation in Darfur, an impoverished and arid region, remains relatively calm. Mission staff continue to conduct routine patrols and escorts.

- **Sudan: Helicopters Top List of 'Shameful' Missing Equipment: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 31 July 2008.**

A year after the UN Security Council authorised the establishment of a 26,000-strong force for the troubled western Sudanese Darfur region, not a single one of the 18 transport helicopters required has been offered, effectively undermining the work of the peacekeepers, a report stated. "Early this month peacekeepers were attacked in Darfur," Amjad Atallah, a spokesman for the Save Darfur Coalition said. "They were outmanned and outgunned. Because no country has provided helicopters for the UN force there was no back-up and seven peacekeepers paid with their lives." It is time the international

community got serious about enabling peacekeepers to do their job of protecting civilians and handed over these helicopters."The force, known as UNAMID, has so far deployed about 9,500 men, many formerly serving in the African Union force that was replaced by the Blue Berets. A possible extension of its mandate was discussed by the Security Council on 31 July. The report, *Grounded: the International Community's Betrayal of UNAMID*, however, noted that questions of resources were much deeper than just lack of helicopters. Many other basic supplies, from boots to ration packs, had also yet to be provided."This report sets out for the first time which states have the necessary helicopters and estimates how many are available for deployment to Darfur," former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Lakhdar Brahimi, former president Jimmy Carter and Graça Machel said in a foreword. The report was endorsed by various organisations working on Darfur."It identifies a number of countries - including the Czech Republic, India, Italy, Romania, Spain and Ukraine - that have large numbers of helicopters that meet the required specifications and are not on mission or mission rotation elsewhere," the elders, who recently visited Darfur, added."Many of these helicopters are gathering dust in hangars or flying in air shows when they could be saving lives in Darfur."The report comes after a coalition of more than 50 African and international human rights and civil society organisations urged world leaders to keep their promises and not condemn millions of Darfurians to more fear and suffering, without protection from violence. In a 28 July report, *Putting People First: The Protection Challenge Facing UNAMID in Darfur*, the coalition said UNAMID was hamstrung by lack of equipment, training and uniformed personnel as well as its own shortcomings."The people of Darfur deserve more than empty words and broken promises," spokesman Dismas Nkunda said. "The international community needs to urgently bolster its support to the brave, mostly African peacekeepers. The truth is stark but simple; the international community's failure to act is costing lives."UNAMID Joint Special Representative Rodolphe Adada concurred with the report in its major findings, but said the force was continuing to do everything it could to fulfil its tasks and provide as much protection possible for the people of Darfur, humanitarian workers and for its own personnel. Force Commander Martin Luther Agwai too urged the international community to honour its responsibilities to the force. "We remain desperately under-manned and poorly equipped...our long shopping list of missing equipment makes for shameful reading," he wrote in an op-ed on 31 July. Aid agencies estimate that 200,000 people have died since conflict erupted in Darfur in 2003, while 4.5 million have been directly affected, including over two million people forced to flee their homes.

- **Sudan: Hope for Abyei's Displaced As Troops Move Out: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 30 July 2008.**

The withdrawal of national army troops from Sudan's oil-rich Abyei region should ease weeks of tension and pave the way for the return of thousands of people displaced by recent fighting in the area, observers said."Those people have now withdrawn," Southern Sudan Army spokesman Major General Daniel Parnyang said. "We got some information yesterday [29 July] that the troops they left behind were leaving, but we are still trying to establish how far they have gone [from Abyei]."Southern Sudan retains an independent military, according to the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA),

while Khartoum controls national forces deployed in Northern Sudan. Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), comprising national and southern forces, were set up as part of the CPA for certain duties and locations. Abyei, situated where the north and south meet, has a special status in the CPA, but the definition of its borders and administration has stalled and the area has become a flashpoint in the implementation of the complex accord. Khartoum troops clashed with southern forces in Abyei in May, displacing an estimated 90,000 people. Abyei town was razed to the ground.

Joint leadership plan

A roadmap agreed on 8 June indicated that the two sides would withdraw their forces and allow for the deployment of joint military and police forces. They would also agree on a joint leadership for the area. Under the agreement, joint integrated units of about 300 from each side were to be deployed within 10 days to replace the two armies, which were to have moved out by 30 June. Sources in Juba said the South had completed the withdrawal of its SPLA forces from Abyei, and sent a contingent to form the JIU, but alleged the North had until 28 July kept a battalion in the area. The UN Security Council in June called for an investigation into the clashes, as well as requesting a probe into the role of peacekeepers deployed to the area.

Lack of confidence

The Abyei displaced are staying away, unsure whether war could break out again. They also expressed a lack of confidence in the ability of UN peacekeepers to stop a recurrence of fighting, according to a report by Human Rights Watch (HRW). "Almost the entire population of Abyei fled," a new HRW report, *Abandoning Abyei, Destruction and Displacement*, May 2008, stated. "In mid-July, they were still living in temporary shacks or crowded into homes with other families. Many told [HRW] they are unwilling to return until the Khartoum government fully withdraws its SAF [Sudanese Armed Forces] military forces from the town." "It needs time," Parnyang told IRIN in Juba on 29 July. "All this time, the situation has been very tense. People have been talking about the fear that fighting could break out again. They were waiting for tensions to calm down before they started going back to Abyei." HRW suggested the role of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) in the run-up to, during and after the fighting, together with recommendations for any changes needed either to its mandate or military and security capacity, be made public. According to HRW, UNMIS knew of the tensions in Abyei in 2007, but did not react, partly because its mandate was curtailed. "This was the result of inherent limitations in the UNMIS mandate, lack of sufficient personnel and resources, and movement restrictions imposed by both SAF and the SPLA," HRW said. "Displaced civilians [said] they had lost confidence in the ability of UN peacekeepers to provide protection for them."

Peacekeeping mandate

David Gressly, head of the UN mission in Southern Sudan, said the peacekeepers acted within their mandate. "What I can say is that we believe that the peacekeeping force acted

within its mandate and capacity," he said. "As in all cases of this nature, there is an internal review that would point towards lessons learned. That way we don't repeat what happened." HRW recommends that human rights monitors be deployed to investigate allegations of killing of civilians, looting and destruction of civilian property and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law during the fighting by any armed forces or militia. In addition, it calls for a strengthened contingent of peacekeepers with sufficient manpower and resources to respond effectively to future threats against civilians and full freedom of movement across the entire Abyei area. Gressly had expressed hope that the displaced could return once conditions stabilised. "Basically if these arrangements are fully in place and an administration established - and we expect that to happen shortly - we believe the conditions would be conducive for the return of the IDPS," he said in mid-July. Parnyang confirmed that tensions in the region had subsided: "According to the people, after the SAF begun withdrawing, things [got] a little calm; the situation is not very tense the way it was."

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: FDLR Rebels Surrender, Demand Talks With Government: Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information (Kigali): 1 August 2008.**

In a drama-filled handover of their guns, Rwandan rebels aligned to the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda - FDLR said on Thursday that their return can only be after 'inter-Rwandan dialogue', RNA reports. About 67 rebels from the RUD group (Rassemblement pour l'unité et la démocratie) and a dissident faction of the FDLR surrendered to a joint UN-DRC government reception center in the Lubero area of the North Kivu province. However, the FDLR group told journalists later that putting down their guns did not mean automatic return to Rwanda as it had been anticipated by U.N. and DRC government officials at the site. It is probably the first time that the rebels have decided to put their guns down but rebuked coming back to Rwanda. Up to 20,000 of these Rwanda militias - some who are accused in Kigali of Genocide - have been repatriated as part of the World Bank funded project that has reached some 60,000 former combatants. The demand for what this break-away faction of the FDLR rebels call 'inter-Rwandan dialogue' has been the position held by the group's top hierarchy - who experts say are holding the low rank militias hostage against their will. This position is explained to mean that they want talks with government that should result into a range of reforms in the management of the country - ushering in their high-profile demobilisation. Government of Rwanda has outrightly dismissed this demand instead saying they should return like millions of other Rwandans have over the years from different countries across the region. Among its ranks, are those that left Rwanda after the Genocide as minors and grew up in the jungles. It is this age group that has maintained the flow of surrenders. The older lot however, - that is actually said to have blood on their hands - have rarely appeared. Since 2003, when the FDLR top commander Major General Paul Rwarakabije and Brigadier Jerome Ngendahimana along with a dozen other militias joined government in Kigali, very few top defections have occurred.

- **Rwanda: Deserting Darfur is Not Our Intention – Kagame: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.**

President Kagame, during the usual Presidential Press conference at 'Village Urugwiro yesterday, stressed that withdrawing Rwanda's peacekeepers from Darfur was not an option given the humanitarian crisis there. Kagame explained that instead of what recent media reports implied, Rwanda's threatening Darfur pull-out, the government was instead working on equipping the peace force better. "We are working on equipping our troops because I think the mission and the purpose of the mission has great importance in as far as the lives of people who are affected in Darfur are concerned," he said "we just wouldn't start by abandoning them." He added that there was no excuse, saying, "It's not good to just keep saying 'if there isn't this am going away because that would belittle the importance of the mission, I don't think that is what anybody intends to do," said the president. Kagame pointed out that there were two ways of finding the equipment; "One is what could be provided by the UN using the countries that have means," he said and the second being, "ourselves working on equipping our own troops." In a report entitled "Grounded: the International Community's Betrayal of UNAMID" released Thursday, an international coalition of activists in a report listed able governments around the world which failed to provide even one of the additional helicopters needed for peacekeeping in Sudan's troubled Darfur region. Rwanda has about 2600 troops serving in the UNAMID force. Kagame also said that Rwanda did not give an ultimatum to pull out if Maj. Gen Emmanuel Karake Karenzi's contract as the deputy force commander of UNAMID was not extended. "That is not true," he said "what we did was, we linked it with Karenzi's indictment." Karenzi is among people indicted by a Spanish judge for alleged war crimes, an issue that has caused the UN to hesitate renewing his contract. "First of all, we have a problem with the indictments in a general sense but also with the UN, a body we belong to that should try to be fair to all its members and which is behind the establishment of the ICTR (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda)." He said the tribunal deals with Rwanda's cases had not found any indications of the allegations yet the UN goes "beyond their own institution which they established," "They listen or base their decision on what a French or Spanish judge is saying about somebody from a member country before they put them to work. That itself is strange, and we made this clear to them," Kagame said. The president wondered how the UN would ensure "fair and equitable justice across member countries" given the present scenario. He wondered whether, a judge was to find a list of French implicated in Rwanda's Genocide, the UN would behave in the same way. "Removal of Karenzi on these grounds is not only unfair or even an injustice to Karenzi himself. It's actually an offence and injustice to Rwanda. Our reaction would not just depend on Karenzi as a person and his removal or how he is treated, it will come from how we are being treated in the general context and in relation to these indictments," he added. "Of course it is not overstressing or overreaching ourselves," he stressed, pointing out that it was all about, "fighting for our rights and you will not find us wanting on that."

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Monuc - Our Strategy is Conflict Resolution in an Integrated Approach: [United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (Kinshasa): INTERVIEW: 31 July 2008.**

*General **Bikram Singh** has completed his mandate as MONUC Eastern Division commander, having overseen the Nairobi Communiqué of November 2007 and the Goma peace agreements of January 2008. In an interview with MONUC's website, General Singh explained the challenges he faced, outlined MONUC's military strategy in support of the peace process in eastern DRC, and gave an evaluation of the peace process to date.*

What were the biggest challenges during your mandate? There were a large number of challenges, but the biggest challenge was looking after a vast area with not very substantial resources. I had 14,500 troops but with the vastness of the area, the troop density was one soldier to 145 square kilometres. This was a big challenge along with the lack of intelligence to create the optimum military conditions.

What were your biggest successes as MONUC Eastern Division commander? In conflict management of this nature, success is gauged by an integrated approach, where the mission works along various prongs to ensure conflict resolution. As the Eastern Division commander, I was able to create those military conditions that are necessary to further the political initiatives.

What are the measures being taken to accompany the Nairobi communiqué and the Amani peace programme?

Firstly as far as the Nairobi communiqué is concerned, we have operations ongoing against the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and in identified areas we are slowly building up our combat power, with the intention of forcing the FDLR to enter the Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration (DDRRR) programme. We have operations ongoing against the FDLR. Information operations are also being undertaken and we're assisting DDRRR initiatives in this regard. We are also undertaking, in concert with the government, the economic strangulation of the FDLR to deny them access to illegal mining sites and the siphoning of mineral wealth into neighbouring countries. With regard to the Amani programme, we have created military conditions which have enabled the consolidation of the peace process. We have enhanced deployment in areas where the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) are located, and in areas between warring factions to keep them at bay and to ensure the cease fire on the ground, and this is being monitored very diligently by MONUC's Eastern division.

How do you evaluate the Goma peace process and the Amani programme so far? What kind of reduction have you seen in militia activity and human rights violations on the ground in the last six months? The Goma peace process is moving forward, though slowly, but it's moving in a very deliberate fashion. I do feel that its going to consolidate and intensify and we're going to have conflict resolution very soon on the ground. A few months ago there were 301 ceasefire violations in one month. The Goma peace process is moving forward. But they have calmed down and since June, there has been a marked improvement as far as the violence between the armed groups is concerned. That's a healthy sign, but there are still reports of a large number of human

rights violations, which is a cause of concern. It's being looked into but MONUC military cannot be everywhere. We have more police forces coming into eastern DRC, and I think in a more integrated fashion we'll be able to deploy in every area of the Eastern Division, so that we can ensure that human rights are respected.

What are the main military strategies for MONUC in North Kivu, Ituri and other areas? Where are the blue helmets concentrated? The strategy is essentially for conflict resolution, in a multi pronged integrated strategy. In this context we are deployed along the population centres, and we are deployed in a manner to provide security to various arteries and roads. It's basically to provide military conditions to ensure the consolidation of the peace initiatives. The Kivus are the two provinces that encompass the peace process, and therefore the majority of blue helmets are located in North Kivu, followed by South Kivu.

How successful are the MONUC/FARDC joint patrols? These joint operations are continuing all over the Eastern division, from Ituri to Kisangani and the Kivus, and the performance of the FARDC is improving by the day, and they have a desire to do their job in the right perspective. Wherever these patrols are being undertaken they are able to fulfill their assigned missions. The performance of the FARDC is improving by the day

What are the main challenges for your successor? I think the main challenge for my successor will be to ensure the military conditions to further the political initiatives of the Nairobi communiqué and the Goma peace process. While the Goma peace process entails more defensive measures, operations against the FDLR would have more offensive minded operations as well. That is going to be a major challenge as far as my successor is concerned.

- **Burundi: Government Questions Lack of Weapons as FNL Fighters Assemble: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 28 July 2008.**

Several thousand combatants of the Forces for National Liberation (FNL) have assembled at Rugazi in northwestern Bubanza Province but only a few weapons have been handed in, according to observers. FNL spokesman Pasteur Habimana said 2,450 fighters were in Rugazi and that number would rise to 3,000 as more came in from pre-assembly areas in Bujumbura Rurale. The rebels were required to surrender their weapons to an African Union protection unit, but only 40 weapons had been handed in, according to government spokeswoman Hafsa Mossi. That number of weapons, she added, was very small considering the number of combatants supposed to have them. This had prompted the government to question where other arms were being kept. In a statement issued on 25 July the government said: "All the combatants still holding weapons are considered criminals." It also criticised the FNL for failing to forward the list of its combatants to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM), saying this was evidence the movement was still recruiting fighters in order to meet the number of 21,100 men it says it has. "That is evidence that it [the FNL] has a hidden agenda," the statement added, noting that this violated the peace accord. The group is Burundi's last armed rebel

movement. The move to assemble fighters was welcomed by the chairman of the political directorate, Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo. The envoy, who also represents the South African government in the mediation team, said it was an important step in the peace process. "It opens the way to the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants," he said in a statement. "We expect other FNL combatants to join the assembly areas in the coming days, which will be a confirmation that the peace process is really back on track." The government representative in the mediation process, General Evariste Ndayishimiye, described it as a sign "that can contribute to get things moving forward". We expect other FNL combatants to join the assembly areas in the coming days, which will be a confirmation that the peace process is really back on track

Poor conditions

In Rugazi, residents said it would mark an end to harassment by FNL combatants searching for food. "If they are given food, we can attend to our daily activities without fear," a resident of Rugazi, who requested anonymity, told IRIN. FNL combatants have regularly been accused of looting households or fields for supplies. Only combatants in assembly areas are provided with food and until 28 July, the Rugazi site was only hosting 155 combatants. Habimana deplored the poor living conditions of combatants in the site, saying they did not have enough food, mattresses or medicine. This issue, he added, needed to be discussed in the JVMM, the body overseeing the implementation of the peace accord. The FNL had suspended the regrouping of its combatants on 7 July, demanding recognition as a political party. However, the government objected to the legalisation of the movement unless the regrouping of combatants was realised. It accused the group of recruiting new combatants and delaying the peace process by insisting on political recognition before cantonment. However, FNL leader Agaton Rwasa denied recruiting new combatants. Rwasa returned to Burundi on 30 May after years of exile in Tanzania and has since denounced rebellion. Before his return, he signed an agreement with the government, committing his group to end rebellion. The FNL last attacked Bujumbura's suburbs in May, leaving 33 people dead and at least 20,000 displaced. Observers have hailed the fact that the guns have remained silent since Rwasa's return, saying it could signal the end of conflict.

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WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Military Intelligence, SSS Raid Dokubo's Abuja Home: Leadership (Abuja): 1 August 2008.**

In what appears to be the Federal Government's resolve to beef up security in the country against militant elements of the Niger Delta, a combined team of operatives and law-enforcement agents yesterday raided the Abuja residence of one of the militants' leaders, Mujaheed Asari Dokubo. The joint team of fierce-looking officers of the Nigerian Army and State Security Services (SSS) who laid siege to Dokubo's two buildings at No. 9 Azdope Crescent, off Kumasi Crescent, Wuse II, Abuja, barricaded the street on two sides with Asari's home in between while their operation lasted. LEADERSHIP gathered that the security operatives, all wearing a no-nonsense look, drove out Asari's wives, children and domestic workers and proceeded to conduct a thorough search. The men of the Directorate of Military Intelligence and SSS who arrived Asari's home at about 11:35 am were driven to the place in a white Toyota Hiace bus packed full of soldiers in uniform and another green colour Peugeot Expert bus with number BY568ABJ filled with security operatives in mufti. Our correspondent learnt that at the end of the raid, Dokubo, who was delivering a lecture at the International Conference Centre, Abuja, told his audience that as he was talking to them, security agents were waiting for him at home. There was a mild drama at the scene of the operation when a younger brother of Dokubo's arrived from the venue of the meeting at the Conference Centre in the company of other persons from the Niger Delta who may have travelled down to Abuja to attend the conference. Our correspondent, who was at the scene, reports that a quarrel ensued between the law-enforcement agents and the Niger Deltalites just as the latter tried to force their way in. The face-off ended with the former prevailing, while Dokubo's brother and others drove off. Only residents of the street who could identify themselves were allowed access to their homes, with an instruction from the security operatives, "Stay indoors please as it is no longer advisable to come out or move about until we are through". The Director-General of the SSS, Alhaji Afakriya Gadzama, confirmed the incident and noted that it was a joint operation. Meanwhile, Dokubo's lawyer, Mr Festus Keyamo, condemned the invasion, saying, "No search warrant was displayed and no court order was also shown to have been obtained." "We call on the security operatives to make public any evidence they have against our client or publicly apologise for this shameless raid," he added. Some of the journalists that went to the scene were unlucky as the news crew of Channels Television was harassed by the security operatives who got cameraman George well beaten, his camera seized and he bundled into their vehicle and driven off. The operation, which lasted over five hours, ended at 5:52 pm. LEADERSHIP gathered that the raid on Dokubo was not unconnected with his recent threat to go into a full-scale war against the nation if the Federal Government continued to overlook the demands of the Niger Delta region. He attacked Northerners recently with incisive vituperations, just as he declared that the militants of the Niger Delta would soon declare war on them with their target on the FCT and some other northern areas. The militant leader had describe the Northerners as "primitive, lazy and parasitic people," saying they could not be able to stop the restiveness of the Niger Delta. Following calls from persons and organisations, both locally and internationally, for the release of Dokubo, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua released the activist early this year after he had spent over two years in prison for alleged treason. He was arrested on October 2, 2005 when former

President Olusegun Obasanjo lured him to a police station and then ignored calls from different quarters to give him freedom.

- **Nigeria: JTF Averts Fresh Attack On Bonga: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 2 August 2008.**

Commander of the military Joint Task Force (JTF) in the Niger-Delta, Brig-Gen. Naven Rintip, yesterday said his command averted an attempt by militants two days ago to launch another attack on Nigeria's important offshore Bonga Oil-field, which suffered the most embarrassing militant attack barely a month ago. Rintip made this disclosure while fielding questions from newsmen at the JTF headquarters in Warri, after a closed-door session with four visiting members of the House of Representatives. As soon as intelligence was received on the planned militant attack on Bonga two days ago, a naval vessel was deployed in Bonga within six hours, he disclosed, daring the militants to attack the offshore facility again. He also said the JTF, a.k.a. Operation Restore Hope, has so far uncovered and destroyed 110 illegal local refineries in Delta State. He said members of the JTF, during operations in Burutu and Bomadi local government areas of Delta State, carried out the destruction of the illegal refineries. "We destroyed about 111 local refineries, and we are going to destroy more", the Commander said, adding, "these illegal refineries are in almost every village in Bomadi and Burutu local government areas." He explained that the seeming invasion or heavy security presence in Tuomo, Burutu Local Government Area was due to the "concentration of illegal refineries in Tuomo." Rintip said the exercise was ongoing and meant not only to checkmate the production and marketing of illegal and substandard petroleum products in the Niger-Delta but also to deal a deadly blow on illegal bunkering in the region; since the improvised refineries have been encouraging the stealing of the country's crude oil. The JTF spokesman, Major Omale Ochagwuba, further revealed that the command had seized from oil thieves, products estimated at over N6.0179 billion. THISDAY learnt that the JTF Commander briefed the House Committee members on the reasons why the June 19 attack, which the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND) had claimed it carried out, was so devastatingly successful. He admitted that the militants tended to have more information on the activities and operational mode of the JTF than the security operatives had about the militant groups. Rintip also noted that the militants were apparently "very much at home" in the creeks and even the high seas, having long lived and worked (fishing and sailing) in the environment and obviously understood the mood of the sea. He however underscored the point that the JTF would not allow itself to be caught unawares in future, lamenting that attack on the Bonga oil-field was only possible because the two frigates assigned to surveillance in the area "were undergoing minor repairs in Warri at the time of the attack." "We need real-time intelligence, for us to cope well with the task", Rintip stressed, saying the successes so far recorded would not be possible but for the quality of the intelligence the JTF has managed to obtain from time to time. He said JTF ships and gunboats were in no way inferior to those of the militants, stressing that the security vessels though slower than speed boats have superior armaments and fire-power. The June 19, 2008 attack on Bonga by militants drastically affected Nigeria's crude export capacity, as the Anglo-Dutch oil giant and major operator of the Bonga oil-field, Shell was forced to shut in 200,000 barrels of crude per

day. Meanwhile, Lt-Col Rabe Abubakar has been appointed as Co-ordinator of the new Joint Media Campaign on Operation Restore Hope, which is meant to carry out a robust publicity on the objectives and activities of the special security task force in the Niger-Delta.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: As Political Violence Subsides, the MDC Alleges New Cases: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 1 August 2008.**

IN the countdown to the June 27 presidential election run-off some parts of Epworth -- a sprawling township outside Harare -- were turned into "war zones" with alleged Zanu PF militia convening regular night vigils where perceived opposition supporters were routinely assaulted. Their crime? Supporting MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai who outpolled President Robert Mugabe in the first round of the presidential poll on March 29. Apart from the 2000 referendum, this was Mugabe's first ever defeat in any poll since Independence in 1980. His continued stay in power was in danger and his party decided to embark on a "military like" campaign to win the run-off for him. Epworth, like many areas throughout the country, became a battleground to win the hearts and minds of voters. State security agents and war veterans allegedly aided Zanu PF in the campaign of violence widely condemned by the opposition and the wider international community. "Epworth was turned into a war zone soon after the March 29 election," recalled a resident who requested anonymity. "Zanu PF militia rounded up residents for reorientation meetings which started daily at 9am and ended at 5pm. From 10pm until the following morning residents were forced to attend night vigils (pungwes)." "During the night vigils, the resident recalled, suspected MDC supporters were savagely assaulted and tortured and ordered to surrender party regalia in their possession." "Despite Tsvangirai withdrawing from the presidential race, the beatings and torture continued until the eve of the run-off," the resident added. "After the results of the run-off were announced, bases established by the Zanu PF militia were disbanded while some perpetrators of the violence were arrested." "As in Epworth, violence has reportedly gone down throughout the country with the police claiming that no fresh reports of political violence had been reported since the run-off. Police spokesperson Oliver Mandipaka said: "We do not have new reports of political violence since the presidential run-off. There is peace throughout the country." "The police could not reveal political violence statistics since the March polls or reveal how far investigations into the alleged murder of MDC activists, among them, Tonderai Ndira, have gone. However, the MDC this week alleged that low-level violence was taking place in some parts of the country. The Tsvangirai-led MDC claims that 122 of its supporters were killed, over 10 000 injured and about 200 000 internally displaced by state security agents, Zanu PF militia and war veterans in politically-motivated violence since the March 29 polls. The party claims that after the signing of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) on July 21 between Zanu PF and the two formations of the MDC, at least two of its supporters have been killed. This, the MDC said, was despite that the MoU, among other things, stated that violence should come to an immediate end. Each party, the MoU read, would issue a statement condemning the promotion and use of violence and call for peace in the country and take all measures necessary to ensure that the structures and institutions it controls are not engaged in the violence." "The parties are

committed to ensuring that the law is applied fairly and justly to all persons irrespective of political affiliation," read the MoU. "The parties will take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of political violence, including by non-state actors, and to ensure the security of persons and property." The parties also agreed that, in the interim, they would work together to ensure the safety of any displaced persons and their safe return home and that humanitarian and social welfare organisations were enabled to render such assistance as might be required. But observers said the parties were yet to issue statements condemning violence and that humanitarian aid was yet to commence despite the signing of the MoU. Reports from throughout the country indicate that the level of violence had reduced considerably with most militia bases allegedly established by Zanu PF youths and the military in the countdown to the June 27 presidential election run-off dismantled. In a statement this week, MDC deputy secretary-general Tapiwa Mashakada said in spite of the Sadc-initiated talks, Zanu PF supporters had murdered two of their party members last week. Mashakada, the acting party spokesperson, said its activist Fungisai Ziome was abducted in Glendale, Mashonaland Central, on July 23 by Zanu PF supporters who allegedly "mutilated, burnt and dumped" her body, which was discovered three days later. "A report was made about the murder to the police, but no arrests have been made," Mashakada said. He also alleged that a police officer, Kingsley Muteta, died at Harare's Avenues Clinic on July 27 from injuries he sustained after he was assaulted by Zanu PF supporters at his parents' homestead in Mudzi, Mashonaland East. Muteta, Mashakada claimed, was based in Harare and was attacked by the mob for allegedly visiting his mother who was a known MDC activist. "The MDC has asked Zanu PF to show its sincerity to the dialogue process by stopping violence, disbanding all militia bases and prosecuting all perpetrators of political violence," Mashakada said. "The deaths show that there is no sincerity on the part of Zanu PF." However, human rights monitors said the scale of violence had gone down. In Buhera, Manicaland, human rights monitors said there were 25 paramilitary bases controlled by Zanu PF youths that were still operational. In other districts, bases continue to be dismantled. The monitors claimed there were a few places in Mashonaland East, Manicaland and Mashonaland Central where curfews were still in place. Last week, police arrested the Midlands regional manager of Civic Trust for allegedly peddling "falsehoods" to the international media that political violence was escalating in the country after the one-man run-off. Peter Muchengeti was arrested for allegedly authoring a document claiming that Zanu PF was still perpetrating violence in the Midlands. Police reportedly recovered diskettes, one recorder with two microphones and cassettes when they arrested Muchengeti. The document, titled "Blood by Tracks in Rural Midlands as Violence Continues", was allegedly sent to the Voice of America's Studio 7 and alleged that bodies of six people from Matshekandumba Village were recovered near a railway line 30km from Gweru. This, the police said, was unfounded and the purported village was non-existent. The police also claimed to have found another document in Muchengeti's office which alleged that more than 600 people in Gokwe were assaulted by Zanu PF youths and the Minister of Special Affairs responsible for Land and Resettlement Florence Buka. The police said they also found an exercise book in which Muchengeti further alleged that 184 people had been murdered by Zanu PF youths and security agents since March 29.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Unlawful Transfers of 'Terror Suspects' Must Be Investigated: [Amnesty International](#): PRESS RELEASE: 1 August 2008.**

Amnesty International and several other international and Kenyan organizations today called on the Kenyan government to conduct an independent and impartial investigation into the unlawful transfer of people from Kenya to third countries – including Somalia, Ethiopia and the United States. The organizations (see list below) said that the transfers are illegal under international law, and called on the Kenyan government to ensure that such unlawful transfers of people from Kenya to other countries are stopped. At least 140 people (nationals of at least 17 different countries, including Kenya) were arrested by Kenyan authorities between December 2006 and February 2007. Most were arrested as they fled to Kenya from Somalia as a result of the escalation in fighting in Somalia. At the time, the Kenyan government stated that these arrests were to prevent the threat of ‘terrorists’ fleeing the conflict in Somalia crossing into Kenya. The individuals were detained in several police stations in Kenya. Most detainees were held for weeks without charge and some were reportedly tortured or otherwise ill-treated. Some were beaten by the Kenyan police and forced to undress before being photographed. They were denied the right to challenge their detention, denied access to lawyers and not allowed any contact with their families. They were not allowed to claim asylum and were denied access to the UN High Commission for Refugees, which is their right. In January and February, at least 85 of these people were unlawfully transferred – without recourse to any legal process – to Somalia and then on to Ethiopia. More than 40 were still detained incommunicado and in secret in Ethiopia at the end of 2007 although recent reports indicate that some of the individuals have since been released. Publicly, the Kenyan government has maintained that no Kenyan citizen was unlawfully transferred to Somalia, Ethiopia or any other third country. This is despite clear evidence to the contrary. One of the Kenyans believed to have been unlawfully transferred is Mr. Mohamed Abdulmalik, who was arrested by Kenyan police on 13 February 2007 and held incommunicado in police stations in Mombasa and later transferred to police custody in Nairobi. He was not charged with any offence. Nothing was heard of Mr. Abdulmalik until 26 March 2007, when the US Department of Defense issued a press statement announcing Mr. Abdulmalik’s detention at Guantánamo Bay. The US Ambassador to Kenya, Michael Ranneberger, confirmed that Mr. Abdulmalik was “moved to the Cuban camp with the full consent of the Kenyan government ... [as] part of collaboration between the two governments to fight global terrorism”. At the time of Mr. Abdulmalik’s detention, the practice of “extraordinary rendition” – whereby foreign “terror suspects” are sent to third countries where they are at serious risk of torture -- was widely known. The Kenyan government knew that if they were to transfer Mr. Abdulmalik to US custody, he would face a real risk of either “extraordinary rendition” or transfer to detention sites such as Guantánamo Bay, Bagram Airbase in Afghanistan and/or “black sites” located outside of U.S. territory – which would involve a real and foreseeable risk of torture or other ill-treatment. Although Mr. Abdulmalik has been held at Guantánamo Bay for more than one year, his U.S. lawyer was only allowed to meet with him for the first time in April 2008. Mr. Abdulmalik has to date not been able to exercise his right under international law to challenge the lawfulness of his

detention. Now that Mr. Abdulmalik is in Guantánamo Bay, it is the responsibility of the Kenyan government to make representations to the US at the highest level as a matter of urgency on his behalf. The Kenyan government must call on the US government to either charge Mr. Abdulmalik with a recognisable criminal offence and provide him with a fair trial in an ordinary civilian court in strict compliance with international standards -- or release and return him to Kenya, should he so wish.

The Kenyan government must also:

- ensure a thorough, effective, independent and impartial investigation into the arrests, detention, and transfer of these individuals, and their treatment during detention;
- ensure that the results of any investigations lead to any perpetrators of human rights violations being held to account;
- publicly identify those still being held in third countries, along with their precise location, and call on the governments holding them to either release them immediately or charge them with a recognizable criminal offense.

Signed by:

Amnesty International; Redress; Reprieve; Human Rights Watch; OMCT; Muslim Human Rights Forum; Cageprisoners; East Africa Law Society; International Commission of Jurists-Kenya; Kenya Human Rights Commission; Independent Medico-Legal Unit and Kituo Cha Sheria

- **Kenya: Sudan to Be Sued over Nairobi Bomb Attack: [The Nation \(Nairobi\): 29 July 2008.](#)**

A lawsuit against terrorism that could put Kenya in an awkward position with its trading partners is to be lodged in the United States by next week. The suit, to be filed by a US legal firm on behalf of victims of the August 1998 bomb blast, seeks to indict Sudan and Iran. The governments of these two countries are accused of having sponsored the attack that left 206 Kenyans and 12 Americans dead. More than 5,000 people were injured. Counter-terrorism legal experts at Mann and Mairone Attorneys said the firm had gathered enough evidence in its two-year research, linking key officials in the governments of Sudan and Iran as the sponsors of the terrorist attack. "We have significant evidence indicating that senior government officials of the Islamic Republic of Sudan and Iran provided such support and finance to al Qaeda and therefore were enablers of the terrorist attack that killed and maimed hundreds of residents of Kenya and they must be held legally liable for the death and destruction caused," said Mr Gavriel Mairone. He said the research was done in Arabic, Farsi, English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Russian, Hebrew and German. The firm said it was approached by one of the victims of the bombing of the US embassy, seeking its aid in the matter. And it has organised a meeting with the victims in Kenya this week.

Medical aid

The lawsuit comes years after victims of the blast and their relatives tried to sue the US for compensation in vain. The US argued it was not under any obligation to compensate Kenyan victims, saying it was itself a victim and that the al Qaeda group should be held responsible. In addition, it said that it had spent millions of dollars in helping victims seek medical aid. However, the legal suit to be filed before August 7 will only involve Kenyans who were employees at the American embassy. Efforts by the law firm to pressure the US government to change its law to cater for other Kenyan victims were fruitless. The lawsuit comes just months after the expansion of the US law on terrorism. In January this year, President George W. Bush signed into law an Act expanding jurisdiction of US courts to any lawsuit against a foreign government that sponsors terrorism filed by either a US citizen, an employee of the US government or a contractor of the US government, who was killed or wounded by an act of terrorism anywhere in the world. Previously, the law permitted only United States citizens to bring lawsuits against foreign governments in America. Mr Mairone said the case would be filed immediately as all lawsuits must be brought within 10 years of the incident. The 10-year period for the Nairobi attack expires on August 7, in under two weeks. Sudanese ambassador to Kenya Majok Guandong said he was not in Government when the attack took place and therefore could not comment on it. Although officials at the Iranian embassy said they would respond they had not done so by the time we went to Press.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Rebels Declare 'Independence' of Bakassi: [The Post \(Buea\)](#): 31 July 2008.**

Militant youths in the Bakassi Peninsula, Friday, July 25, declared the oil rich area independent. According to a Nigerian newspaper, the "Sunday VANGUARD", a group calling itself the Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination, BAMOSD, said it had joined forces with the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, MEND, in carrying out the secession. A week earlier, Southern Cameroons Peoples Organisation SCAPO, together with the indigenes of Bakassi Peninsula had threatened secession. The "Sunday VANGUARD" reported that BAMOSD dispatched an e-mail signed by one Sive Ogan to its correspondent in Port Harcourt and "said the decision to secede was taken at a meeting held in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State on July 2, 2006.

The Declaration

The e-mail titled the "Die is Cast," says the "new country's" capital is Akwa in the peninsula. The "Sunday VANGUARD" also reported that the group stated that it had deployed its members in the creeks and was ready to do battle with any government that opposes its action. The group warned the Nigerian government not to send its troops to attack the members "because such action would spell dire consequences both for the soldiers and the government." The e-mail reads thus: "Now that the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, has sealed the deal made between the Presidents of Nigeria, Cameroon and the companies exploring oil over the blood of the Bakassi people, the die is cast. Therefore, BAMOSD now declares as follows: That with the withdrawal of Nigerian troops from the Bakassi Peninsula, which takes away our last line of defence as

Nigerian citizens and exposes our people to perpetual and permanent bondage of exploitation, under-development and death, which characterised life in the larger Niger Delta and the Gulf of Guinea over the last 50 years of multi-national oil companies occupation with the connivance of Nigerian leaders, we are left with no other option than to defend our land and people by any means necessary."That our peaceful, social economic, historical and ancestral ties with the rest of the people of the Niger Delta leave us not only with no other frontier, but with no other option than to join forces with the valiant and heroic freedom fighters of the Niger Delta."That BAMOSD by this declaration is subsuming all its activities on the Bakassi Peninsula into the larger war of liberation of the Nigeria Delta, under the joint leadership of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, MEND, and other joints commands for the protection, defence and security of its people and resources.Other forces or operators found within the territorial waters of Bakassi shall be considered enemy forces and dealt with accordingly."As we speak, half of our soldiers from all parts of Niger Delta are in the creeks awaiting the dooms day. Nigeria handing over Bakassi to Cameroon means that Nigeria has no right to confront our soldiers, so we are calling for Nigerian government to stay clear and allow us face our battle, because any attempt to clamp on any of our soldiers means confrontation and we shall react likewise.We also want to inform the world that henceforth, Bakassi has become an independent state and shall control its resources. To this effect, all operators, Nigerian or foreign, exploring or exploiting resources on the Bakassi Peninsula that has not consulted with the appropriate authorities should leave the territory immediately. We emphasise again; leave our waters immediately. Do not say you were not warned. There will be no further warnings..."The same tabloid also reported that only last weekend, SCAPO had threatened to pull Bakassi out of Nigeria and with Southern Cameroons create Ambazonia Republic if the Federal Government fulfilled its promise of handing over the peninsula to Cameroon.According to "VANGUARD", SCAPO conveyed its message in separate letters to President Olusegun Obasanjo, his Cameroonian counterpart, Paul Biya and UN scribe, Mr. Kofi Annan.These threats of secession and the declaration of the independence of Bakassi comes in the wake of Nigerian President, Musa Yar'Adua's, stated commitment to respect the August 14 final handing over of the peninsula to Cameroon.According to the Nigerian tabloid, Yar'Adua is said to have been speaking in Abuja during a reception accorded to Cameroon's Minister of External Relations, H E Henri Eyebe Ayissi.Yar'Adua is reported to have pledged Nigeria's commitment to ensure that the terms of the Green Tree Agreement of 2006 are respected to the letter, now and even after August 14."As major stakeholders in the area, we have a joint responsibility to ensure that we take a leading role in the establishment of structures and a force to safeguard our people and resources towards a collective security of the Gulf of Guinea," Yar'Adua is quoted to have said."We must work closely together at the Mixed Commission on agreements that need to be signed and implemented in the aftermath of the August 14 handover," Yar'Adua added.Minister Eyebe is reported to have borne a special message from the Cameroonian President, Paul Biya, to Yar'Adua, on Monday, July 28, following the recent Niger Delta rebel attacks in the Bakassi area.Last July 24 attacks are said to be a line of calculated moves by the rebels to puncture the planned complete handover scheduled for August 14."This Day", still in its report insinuates that there may be other attacks in the offing."This Day gathered that the militants are planning another invasion of key areas of

the Peninsula and are already on the high seas with 11 boats in preparation for the attack."The paper goes on to report that the Rebels are acting under the blessings of the Niger Delta militants. Meantime, there are reports of an upsurge of frightened Nigerians in Bakassi who have since been fleeing the area. They are said to be escaping to Ikang and other areas in Nigeria.

Hypocrisy?

Earlier last December, an editorial in "This Day" had described the row in the Senate over the status of Bakassi as hypocritical. According to the editorial, it would seem that the decision to cede the territory was a unilateral one. The editorial reported that from what a few members of the Senate were saying then, former President Olusegun Obasanjo acted without the approval of the Senate as required by section 12 of the constitution. According to the editorial, that section of the constitution stipulates that "no treaty between the Federation and any other country shall have the force of law except to the extent to which any such treaty has been enacted into law by the National Assembly." It seems then, that the provision was not followed in ceding Bakassi to Cameroon, hence the threat of secession.

33. NORTH AFRICA

- **EGYPT Pledges 40 Million US Dollars for River Nile: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 31 July 2008.**

Egypt will contribute over \$40m towards the maintenance of River Nile in order to ensure water security in the Nile and Lake Victoria Basin. This was revealed by the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on his one-day visit to Uganda. In a dinner hosted by his Ugandan counterpart President Yoweri Museveni at State House Entebbe, Mubarak said that the Nile should no longer be an issue of conflict but a uniting factor for all the countries that depend on its waters. "We should all work together to maintain the water levels of the Nile so that one country's use of the Nile water does not affect the others," remarked Mubarak. He also said that talk of Arab countries benefiting more from the Nile should be stopped because the Nile could not be confined down south but rather the Nile Basin countries should be proud of sharing one of the world's wonder features. Egypt has also pledged more resources towards the eradication of the water hyacinth weed that is resurfacing on L. Victoria and is threatening to destroy other lakes and rivers. Through a Ugandan ministry, Egypt will finance the project to 'harvest' the highly multiplying weed that had been wiped out in 2002. About \$8m will be released before the end of this year while a team of Egyptian scientists and technocrats will be sent to research and find out better means of managing L. Victoria. Mubarak was returning from South Africa when he made the brief stop-over in Uganda to discuss with President Museveni some of the contentious issues the region is facing. Increasing food and energy prices, the International Criminal Court's indictment of Sudanese President Omar el Bashir were among the issues. Mubarak had been in South Africa to discuss the ICC indictments with

President Thabo Mbeki. The Egyptian president also said that countries down south should take advantage of COMESA and trade with Arab countries. He said that countries with cultivatable land should exploit the ready food market in North Africa since most of the countries there lie in the desert. He added that this would also give southern African countries a chance to dig into the abundant oil resources in the North. Mubarak added that Egypt is developed industrially and open for COMESA trade. He also advised that the Nile Basin countries should hold bilateral talks about re-exploring the Nile to remove any conflicts and disputes. The Nile has of late become a controversial issue with a new study disputing its current source, and another study claiming that it's not the longest river in the world. President Mubarak has rarely visited African countries since 1990 when he survived an assassination attempt in Ethiopia.

- **Mubarak, Museveni Discuss Trade, Bashir ICC Indictment: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 31 July 2008.**

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt yesterday paid a rare visit to Uganda, the first of any Egyptian leader and discussed the pending indictment of Sudanese President Omar-el-Bashir by the International Criminal Court. Lands Minister Daniel Omara Atubo holding fort for the Foreign Affairs Minister, told a news conference after closed door meetings between President Museveni and Mr Mubarak, that the two leaders "expressed their interest in the positions so far taken by the African Union, the Arab League, and the Organisation of Islamic Conference, that is geared towards assuming peace and stability in Darfur." Mr Mubarak's visit comes days after the Egyptian president reaffirmed his government's support to the Sudanese leader over war crime and genocide charges by a prosecutor of the ICC. Already, the Arab League held crisis talks in Cairo, in which its foreign ministers called on the ICC to back off while the African Union has urged Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo to suspend any plans to arrest Gen. Bashir, saying it would only jeopardise attempts for a negotiated settlement to the crisis in Darfur and southern Sudan. But Uganda is concerned as well, that the indictment could negatively impact a possible settlement of the northern region crisis with rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army. And while the two leaders held bilateral talks, there were also calls by host President Museveni for Egyptians to come and invest in the country's agro-based and food processing sectors. According to a press statement from Mr Museveni's office, the President made the call during a state luncheon, he hosted in honour of Mr Mubarak at State House, Entebbe. The Egyptian leader was here for a one-day official visit. According to Mr Atubo, the two leaders also discussed the Nile Basin Initiative- a project meant to reconfigure the relationship between states through which the River Nile flows. He said Egypt pledged to "offer more support" to fight the deadly sea weed, water hyacinth, adding that on top of the \$33 million Egypt had handed out to Uganda for the fight, another \$8million was on its way. Mr Atubo said the presidents discussed "River Nile issues" since it is a source of life for Egypt and said they were interested in "capacity

building" and "trans-boundary water training," adding that Egypt would help Uganda with "fish development." But lawmakers in Uganda and elsewhere in the Nile Valley states are however pushing for re-negotiation of colonial era agreements which bar large scale water projects on the Nile that may hurt Egypt. The pacts have lately been ignored by so-called Riparian states because their own water needs have grown. Egypt on the other hand has embarked on a massive US\$ 70 billion project to reclaim half a million acres of desert in what is known as the Toshka project and is relying on water from the Nile. The Nile as a strategic asset for both Uganda and Egypt remains the most binding aspect of the two nation's relationship. "I am confident that we shall do a lot for the good of the people of the two countries", the State House statement quoted Mr Mubarak as having said. Mr Mubarak ended his five day tour of Sub-Saharan Africa with a last leg in Uganda, and flew back home yesterday.

- **Morocco: Journalist Mostapha Hurmatallah Released On Completing His Prison Sentence: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 28 July 2008.**

Reporters Without Borders notes that reporter Mostapha Hurmatallah of the weekly "Al Watan Al An" was freed on 25 July 2008 on completing his prison sentence. He had been in Casablanca's Oukacha prison since 19 February, when Morocco's highest court of appeal ordered him to go back to jail to serve the rest of a seven-month term. "We welcome Hurmatallah's release with joy, but we reiterate our firm condemnation of the original decision to imprison him just for doing his job," Reporters Without Borders said. "We now hope that this is the end of the era when people are jailed in Morocco because of what they write." Hurmatallah, whose request for a royal pardon was ignored, told Reporters Without Borders that conditions in prison were very harsh. He was put in a cell with convicted criminals and his visits were restricted. He added that he nonetheless hoped that he would be the last journalist to be jailed in his country in connection with their work. He was initially sentenced on 15 August 2007 to eight months in prison on a charge of "receiving documents obtained by criminal means" in connection with a special report about a state of alert in the 14 July 2007 issue of "Al Watan Al An". The following month his sentence was reduced to seven months and he was released provisionally. However, he was returned to prison in February after the country's highest court rejected his appeal. His release means that there are no journalists currently in prison in Morocco.

- **Mbeki, Mubarak Escalate Bilateral Relations: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 29 July 2008.**

President Thabo Mbeki and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak have increased the existing bilateral political, economic and trade relations between the two countries at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. President Mubarak, who is on a three-day official visit in South Africa, aims to look at additional ways to consolidate relations. "President Mubarak's visit is important from the point of view of looking at what additional steps we should take in order to strengthen the bilateral relations and indeed, there is quite a lot of

work that is going to go into that because it is quite clear that we could further escalate these relations in many areas," President Mbeki said on Tuesday. Mr Mubarak's visit is the first of its kind by an Egyptian President to South Africa since our democracy. President Mubarak said their consultations have touched upon a wide range of African issues including the current situation of peace and security on the continent as well as the role played by the two countries to enhance African interaction within the African Union and NEPAD. "We reviewed many regional issues of common interest including the Middle East Peace process, the situation in Iraq, Iran's nuclear programme as well as the crisis of the world economy and its implications on food security in developing countries, particularly in Africa," he told the media gathering. Accordingly he said the discussions reiterated our mutual resolve to enhance our standing cooperation, increase investment, mining and energy, scientific research and technology as well as other priority fields of common interest. The two leaders are expected to sign a number of agreements in the fields of tourism, science and technology and air service, petroleum, gas, civil service and training among others. When asked about the situation in Sudan and Zimbabwe, President Mubarak said they did discuss the issues, adding that they are both making efforts to find a solution. "The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Arab League convened and President Omar El Bashir was informed of the decisions so that if he could implement those then the case could perhaps be postponed for about 12 months during which something could happen to decrease the tension," said the Egyptian President. With regards to negotiations on Zimbabwe's political crisis, where President Mbeki is the chief facilitator, he said the meeting had been adjourned for a few days to allow the leaders of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Zanu-PF to return to Harare and consult with their parties. "They will come back at the end of the week to conclude the negotiations," President Mbeki told the media, adding that the negotiations were going very well. "They undertook that they would try to conclude the negotiations within two weeks from the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding ... they are indeed determined to keep that commitment." According to the MoU signed last week the parties agree to commit themselves to a dialogue with each other with a view to creating a genuine, viable, permanent and sustainable solution to the Zimbabwean situation. It further envisaged that the dialogue will be completed within two weeks. Having substantively consolidated political relations with Egypt in the past 14 years, attention was based on other sectors where the two nations can cooperate in. President Mubarak is also expected to meet Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka while in the country. In 2007 South Africa had a positive trade balance of R 260 721 000 with Egypt. South African exports to Egypt more than doubled in the same year, while imports declined significantly after an unusual high in 2006. The main exports are mainly base metals, vehicles and chemicals, while imports from Egypt are textiles, stone, machinery and vegetable products.

- **Egypt: U.S. Not Living Up to Rhetoric on Support for Democracy: Freedom House (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 29 July 2008.**

The United States must pair its tough rhetoric on promoting democracy in the Middle East with genuine actions that support the region's democratic activists, such as Egyptian political prisoner Ayman Nour. President George W. Bush called for Nour's release in a speech yesterday that outlined progress on his "Freedom Agenda." He also urged senior diplomats to "maintain regular contact with political dissidents and democracy activists" in autocratic countries. Nour, a former member of the Egyptian Parliament, has been in prison for nearly three years on trumped up forgery charges after winning the second-largest number of votes in the country's 2005 presidential election. "More than mere words and visits are needed to free Nour from his prison cell and open a space for free expression in Egypt," said Jennifer Windsor, Freedom House executive director. "Congress and the Bush administration must use all tools at their disposal—including direct assistance to dissidents, foreign aid and diplomacy—if they are to have any real impact in the Middle East." Bush's speech coincided this week with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak pardoning more than 1,500 prisoners, including those convicted of murder. Nour was not among those pardoned and his attempts to appeal for release on medical grounds, citing diabetes and heart problems, have been denied. Mubarak's repressive regime is also waging a systematic crackdown on the so-called "Facebook activists," who use the social networking site to advocate for democracy. Egypt arrested 26 of these activists over the last several days for "threatening public security." "All the world knows that Mr. Nour was imprisoned on trumped up charges because he had the temerity to present himself as a candidate for president of Egypt in 2005," Windsor said. "While his lengthy incarceration is an affront, first of all, to the people of Egypt who desire to live in a democratic society, it must also be seen as an indirect slap at the United States for urging Mubarak to relax his grip on the political system." Egypt is ranked Not Free in the 2008 edition of Freedom in the World, Freedom House's survey of political rights and civil liberties, and Partly Free in the 2008 version of Freedom of the Press.

- **Sudan: Egyptian Military Engineers Join UN-AU Mission in Darfur: UN News Service (New York): 24 July 2008.**

A contingent of 126 Egyptian engineers today arrived in El Fasher, Darfur, according to the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission (UNAMID). They join 83 personnel already deployed in the area, and UNAMID said it expects it to come up to its full complement of 335 staff in the next few days. The contingent which arrived today - including construction, de-mining and water desalination platoons - has been assigned to the construction and maintenance of El Fasher airport. Yesterday, UNAMID's head, Rodolphe Adada, met with Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in Darfur and pointed out that the mission had thousands of containers awaiting "movement along the difficult and sometimes dangerous routes into Darfur." Mr. Adada also called on the Government to ensure that the convoys reach their destinations safely. Also yesterday, UNAMID announced that it was continuing to suspend the temporary relocation of its non-essential UN personnel. Around 300 people were moved out of Darfur before the relocation was halted last Friday. Some 300,000 people are estimated to have been killed as a result of

direct combat, disease or malnutrition since 2003. Another 2.7 million people have been displaced because of fighting between rebels, Government forces and allied militiamen known as the Janjaweed.

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- **Tunisia: Journalist Slim Boukhdar Released: [Reporters sans Frontières](#) (Paris): PRESS RELEASE: 23 July 2008.**

On 21 July 2008, Reporters Without Borders voiced its relief at the news of the release of Slim Boukhdar four months before the end of his sentence. The freelance journalist has been held since 26 November 2007 in very harsh prison conditions at the civil jail in Sfax, 230 kilometres south of the capital. Boukhdar, 39, is correspondent for the pan-Arab London-based newspaper "al Quds al Arabi" and for the website of satellite television station al-Arabiya. He also posts articles on several websites, particularly Tunisnews and Kantara. "We are absolutely delighted at the release of Slim Boukhdar. Like Mohammed Abbu before him, he should never have been in prison in the first place," the worldwide press freedom organisation said. "He was deprived of his freedom for 238 days and treated like a common criminal simply for constantly exposing the abuses of power. We would like to see the decision of the Tunisian authorities to free him as evidence of their goodwill", it added. "The Tunisian state must put an end to the harassment of independent journalists and their families and to seizures of the opposition and foreign press. The authorities should also allow free access to the Internet so as to create a space for freedom and to ensure free expression in Tunisia". Boukhdar, who was released in the late afternoon on 21 July, told Reporters Without Borders that he wanted to thank the international community which campaigned for his release. Despite harsh jail conditions - poor hygiene, threats from his fellow prisoners and deprivation of letters and independent newspapers - the journalist said that he had "kept his spirits up high". He was arrested on 26 November 2007 during a check on papers of passengers using a collective taxi between Sfax and Tunis. He was immediately taken before a cantonal court in Sakiet Ezzit in the Sfax suburbs and sentenced, at the end of an unfair trial, to a year in prison for "insulting an official in the exercise of his duty", "breach of accepted standards of behaviour" and "refusing to produce his identity papers for police". On the day of his arrest, he was travelling to the capital to reclaim his passport, which he had been deprived of since 2004.

34. NEWS COMMENTARIES

WEST AFRICA

- **An African Perspective - is Cyber Democracy Possible? : [Fahamu](#) (Oxford): OPINION: 30 July 2008: [Clayton Peel](#).**

Wole Soyinka was addressing a conference on the issue of the 'brain drain' from African countries. He remarked on how many of the speakers before him had lamented the flight

of millions of Africans to the West and how apparently desperate were these speakers, who included African heads of state, to reverse the trend so that the bright young minds and their skills could be retained on the continent.

'Lucky draineers!' Soyinka enthused, with a whiff of sarcasm. While they went abroad exploring new frontiers, 'the brains of their stay-at-home colleagues will be found as grisly sediments on the riverbed of the Nile. Or in the stomach linings of African crocodiles and vultures' (Olaniyan, 2003). You will understand then why, at a conference of writers in exile held in Vienna in December 1987, the award-winning Somali writer, Nuruddin Farah, spoke 'In Praise of Exile.' He was not disparaging his home country: he was seeking to challenge the perspectives of its leaders. Basically agreeing with Soyinka's opposition of lucky exiles to dead stay-at-homes, Farah said he himself could not have been a writer in Somalia, only a prisoner. Not for him the common idea that the distance of exile kills artistic creativity: 'For me,' he wrote, 'distance distills; ideas become clearer and better worth pursuing'.

Removed from Zimbabwe, many of us have now become, in positive terms, more critical analysts of the situation in our homeland; in negative terms, soppy armchair critics. But the fact is that, we have the liberty of doing so! This armchair critic, for I am one, has become pre-occupied with the segmentation of Zimbabwean transnational website communities. Racially-charged politics, a high rate of HIV-AIDS infection, the complexity of gender relations derived from a country context that mostly is culturally conservative, and settlement in Britain by Zimbabweans and the various sensitivities that surround it, in both countries, are some of the issues that are raised in these website discourses. But difference is an opportunity to negotiate identities and is not inimical to the historical particularities that have shaped a definitive and distinctive ethnic presence in the demographics of Zimbabwe and in its diaspora.

For Diaspora and Communication studies, Zimbabwean electronic fora - the 'new media' - and their associations in Britain represent an important interface - a 'social embedding' (Aarsaether and Baerenholdt, 2001:49) of Diaspora communities in the homeland agenda that has created of the websites 'specific communal refuges' based on networks of family and friends and ethnic associations. In a generation of émigrés witnessing their homeland's political and economic ruin but possessed of enhanced media technologies, the facility to not just track, but respond to events has led to the emergence first of social networks, and later the source of Internet activism that irked Robert Mugabe (2003) who said it represented 'the same platforms and technologies through which virulent propaganda and misinformation are peddled to de legitimise our just struggles against vestigial colonialism, indeed to weaken national cohesion and efforts at forging a broad Third World front against what patently is a dangerous imperial world order led by warrior states and kingdoms'. Compatriots wanting to assuage anxieties and nostalgia created and contributed to a web of electronic activism that contributed meaningfully - and varyingly - to Zimbabwean communities as the discourses and their associations grew vivid, provocative, and productive. Creatively using new technologies to define themselves, the Zimbabwean Diasporic websites raise social and anthropological media properties bound to attract scholarly attention.

Secondly, the fora are a microcosm of Zimbabwean diversity which deconstructs the authoritarian nationalism that has been a signature of Mugabe's 28-year rule. This study characterizes the Diaspora websites' 'production of difference within common, shared and connected spaces' (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997:45). It fills a research void acknowledged by Mwangola (2007) regarding smaller Diaspora communities 'considered by both their host countries and the African world to be insignificant because of their small numbers and lack of political and/or economic capital'. Diverse Zimbabwean identities and their expressions which convey not only data and meaning, but community building through communication, form a transnational public sphere of website communities and associations representing a vibrancy absent from the 'intolerant' and 'dull...intellectual ghetto' Zimbabwe had become (Nyamfukudza 2005:21, 23) .

Thirdly, there is a general lack of authoritative source material of a qualitative nature on which UK agencies can rely for assessment of Zimbabwe and Zimbabweans, in the UK and at home. Over a two-year period I have provided assessments for law firms pursuing asylum cases and was given access to not just the claims, but the material on which government agencies drew to make their determinations. The source material nearly always lacked comprehensive detail. In particular, the expectation that all hardship in Zimbabwe must have had a party political dispensation to be worthy of an asylum claim betrayed an insensitivity to other tensions existing in that strangled environment, which UK-based agencies in particular seemed to be uninterested in. My research has the potential to expand the value and the knowledge base of interested parties. It makes diversity a factor of social research with its emphasis on 'undigested minorities' (Nyamnjoh 2006:94; Nyamfukudza, 2005:18). Despite the significance of ethnic and cultural difference to Zimbabwe's distant and recent history, this has not been a priority area in the research there has been into Zimbabwean transnationalism. The odd scholarly observation in this direction has remarked on the 'fragmentation' (Pasura, 2006a), although to view the diverse representations of a country's multi-ethnic make-up solely in that light is to potentially omit positive aspects which the diverse populations and their plural expressions might bring to the discourse, something the electronic media may have enhanced. Conceptualizing this multi-polar engagement, I use Appadurai (1996), Werbner (1997a), Wise (2006), Moyo (2007) and Habermas' descriptions of the public sphere as the 'epistemic dimension' (2006:411) to the procedures of democratic discourse. The research hopes to demonstrate not only the extension of democratic space, but also the production and reaffirmation of marginalized cultures in the electronic fora. Zaffiro (2002), Raftopolous (2004), Ranger (2005; 2002) and Nyamfukudza (2005), among others, have tracked the Mugabe government's attempts to forge a corporate Zimbabwean identity and history that either excluded or assimilated minorities, or distorted their historical roles and the entitlements of their Zimbabwean citizenship. The social and economic upheaval which ensued, notwithstanding political arguments in mitigation, were accompanied by a re-ordering of Zimbabwean historiography that replaced even-handed analysis with unbalanced and at times rabidly racist literature (Nyamfukudza, 2005; Ranger, 2005; Raftopolous, 2004). By contrast, the transnational websites may inform an alternative narrative that acknowledges Zimbabwe's demographics in deconstructing history and re-defining the nation.

As it expands its functions and its properties become progressively more accessible to households and other non-institutional users in Britain (OfCom, 2004), Internet communication is being appropriated by various echelons of the society to serve diverse interests: to 'encompass the cultural forms of marginal constituencies' (Ebo, 1998:x) as well as 'emphasize hierarchical political associations' (1998:2); to 'encourage broad participation and emphasize merit over status' (1998:3) as well as create private media spaces for individual, group and culture aggregations (Burnett and Marshall, 2003:67-68). There is a sense of virtual spaces being freed up to ventilate the previously unventilated: the minorities and the marginalised, their aspirations, their political and social will all being articulated in the relative freedom of a media-savvy Western liberal democracy.

In Ebo's words, internet technology allows groups 'traditionally dislocated from mainstream social linkages ...to develop communal bonding' (1998:4) through virtual and real-life associations that 'fulfil the same traditional essence of associations and bonding, and invariably promote social relationships that are orchestrated by inherent inegalitarian tendencies in society' (1998:5). He concludes that the stratification in the online associations will continue, for 'as long as communities on the Internet allow participants to engage freely in the creation of social realities, economic and social classifications rooted in race, class and gender...will invariably influence relationships in virtual communities' (ibid., p6). Ebo refers to this property of online engagement as the 'cyberghetto perspective' (ibid., p5), betraying a fear of negation and inequality being extended to cyberspace. But the facilitation of self-propelled diverse interest groups which use Internet communication to gain leverage in a world of inequalities is the rather more positive intuition behind this research.

CONCLUSION

To foregrounds a plurality of ethnic, political and professional continuities to introduce a study that addresses the democratic deficit and counter-authoritarian discourses that co-exist in an extended public sphere which this thesis seeks to describe. It has introduced plurality as a key element in website production and usage and the real-life associations that are formed based on shared affinities to the respective websites.

****Clayton Peel is the Vice-Chairman, Britain Zimbabwe Society. This paper was presented at the Britain Zimbabwe Society Research Day, 2008.***

- **Arrest Bush, Not Al-Bashir: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): OPINION: 30 July 2008: Ibrahim Muhammad- Kaduna.**

Confession: If the above title looks like a reframed version of the one earlier used by one of my senior colleagues in Daily Trust, it's because he was right. The issues at hand necessitate the photocopy of that title. The height of international duplicity exposes itself when the International Court of Justice issues a warrant of arrest on Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir. The reason was based on alleged genocide in Darfur. The ICC prosecutor accused Al-Bashir of running a campaign that killed 35,000 people and caused

more than a million to flee their homes. These are just allegations as the ICC prosecutor claimed. Both the African Union and Arab League have condemned such move. China and Russia have also expressed their own concerns over this seeming international conspiracy against Sudan. Now, IF Omar Al-Bashir actually committed the above crimes as alleged, does ICC have the legal jurisprudence to issue such warrant?

The Rome statute gives the court jurisdiction over the most serious crimes of international concern if they are committed after July 1, 2002 either (1) by a citizen of a nation that accepts the statute or (2) by a person of any nationality on the territory of a nation that accepts the statute. The latter type of jurisdiction means that citizens of nations that have not accepted the treaty may be arrested and tried for international crimes if their actions take place in the territory of a nation that adheres to the statute. Nations that are not parties to the statute may voluntarily accept the court's jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis.

Furthermore, the UN Security Council can grant the court jurisdiction for a specific situation even when the nation in which the crime occurred is not a party to the statute. In any criminal case, the ICC may only exercise its jurisdiction when a national court is unwilling or unable to carry out the investigation or prosecution. For example, the ICC might intervene when a government's judicial system has collapsed or is actively shielding a person from criminal responsibility. Please, note the highlighted sentence above.

The Statute was adopted by a vote of 120 in favour, 7 against, and 21 abstaining. The names of the countries voting were not recorded, but interestingly, three countries-the United States, Israel, and China-openly stated their reasons for voting against the statute. The United States objected to the court's independent power to initiate prosecutions and sought a greater role for the UN Security Council. Fearful that American soldiers abroad could be brought before the court to answer for their war crime charges, the US had tried to reshape the statute to give the Security Council exclusive power to initiate prosecutions; the two birds of the same wings and feathers - US and Israel - again on the same side here. Before you ponder over the above puzzle, let's compare and contrast the naked crimes that the Bush administration has committed against defenceless countries in the Middle East. After the Bush administration invaded Afghanistan and Iraq under the pretext of the so-called war on terrorism, slaughter, massacre, ethnic cleansing, liquidation, extermination and total annihilation have been going on for years without any end in sight.

Did the ICC prosecutor take a leave from this world when all these acts were being committed? Maybe the ICC temporarily relocated to Pluto when Israel has been murdering thousands of Palestinians on a daily basis. Some of these world bodies are operating two separate and contradicting laws. The executable ones are to stifle Third World countries and to manipulate moronic regimes to dance to their colonialist tendencies. The preserved regulation is to allow so-called civilised countries to spread their filthy, licentious and lewd ways of life to other countries. Globalisation was invented on the wrong computation that it would allow the status quo to permanently

remain. The same globalisation has allowed the Third World to see through their cryptic rangefinders. Not long ago, the Israeli military conducted military exercise in what many termed to be a rehearsal in preparation for an attack on Iran. No condemnations came from any of the so-called superpowers on such a provocative exercise. Some weeks later, in order not to be caught unawares, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards test-fired some of their missiles. Immediately, the western megaphones started to issue one press statement after the other on the danger posed by Iranian retaliatory exercise.

Come to think of it, what type of international law will allow Israel to have a nuclear arsenal and deny Iran from having one? Between the two countries, which one among them has committed more acts of genocide and mass murder? How many United Nations resolutions has Iran flouted compared to the illegal state of Israel? The border of Israel keeps on increasing every year because the international community looks the other way when Palestinians' lands were being forcefully seized. The most painful thing for me is seeing the fathers of human rights turning away from what is clearly genocide. By pulling the thread holding Palestinians together, they are pulling apart their so-called civilisation in Europe.

If the International Criminal Court of Justice does not understand the meaning of genocide, they should arrest President Bush and his partner in crime Olmert of Israel.

It is the conflict of interest of the superpowers that keeps the flow of blood flowing in Sudan, and not their internal conflict. If not for the reasonable resistance of African countries, Zimbabwe could have been turned to another battlefield by the western propaganda machines. The African Union need to redirect their attention to investigate the cause of most of African conflicts in order to track down the roles of these imperialists. The proposed United States of Africa process must be quickened to foster economic integration. Most of the conflicts in Africa and the Middle East can be traced to the doorsteps of the 'big brothers.' They should remember that people crushed by law have no hopes but from power. If laws are their enemies, they will be enemies to the laws and those who have much to hope for and nothing to lose will always be dangerous more or less. You have not converted a man because you have silenced him. These are lessons that they have refused to learn from history. It is an axiomatic fact that the advanced countries of today reached their present affluence through domination of other races and countries. Their sheer ruthlessness, undisturbed by feelings of compassion or by abstract theories of freedom, equality or justice, gave them a head-start. It will surely be one of history's darkest ironies if the enlightenment project of a world civilisation ends in the chaos of sovereign states and stateless peoples struggling for the necessities of survival. Africa must resist these empty threats from the ICC, and if we ignore the threats, we'll be inviting certain blackmail and place millions of our citizens in grave danger. The future of our generation yet unborn may be in perpetual obscurity and darkness. The efforts of President Thabo Mbeki in bringing the warring faction in Zimbabwe to a roundtable must be commended and other African regional powers especially Nigeria and Libya must rally round to bring the political tension in Zimbabwe under control. Let's start resolving our disputes our own way. No one knows when the hour of Africa's redemption cometh. It is in the wind. It is coming. One day like a storm, it will be here. When that day comes,

all Africa will stand together, live together and think as a single block. On the economic front, we are operating on policies formulated by the imperialist countries. The fault of a colonial economy is that it is dishonest: it misrepresents reality. In practice, it is simply a way of keeping costs off the books of an exploitative interest. It's interesting to note that anytime they impose their political sanction on any country; such a country always comes out stronger and more self-reliant. At such period, nothing is being taken out of their economy through capital flight policies. Long live, the victory of people's war!

Muhammad wrote from JJ9, Ibadan Street, Kaduna.

- **Nigeria: Surviving Without Oil: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): OPINION 1 August 2008: [Adamu Adamu](#).**

Since colonial times there has been this tendency, especially among Nigerian elites in the southern parts of the country, to regard the North as a parasitic appendage to the national enterprise. Many believe that it was not buoyant then or now and needed revenue injections from the South to develop it and make it catch up.

This image has been popularized and it has persisted to this day even while the figures tell the contrary; and belief in the matter has since joined the ranks of other national dogma-along with the northern sheep and goats that the late Bola Ige saw being counted at censuses. For many, this image of a parasite might seem to have been confirmed when oil found in the South came to dominate, mark you, not the economy but, the country's foreign exchange earnings. These were earnings to which the North seemingly contributed little; but the economy had always depended on agriculture for 70 per cent of its Gross National Product, GDP. However, since the 1970's, oil had accounted for more than 80 per cent of Nigeria's foreign earnings. Before the beginning of that decade, it didn't amount to much. And, according to estimates by experts, Nigeria's reserves would not last more than the next three decades, in which case the nation would soon find out that it might have to go back to its pre-independence dependence on agriculture: only that now there would be no agriculture to depend on.

Today, contributions to the debate are couched in different but related terms-taking something only too true, but employing it to support and advance a proposition that is false. Listening to them or reading their writing, you find it difficult to know whether the North is poor because it is a parasite, or it is a parasite because it is poor. Or it is both because of both-poor and parasitic because of poverty and parasitism? And you go on in circles, with them trying to square it. There is poverty in the North, no doubt about it; but the North is not a parasite. And it is not just the Northern elite alone who is to blame or whose sole duty it is to develop the North. It is the duty of government, especially those officers of government who are charged with the enunciation of the fiscal and monetary policies to properly manage the economy and help develop the country evenly. If, almost 50 years after independence, there is endemic poverty in the North or any part of the country for that matter, this is a failure of government, or, more correctly, a failure of politics without purpose.

The Northern peasant knows all about farming and trading. But it is not fair to expect him to know all the intricacies of the recapitalization of banks, for instance; or, to understand why doing it may have deprived him of easy agricultural credit on familiar territory. Nor do you expect the Northern peasant to understand why Chief Olusegun Obasanjo built a stadium and staged a tournament for more than 50 billion Naira in the same year in which he allocated only 2 billion Naira to agriculture, the mainstay of the nation's economy. The Northern peasant doesn't even know that agricultural activity is mainly a Northern phenomenon, or realize that low budgetary allocation for that sector is a slap in his face.

And he wouldn't even know that he was supposed to be a parasite to some of his fellow countrymen. But what exactly do they mean when they say that Northerners are parasites? Is it because there is no oil in the North? If it is lack of oil that is parasitism, then the North is not the only parasite in the country. But then, if parasitism is depending on others, who isn't a parasite? And is the presence of oil in the soil of a land a certificate of fitness for those leaving on it? Is the possession of oil by the soil of one's land proof of his contribution to the national purse? Or is it because, as they say, people in the North are indolent? But then, some of those making the charge come from enclaves that are greater havens of indolence than the areas of the most indolent of the North. And they often accuse the wrong person. The truth is that the Northern peasant, who is often portrayed as the archetype of the poverty-stricken Nigerian, may not have the wherewithal to save or the need to invest in shares or the certificate of Western education to show to enable him dispense with manual labour; but he is a most hardworking Nigerian, growing all the food and raising all the livestock that Nigerians, including those living in riverine oil areas, eat in order to survive. If there are indeed parasites in the country, they will probably be found to be leeches sucking the blood of the Northern peasant. He may be poor despite his hard work; but he is not a parasite on anyone in spite of that other's riches.

Last week, Professor Charles Soludo, Central Bank governor, talked about the poverty in the North. "Poverty is unacceptably high in Nigeria but the alarming and persisting level of poverty in Nigeria is a phenomenon in the North," he said. According to the statistics, more than 70 per cent of people in the North are poor-painfully poor. Soludo heaped most of the blame on Northern elites, and they are by no means, blameless. But we must be clear who the culpable elites are and understand the constraints facing even those we can hold responsible. All too often, people in the North love recalling or even invoking the name of the Sardauna; but we must by now understand that invoking his name a thousand times will not develop the North. What will develop the North is doing what he did.

And what did he do? In a nutshell, what he did was to lead with vision and inspire his people towards giving their best; he respected procedure and due process and he treated people with equality and fairness. And because he had the executive authority, he could and did establish many of the institutions whose decay people today lament. Today, the only class among the elites who could be held responsible for doing or continuing with what he did were those who had once been or right now are governors of their states, because they are the Sardauna. The rest of the elite class can only set the agenda for the society to take its cue. And once the agenda has been set, the elites can lead the people by

taking the initiative in all the areas in which change is desired or thought necessary. Those of them of means can, like their counterparts in other sections of the country, be made to learn to invest in people. Here of course there is a potential for contradiction, because most of those with the required level of means to intervene have been corrupt. At any event, the possession of executive authority is clearly a prerequisite for repeating the Sardauna's feat. But instead of vision, which few have, there is today only one thing to governance, and that is expenditure-the mere spending of money, which anybody can do. This can be seen in the fact that many governors count their achievements by the quantum of money they have spent in the name of projects. Because they haven't planned what they want to achieve; and since, consequently, they couldn't have coordinated their several plans, the following become evident. First, there is wrong priority setting, often with first things coming last-schools of information technology before good primary schools. Second, when projects do get executed, they prove to be mere white elephants, because the goal is not the product; it is the process. It is not the provision of education that worries most of them: it is the award of contract for constructing the schools.

Third, we witness education, agriculture and general infrastructure collapsing, and with them, the present and the future are both thrown to the dogs. Fourth, even when effort is made towards doing what is required, the matter ends up consumed by too much sumptuary. The problem is not purely an academic one. This is not to the importance of conceptualizing and debating what to do by way of solution; but we can't ignore the fact that the case of Arewa's backwardness in education, in industry and, now, in agriculture has been the subject of too many conferences, seminars and meetings, none of which enriches the other.

But the most important problem facing any future Sardauna is that of corruption. Within the last eight years, for instance, there has been a net capital flight from most of the Northern states to Lagos, a direct result of corrupt whose effect on the poverty in the North has remained unstudied. Sardauna Ahmadu Bello would never have under any circumstance impoverished the North in order to enrich self or any other business front.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Sudan: Bashir's Indictment, a Ray of Light to Darfur: [The Monitor \(Kampala\)](#): OPINION: 30 July 2008. [Okello Oculi](#).**

The charges brought by the International Criminal Court against Sudan President Omar Hassan al-Bashir present a crack for sunlight to shine through the dark clouds of official terrorism perpetrated for over two decades by the Khartoum regime against helpless

peasants, writes Okello Oculi The oil found in Darfur will turn into a curse for the region, bringing about the loss of many lives, hand in hand with large-scale land alienation and devastation," so wrote Prof Fouad Ibrahim of Bayreuth University, Germany. Prof Ibrahim's pessimistic prediction - published in the Winter 2005-Spring 2006 edition of the Global Development Studies - was rooted in several emerging themes in the governing of Sudan. At the top of these themes is a historically-rooted division of Sudan's population along racial lines and unequal access to political, administrative, cultural and economic resources with the lighter skinned Arabs in the Omdurman/ Khartoum axis in the Nile valley and the "black African peasants" (such as the million Furs, the Berti, Masalit and Zaghawa who number 350,000 each and inhabit Darfur, at the bottom of the social ladder. (Darfur means the land of the Fur).

According to Ibrahim, the "black African peasants" of Darfur have, since Sudan's conquest by the British in 1919 and rule by successive post-independence governments from 1956, suffered from sustained neglect and deliberate underdevelopment by the rulers. Inhabiting the savannah belt of the region, their land enjoys higher rainfall which camel-keeping and livestock-rearing Arab ethnic groups in the desert northern Darfur migrated to, thereby evolving traditions of conflict typical of areas elsewhere in Africa between pastoralists and settled farmers. A significant element of this tradition was the existence of horse-riding warriors who tracked, also on-horse-back-rustlers, and fought them to win back the animals vital to nomadic peoples. These groups would later be adopted by both Sadiq al Mahdi's regime (1985-1989) and Hassan al-Bashir and supplied with modern weapons and constant supplies of ammunition to wage war against Darfur's ethnic groups, and others elsewhere.

Al-Bashir launched his own version of terrorism in 1989 when his government promulgated the 'Popular Defence Forces Law' which legalised paramilitary training to militias to execute a "jihad against Christian influence in the South". This was a clever way of using religious fundamentalism to reverse a growing consensus among Sudan's political parties to end the civil war that had raged intermittently since independence in 1956 against Southern Sudan.

It was a strategy which the National Islamic Front, al-Bashir's allies, would use to snatch political influence from the Umma Party, the National Democratic Party, the Communist Party and political parties in Southern Sudan whose activism had made Sudan's political culture vibrant and patriotic. Under this umbrella fundamentalist Islamic revivalism, the legitimate claims of the peoples of Darfur for an end to their economic backwardness and marginalisation would be subverted through the "jihad".

Prof Ibrahim's second theme was a growing tradition of violence to drive away populations from areas that were known to contain oil deposits. This vicious measure was first used by the American oil company, Chevron. In 1976 Chevron recruited Arab tribes to drive out the Dinka and Nuer populations out of villages in oil-rich zones. By 2001, a report by a United States Committee for Refugees stated that from February 1992 to December 1993, the government of Sudan had adopted Chevron's terrorism with the

result that "across the oil-rich regions of Sudan, the government is clearing land of civilians".

A Swedish oil company, Lundin Oil, and a Canadian oil concern, Talisman Energy were using "scorched earth" tactics arming militias and "engineering famine" against peoples "around oil fields". In order to "guarantee the safety of the oil company's operations" these oil companies gladly embraced and used facilities they had built.

Several official investigations noted this sad situation. As al-Bashir's regime grew increasingly tied to Sudan's growing oil economy, a Special Rapporteur Commission on Human Rights of the UN General Assembly said, in a report issued on September 7, 2001, that al-Bashir's militias "do not only target rebel camps or armed individuals, but also civilians, in a very intensive manner. Usually food crops are destroyed, men are killed and women and children are abducted". When, in self-defence, the terrorised tribes of Darfur raised liberation fighters, they met a Sudanese regime under al-Bashir that, since assuming power in 1989, was accustomed to using maximum violence against settled populations to satisfy its leaders' hunger for petrol dollars.

Meanwhile a cynical paradox had also grown over the years. American, Canadian and European Union governments were silent on the active and genocidal role played by their oil companies against defenceless populations in Sudan whose only crime was that their ancestors had owned land that held vast oil deposits under their feet.

The West started blaming al-Bashir when it became increasingly clear to it that SPLM /SPLA leader John Garang, in alliance with leaders of opposition political parties in Northern Sudan, had mobilised the grievances and anger of tortured and victimised populations into a new growing revolutionary Sudanese nationalism that had began to take arms against the sadistic impunity of the small elite that coalesced around al-Bashir's military machine. But, opting to land safely into the friendship of the leaders of the new revolution, the West began to support the groups fighting to end the terrorism against Darfurians and elsewhere. The vigorous entry by India and China into Sudan's oil belt also made them develop convulsive fits of panic. An empty rhetorical South-South solidarity among China, India and Sudan was tolerable and even entertaining. But giving China and India access to oil concessions was clearly diabolical. Al-Bashir was urgently accused of committing "genocide" in Darfur.

Sudan's tragedy has been the pathological cruelties of successive leaders (from Jaffar al Nimeiry, Sadiq al Mahdi to al-Bashir), against citizens of their country. Sudanese intellectuals, like Deng and Prof Ibrahim, have seen Arab racism as the curse of Sudan. This terrible virus is claimed to be most virulent in leaders with varying degrees of dark skin and West-African tribal marks--the Janjaweed. Commentators on genocide in Rwanda have noted that Hutus with Tutsi mothers were often the most brutal in killing Tutsis. They were apparently anxious to prove the authenticity of their Hutu ethnic nationalism.

This situation remains a critical challenge to those working on building national unity in Sudan. The vast crowds that turned up to welcome John Garang as a hero into Khartoum (after the signing of the peace accord ending the civil war in Southern Sudan in 2005), suggests, however, that the quest for justice, freedom and dignity was a more powerful force than shades of skin colour in Sudan. The positive value of the charge brought by the International Court of Justice in The Hague against al-Bashir is that it has opened a crack for sunlight to shine through the dark clouds of al-Bashir's official terrorism against Sudan's helpless peasants for over two decades.

Even if the light does not owe itself to a newly found love for Sudan's tortured millions by American, Canadian, German, French, British, Indian, Chinese and Russian oil companies and their home governments, it still opens a desperately needed window of hope for a return to the culture of vibrant democratic pluralism that once made Sudan a beacon of hope for oppressed peoples all across Africa. It is the fall of al-Bashir's terrorism at the grassroots; authoritarianism against politicised urban populations and cynical manipulation of Islam to kill freedom, justice, economic and human development in Darfur, Southern Sudan, the Red Sea areas and lands along the Egyptian border, that will end the disaster in Sudan.

If locking up al-Bashir and his cohorts will open the political skies over Sudan, it would be welcome by the silent and oppressed majority of her peoples. The African Union should hear their heartbeats and sighs for sunlight.

Abuja-based Okello Oculi is a commentator on African issues: Africa Insight is an initiative of the Nation Media Group's Africa Media Network Project.

- **Cameroon: Intolerable: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): COLUMN: 28 July 2008: Shey Peter Mabu.**

Although Africans view their continent as one of the conspicuous victims of selfish geopolitics, they themselves regrettably perpetrate the societal ills that leave their regions and countries behind other nations of the world.

From the slave trade, colonization, struggles for independence, freedom with its disillusionments, and today's turbulent democratization processes, there has been much that keeps observers wondering if African nations are genuinely committed to the challenge to forge ahead as far as economic development, peace and political stability are concerned. Yet, without these virtues of live-and-let-live, there can be no regional and continental solidarity, for progress.

Cameroon and Nigeria have in recent years taught other African nations, and the rest of the world, the rationale of dependence on international law as far as geopolitical conflicts are concerned. But what a shock that at a time when the two neighbours in respect of the verdict of the International court of Justice on the Bakassi Peninsular conflict, await the withdrawal of Nigerian troops and the Green Tree agreement, some unpatriotic and rebellious elements think they can alter the trend! Whether the masterminds of the ugly

scenario in Bakassi believe they are acting in the interest of their region, or the Federal Republic of Nigeria, one thing they tend to forget is the suicidal stance portrayed by undermining the fraternal and sane socio-economic ties Cameroon and Nigeria have always enjoyed, and would like to sustain. To be frank, African nations in their quest for genuine globalization, in spite of its challenges are aware of the elements that render credible their demands. They are also aware of national, sub-regional, and regional prerequisites of effective lobbying, cooperation and confrontation when ever need arises. But how can they attain these goals if they are constantly embarrassed by events which betray their maturity and regional solidarity? How can we claim to be struggling for a better image of the African continent and its nations, if for selfish reasons we allow ourselves to be manipulated by unpatriotic citizens and sadistic foreigners despite the damage this does to our respective nations, our region and the rest of Africa?

In the face of the unpleasant surprises coming from Bakassi, patriotic Cameroonians and Nigerians alike strongly deplore the ambush attacks by Nigerian pirate rebels who by claiming to act in the interest of the Delta region have caused the loss of innocent lives and betrayed our regional solidarity. The so-called Niger Delta Defense and Security Council, NDDSC should note that its options are not only against the decision of the Federal Government of Nigeria, but also unbecoming to the International Court of Justice, a specialized organ of the UN of which Nigeria is a member state.

In this light, the made-belief argument by the rebels that they ought to have been part of the negotiations as concerns the Bakassi conflict is irrational considering the norms that were respected by the International Court of Justice at The Hague, in the handling of this conflict. As the August 14, 2008 deadline for complete withdrawal of Nigerians troops from Bakassi approaches, there is no doubt that peace-loving Cameroonians in appreciation of the peaceful means they have already used to maintain what is rightly theirs will not be compromised despite the threats by pirate rebels. President Paul Biya Cameroon's leader who in 1994 could have reacted with force after the illegal occupation of Bakassi by Nigerian troops is quite conscious of the honour this option brought Cameroon and Africa. He does not ignore the fact that our valued territory merits defense. On its part, Nigeria, our neighbour with whom we are linked by history, kinship, trade and culture will not undermine what has already been done in the interest of the two nations, Africa and our global village.

For, any trend that undermines this option is intolerable, and in reality, against the peace and political stability direly needed by African nations.

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BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: August 12, 2008

Sub-Saharan Africa

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From August 3 to August 9 2008

SUMMARY

The opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games began in the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest, in north Beijing at 8pm on Friday. Two Chinese firms are set to generate power from coal in line with President Musa Yar'Adua's projection of solving the acute electricity power supply ahead of 2011 target. SEVEN Chinese companies have launched a multi-million dollar programme to help more than 3 000 physically-challenged people and those infected and affected by HIV and Aids in Zimbabwe.

Nigeria, United Nations (UN), Africa Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) have condemned the military coup in Mauritania. Renegade soldiers overthrew the first government to be freely elected in the West African country in more than 20 years. The junta spurned a call by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the AU to revert to status quo ante. The Army officers detained President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi and Prime Minister Yahya Ould Ahmed Waqef. Speaking while receiving the Chiefs of Defence Staff of member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at the State House in Abuja, **Yar'Adua said the coup plotters would not be accommodated in the committee of nations.**

About \$1.6 billion has been provided by the World Bank since 2000 to fight HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan African, a report from the bank said.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) would begin to heave a sigh of relief, if a proposed bill dubbed "Stop Vulture Funds Act" before the US House of Representatives, is passed to become an Act. The proposed bill seeks to end the greed and corrupt business practices of the Vulture Fund, which takes advantage of the world's poor countries. The bill, when passed into an Act, will clip the wings of the Vulture Fund, from further making excessive profits, off the debts of the world's poorest nations.

Lack of export orientation in the past has caused economic failures in African countries, which is why these countries should focus on exports to build industries. This is the view of Dr Thandika Mkandawire, director of the UN Research Institute (UNRISD). IPS interviewed him after he delivered the opening paper at the Guy Mhone Memorial Conference held in Lusaka, Zambia, at the end of last month.

The 17th International Aids Conference (AIDS 2008) opened on Sunday with a rejection that a lot of funds were being spent on HIV/Aids at the expense of health systems in resource limited countries. This was echoed by the outgoing International Aids Society President Dr Pedro Cahn saying despite the progress in saving lives and healing the sick in the poorest nations of the world, critics claim that HIV funding is creating more problems than it solves.

A wave of ill-considered new African HIV/AIDS laws criminalising the transmission of the virus were likely to backfire and end in more people being infected, Supreme Court of Appeal judge Edwin Cameron said this week. Cameron was speaking at the 17th International AIDS Conference IN Kampala, Uganda.

Organic fertilizers are good because they improve soil fertility by retaining it in its natural form and crop yields. They are also cost effective. According to Sambhi Reddy, the senior marketing manager of JN Agritech International, a company that distributes organic fertilizers; a kilogram of packed organic fertilizers is sold between Frw.1500 and Frw2,000-depending on the quantity and content while inorganic fertilizers cost twice as much ranging from Frw3,500 a kilogram to Frw5,000.

In his opening remarks at the East African Heads of State Summit, held last June, Rwanda's President Paul Kagame called on his colleagues in the region; to work towards the removal of 'corruption costs' as a way of reducing the cost of doing business in the region.

The Gambia Supreme Islamic Council (GSIC), has ordered both the print and electronic media outlets in the country to stop all programmes propagating the Shi'ate doctrine in the country.

In its first ever move against a head of state, the International Criminal Court (ICC) prepared last month to indict Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes allegedly committed in Darfur. Since then, most Arab and African leaders have condemned the move, which some local commentators see as politically motivated. "It's an attempt by certain western countries to internationalise the Darfur problem for their own political ends," Ayman Shebana, political science professor at Cairo University's Centre for African Studies told IPS.

The government of Rwanda released the long-awaited report on the alleged role played by France in the 1994 Genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda. The three-volume scathing report was unveiled by the Minister of Justice, Tharcisse Karugarama, who was flanked by Louise Mushikiwabo, Information Minister. Hundreds of people thronged the Ministry of Justice conference room to hear the findings. The so-called 'Mucyo Commission' report names former French President Francois Mitterand, his son Jean Christophe Mitterand

and several members of his cabinet as well as senior military officials as among those who should be held responsible for the slaughter of over a million people in 1994.

Civil society activists in Nigeria are welcoming the World Bank's acknowledgement of a series of damaging mistakes during the building of the World Bank-financed West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) running from Nigeria through Benin, Togo, and Ghana. But they also said the report does not go far enough in answering crucial questions.

A multi-million dollar plan to transform Lake Victoria basin into a special economic development and growth zone has been unveiled. The \$5 billion (Sh5.5 trillion) plan is also part of a broader programme aimed at accelerating the East African region into a middle-income economy in the immediate to medium term.

Former US President Bill Clinton has said that coffee can transform the economy. He said this Friday evening while meeting a group of Rwandan coffee growers who, through the Clinton Hunter Development Initiative (CHDI), had their coffee branded and marketed in Europe and other parts of the world.

The leader of Somalia's divided Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, has called on Arab states to support the ongoing peace process in the war-torn Horn of Africa country. Sheikh Sharif and an ARS delegation spoke in Cairo, Egypt, on Thursday with officials from the Arab League and the Egyptian government about peace prospects in Somalia."

NEWS COMMENTARIES

- Straddling Arab and sub-Saharan Africa, the desert nation of Mauritania has had two changes of government in three months, ending in a military coup earlier this week. Ex-presidential guard leaders have formed a military council, which they say has assumed power. President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi remains in detention as of Friday, and a military blackout of state media continues. Soldiers detained the president on Wednesday, only hours after he tried to dismiss his top four personal military guards. Members of the League of Arab States and the African Union are scheduled to meet with coup leader Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz on Friday.
- Gamal Abdul Nasser was a Egyptian revolutionist that successfully drove British out of his country after 72 years of rule, under his presidency Egypt came out of intense poverty to prosperity, he became famous all around the Arab Peninsula after standing firm against the western nations and his efforts of combining the Arab power to combat anti-Muslim forces mainly the Israel.

- As plausible, near-convincing and sympathetic as are submissions made by high ranking officials of this present government on whether or not Nigeria should handover the rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon, it is yet not in doubt, going by public international law, that Nigeria is bound by two great happenings to handover the Peninsula to Cameroon. These are: The judgment delivered in 2002 by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), under its compulsory jurisdiction, ceding in the main, Bakassi to Cameroon. The June 12, 2006, Green Tree Agreement in New York, United States of America, between Nigeria's then supremo, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, and Cameroon's 'smart one,' Paul Biya. It is clear from the combined provisions of Articles 5, 6, 7 and 94 of the United Nations Charter that should Nigeria in any way attempt to disobey or disregard the terms of the judgment of the International Court of Justice, it will likely face official aggression from the comity of nations under the umbrella of the United Nations - ranging from imposition of sanctions to outright use of force to enforce that judgment.
- LET the Olympic Games begin! But as they do, we should remember that the contest starting in Beijing today is not the only one of Olympian proportions playing out in the world today. There is also an economic marathon taking place between runners in the west and those in the east, a national relay race that will eventually see the baton of economic supremacy being passed from the US to China.
- Political dynasties are families that have exerted disproportionate influence on the politics of their societies. If they are successful, they may produce more than one Head of State or Head of Government. But at the very minimum, political dynasties have produced political leaders in varied ranks of the political process. The Bush family in the US has become a political dynasty. It has so far produced two presidents: George Herbert Bush and George William Bush. It is possible that there will be a third President Bush: President Jeb Bush, currently the Governor of Florida, writes Prof. Ali A. Mazrui.

THE HEADLINES

35. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- West Africa: New Asia-West Africa Route Opens: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 5 August 2008.
- Nigeria: FG Set to Generate Power From Coal: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 4 August 2008.

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- Ghana: Sharabutu Tells Politicians - Stop Creating Tension in the Country: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 5 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Clerics Condemn Incidence of Homosexuality: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 8 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Neglect of a Language Village: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 5 August 2008.
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- South Africa: Urban Women 'Are Primary Earners': [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 5 August 2008.

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- Sudan: End Sham Trials By Anti-Terror Courts: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 6 August 2008.
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- Botswana: Court Rules in Favour of HIV Positive Man: [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 6 August 2008.

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- Somalia: Cabinet Minister Resigns in Puntland: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 9 August 2008.

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44. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

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- Sudan: UN-African Union Officials Confer With Country On Darfur Peace Force: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 4 August 2008.

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- Rwanda: IRDP, Stakeholders Discuss Means Against Negation of Tutsi Genocide: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 8 August 2008.

45. REBEL, MILITANCY AND “WAR ON TERROR”

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46. NORTH AFRICA

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48. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- **West Africa: New Asia-West Africa Route Opens: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 5 August 2008.**

MULTI-trade shipowner Safmarine has started a regular, multi-purpose vessel (MPV) service between Asia and West Africa. MPV executive Greg Ulicki said the positioning voyages of Safmarine's Chinese-built Angela, Andisa and Akwaba vessels were used to determine if there was sufficient demand, and based on their success "we have decided to open up a monthly service". The new service commenced with the return of the Safmarine Akwaba from Africa to Asia full of eastbound cargo last month, and the cycle continues from there. Major West African ports that will be served include Namibe, Lobito, Luanda, Pointe Noire, Libreville, Douala, Malabo, Sao Tome, Durban, Lome, Tema, Takoradi, Abidjan and San Pedro. Verner Hammeken, MPV manager for Safmarine in China, says the key to satisfying customer demand is being able to offer flexibility of loading cargo of any shape, size and weight. "Our ships are equipped with cranes capable of loading, carrying and offloading commodities in bulk, out-of gauge project cargo, heavy lift and also containers with special cargo (such as reefers) into the most challenging African destinations." Reports from Mathabo le Roux, Dave Marrs, Tariff & Trade Intelligence and Railways Africa

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- **Nigeria: FG Set to Generate Power From Coal: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 4 August 2008.**

Two Chinese firms are set to generate power from coal in line with President Musa Yar'Adua's projection of solving the acute electricity power supply ahead of 2011 target. Minister of Mines and Steel Development, Alhaji Sarafa Tunji Ishola gave this hint in Abeokuta shortly after he was conferred with the title of Osi-Balogun of Erunwon-Abeokuta. Sarafa, accompanied by his wife who was full of smiles, added that the Federal Government had already issued operating licences to the firms. According to the minister, who spoke through his Special Assistant, Mr. Seye Adekeye, the firms: Delta Services and Western Metals located in Kogi and Benue States have already moved to site as part of the Federal Government's efforts to meet its target of 10,000 megawatts in the energy sector by 2011. He also disclosed that President Yar'Adua's administration was more determined to explore gold, bitumen and limestone which according to him, were in large quantities in some parts of the country. "One of the firms has been given license to operate in Kogi State, while the other is in Benue State where there are large deposits of coal. They are to do so in conjunction with the state governments. I can tell you that within the next two years, the two firms will generate nothing less than 3,000 megawatts to the power sector". While the Delta Services firm had acquired the Okaba coal field for \$10 billion, the Western Metals had acquired the Ogomojoya field for N50 billion. According to Sarafa, the exploration of large quantities of bitumen had reached an advanced stage, particularly with two Canadian and Australian companies and assured that the bidding would open before December so that Nigerians will feel the impact

within the next one year. The minister lamented that limestone and gold which is among the seven strategic minerals in the country have not been explored to the fullest advantage of the country, citing Awo, Osun State where he hinted that the state government had taken over expanse of land for serious exploration. Sarafa said, the policy of this civilian dispensation was to take care of the general interest of the immediate communities where minerals are discovered. "Now, it is a must that before any exploration begins in a community, there must be serious understanding between that community and the government." Speaking further, he said, to ensure that the policy is well implemented, his ministry was set to establish Mineral Resources Committees in all the 36 states of the federation including Abuja. He added that, though the reserve base of bitumen in the country is about 4 trillion metric tons, "there has not been serious investor in this area". His words, "since the world war, the gold in Ilesha has been explored but nothing has accrued to the government and people. Those who have been reaping bountifully from it are those illegal miners and this must cease".

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Beijing Olympic Games Kick Off: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 8 August 2008.**

The opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympic Games began in the National Stadium, also known as the Bird's Nest, in north Beijing at 8pm on Friday. A formation of 2 008 young men controlled 2 008 Fou, an ancient percussion instrument of China with a 3 000-year history, all embedded with LED beads, to flash out the last seconds of the seven-year countdown to the Games, which started on 13 July 2001. Chinese President Hu Jintao and International Olympic Committee President Jacques Rogge rose from their seats in the VIP stand to wave to a cheering crowd in the full-packed stadium. The formation of Fou beaters then started a thunderous welcoming ceremony, chanting Confucius' saying "How Happy We Are, To Meet Friends". Twenty-nine colossal footprints, created by firework explosions in the sky and symbolising the successive summer Olympics, travelled all the way along the central axis of Beijing, from the ancient city gate of Yongdingmen in the south to the futurist steel-framed Bird's Nest. Sparkles fell into the stadium and "lit up" a huge LED screen that showed the Olympic five rings. Embraced by "flying fairies" in shining costumes, the five rings, also made up with LED beads, were lifted in the air before the unbelieving eyes of some 91 000 spectators. To the melodious rhythm of the song "A hymn to the motherland," the Chinese national flag was ushered in the stadium, and hoisted with the excited and proud home crowd singing the national anthem loudly. -

- **Zimbabwe: Zimbabweans in Chinese Embassy Demonstration: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 8 August 2008.**

Zimbabwean activists in the United Kingdom on Friday teamed up with protesters from Burma, Tibet and Sudan to demonstrate at the Chinese embassy in London. Zimbabwe, Sudan and Burma have all suffered human rights abuses at the hands of dictators, supported by China. The people of Tibet meanwhile are fighting for their independence from China which invaded the territory in the fifties. Many died in that conflict. While the

opening ceremony of the Olympics in China was being played out in Beijing the marchers raised the various flags of the oppressed countries and their national anthems were played. British MP Kate Hoey, who chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Zimbabwe, gave a speech at the demonstration. Over 40 policemen formed a protective wall around the embassy, standing behind metal fences that were erected. The Zimbabwean activists were protesting China's continued support for the Mugabe regime, including its use of a veto last month to block a resolution at the United Nations Security Council calling for targeted sanctions against the regime. The resolution would have also seen a UN arms embargo being slapped on the country. The Chinese instead have been supplying arms to the Mugabe regime, despite international condemnation and arguments that there was no legitimate government in place. The demonstrators put together a presentation featuring look-alike dictators from Zimbabwe, Burma and Sudan, bowing to a figure representing China. A black coffin was on display to represent the people who have died in the various countries while fighting for freedom. There was a lot of drumming at the venue, while banners were held aloft calling for a 'Free Tibet' and demands for China to stop its support of the brutal military junta in Burma. Radical campaigner Peter Tatchell told journalists 'We are here to remind China and the world that the Olympics show may proceed but we have not forgotten the millions of people who are the victims of the tyranny of the regime in Beijing, the political prisoners, the suppressed trade unionists and the persecuted minorities like the Tibetans. He said there could be no normal sporting relations 'with the abnormal oppressive regime in Beijing.'

- **Zimbabwe: 3 000 to Benefit From Sino Companies' Project: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 8 August 2008.**

SEVEN Chinese companies have launched a multi-million dollar programme to help more than 3 000 physically-challenged people and those infected and affected by HIV and Aids in Zimbabwe. Speaking at the launch of Care Action in Harare yesterday, Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe Mr Yuan Nansheng said the project would assist the disadvantaged and those affected and infected by HIV and Aids in Zimbabwe. "The Care Action programme is designed as a long-term project to assist Zimbabwe. A total of seven companies have pledged to assist in orphanages, homes as well as schools in the country as a way of giving back to the community," Mr Yuan said. The companies had donated basic goods worth over US\$5 000 to Mashambanzou Trust in Waterfalls, Harare. The goods included beef, cooking oil, flour, bread, Colgate toothpaste, tomatoes, eggs, maize meal, drinks and bicycles. Mr Yuan said Care Action demonstrates the kindness and willingness of Chinese companies and the Chinese Government to further strengthen the China-Africa relations through the assistance. "The Care Action is a further step for us in implementing the spirit of China-Africa co-operation where companies undertake to respond to the urgent need of assistance as part of their social responsibility," he said. The companies are - Sinosteel Zimbabwe, Tianze Tobacco, Sino-Africa Nickels, China Jiangxi Corporation, Huawei Technologies, Zimbabwe International Travel and Tourism and Connick Investments. Mr Yuan said the action would be co-ordinated by the Zimbabwean Chinese funded Enterprises' Association and the Chinese businessmen's

Association. He said the companies would also motivate more firms from the Far Eastern country to assist Zimbabwe. Mr Yuan said the action, which would also be complemented by official assistance from the Chinese Government, will construct a school in Harare to accommodate 800 orphans, give financial support to Crowhill Primary School and create employment for disadvantaged people. China and Zimbabwe enjoy excellent relations and would continue to support each other. Since he came to Zimbabwe, Mr Yuan said China had constructed two schools and one hospital and was also funding the renovation of the National Sports Stadium among other projects. Speaking on behalf of the companies, Sinosteel Zimbabwe general manager Mr Harris Jian Deng said this was the beginning of a relationship that will see more Chinese companies supporting Zimbabwe. Mr Yuan and his delegation yesterday visited Mashambazhou where he officially handed over the food donations to the Mashambazhou Trust co-ordinator Sister Margaret McAllen who expressed the centre's sincere gratitude.

- **Zambia: Chinese Government Hailed: [The Times of Zambia](#) (Ndola): 2 August 2008.**

The Chinese government and its defence forces have been praised for the support it rendered to the economic and defence development that Zambia has attained. Defence Minister, George Mpombo, said in Lusaka yesterday when he officiated at the 81st anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Peoples' Liberation Army (CPLA) that the economic development that China had achieved was an example to many countries and that Zambia was not an exception. "China has continued to live up to its reputation as an all weather friend to Zambia by extending various forms of economic and technical assistance including in the field of defence," he said. Zambia had and was still benefiting from the economic and infrastructure development that China had achieved. Today China had continued to assist Zambia in the field of training its defence forces and medical staff to hasten the bilateral relationship that existed between the two countries. The minister said the friendship between CPLA and Zambia defence forces dated back to the time when Zambia attained her independence hence the need to have the relationship continued. "Zambia will never forget the day when China and its CPLA gave material assistance to our defence forces when we were fighting for the liberation struggles," Mr Mpombo said. And the minister has described calls by some people to publish pictures of President Mwanawasa while in hospital as uncalled for. He said it was regrettable to hear that some members of the public were calling for pictures of Dr Mwanawasa currently admitted in a French hospital to be published. He said Dr Mwanawasa deserved respect as he was not just a Head of State but a human being as well who had the right to privacy. CPLA defence attaché, Wang Zhiyong said the Chinese defence force and the people of China were grateful for the support that Dr Mwanawasa had offered to them during the 12th May earthquake which struck Sichuan Province of China. Colonel Wang said the Zambian defence force had become the best partner in development of the military defence force and that Zambia was the only country in the world, which had benefited from the continuous assistance from China in defence matters.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Sudan: Human Rights Groups Call on McCain and Obama to Co-Sponsor Senate Resolution on Olympics: Investors Against Genocide (Boston): PRESS RELEASE: 4 August 2008.**

A coalition of nearly thirty human rights and anti-genocide organizations, joined by Mia Farrow, today issued an open letter to Senators John McCain and Barack Obama asking them to release a public statement announcing their co-sponsorship of Senate Resolution 632 and their support for an Olympic Truce for Darfur effective immediately. The letter also urges the two presidential candidates to support the Olympic Truce for Darfur in public statements in the coming week and during the Olympic Games. (Complete text of letter below) Senate Resolution 632 urges the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the international community to use the upcoming Olympic Games as an opportunity to push for the parties to the conflicts in Sudan, Chad, and the Central African Republic to cease hostilities and revive efforts toward a peaceful resolution of their national and regional conflicts. The resolution also encourages the United Nations Secretary-General and other international leaders to publicly promote the principles reflected in the Olympic Truce among all the warring parties in Sudan, Chad, the Central African Republic, and other areas of conflict around the world. "Either John McCain or Barack Obama will become the next President of the United States," stated Susan Morgan, spokesperson for the coalition. "As presumptive presidential nominees, they already have tremendous power to influence the international community to do more to help end the genocide in Darfur. We are asking both candidates to act now to help bring peace to Darfur, since waiting until January 2009 will be too late for countless victims of this humanitarian crisis." Although the Senate is in recess, additional Senate co-sponsors can submit their names now, to be officially recorded in September when the recess is over. "The international community has failed Darfur for over five years," said Charlie Clements, President and CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. "On the eve of the Summer Olympics, both John McCain and Barack Obama have an important opportunity, by publicly supporting the Senate resolution, to use their influence to urge world leaders to embrace the Olympic dream of world peace and help protect innocent Darfurians." The tradition of the Olympic Truce originated in ancient Greece to ensure the safety of athletes traveling to the ancient Olympic Games. The importance of the truce was reaffirmed in 2003 by the United Nations and has evolved over recent years to address the safety of civilians caught in the midst of conflict or strife. The Olympic Truce traditionally begins one week before the Olympic Games and extends one week after the end of the Paralympic Games. On July 1, Team Darfur, a coalition of current and retired Olympic athletes, issued an open letter to world leaders, also invoking an Olympic Truce. In their letter, the athletes called for leaders to (1) insist that the Government of Sudan not bomb its own unarmed civilian population for at least the 55-day truce period of the 2008 Beijing Games, (2) use the truce period to allow humanitarian workers to access civilians who have been without food, clean water and medical care for years and (3) make progress on deployment of peacekeepers. According to Jodi Jacobson, Director of Advocacy at American Jewish World Service, China is in a unique position to help end the crisis in Darfur. "China is a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, and was acting President when the Security Council approved the UNAMID peacekeeping mission. As such, China has a special responsibility to ensure the full and rapid

deployment of a fully equipped peacekeeping force in Darfur. Moreover, as current custodian of the universal values of peace and fraternity represented by the Olympics, China has a special duty to ensure that its actions are consistent with those values," she stated. China is Sudan's leading trade partner in its oil industry thereby providing the Government of Sudan with the economic resources needed to carry out violence against the people of Darfur. For more than a decade, China has also been a major military benefactor of Sudan, including its number one supplier of small arms. A UN report documented that Chinese small arms have regularly been used in Darfur. Lastly, China has also been Sudan's most important defender in the United Nations, blocking or weakening measures that would compel Sudan to end its violence in Darfur.

- **Uganda: Naguru Health Clinic to Become Hospital: [New Vision \(Kampala\)](#): 6 August 2008.**

NAGURU Health Clinic in Kampala is to be upgraded into a district hospital. This was confirmed on Tuesday during a meeting of the mayor, Nasser Sebagala, health ministry officials and a delegation from the Chinese government. Construction is to be funded by the Chinese and work is expected to kick-off by April next year. The clinic, currently graded as a health centre IV, is to be demolished by the end of the year and the hospital built on the five-acre piece of land on which the clinic now sits. "We have alternative places like Kiswa Health Centre, Bukoto I or Kisugu, where the clinic would be shifted as construction goes on," said Dr. Misaki Mubiru, the city health services chief. The clinic receives about 300 patients daily. The Chinese team was led by Zhang Jian Yu of China Architecture Design and Research Group, accompanied by counsellor Zhang Aiming of the Chinese Embassy. They had earlier toured the project site. The commissioner for clinical services, Dr. Jacinto Amandua, said the 100-bed hospital would have a theatre, youth, HIV/AIDS and maternity centres. The Chinese government intends to build three more hospitals in Kampala, depending on the availability of land.

- **Eritrea: Chinese Investors Conduct Tour in Gash-Barka Region: [Shabait.com](#) (Asmara): 5 August 2008.**

Chinese investors who are undertaking exploratory task in Eritrea to invest in the development of cotton plantation conducted a tour in Gash-Barka region to observe the available investment prospects. They visited the plains in the sub-zones of Tessenei and Golij, especially the ones around Fanko-Rawi, Fanko-Tsimue, Gerset, Haj Arab and Aligidir. They received briefings by experts on the existing underground water resource in the area, land size and the available infrastructure facilities that encourage investment. The Chinese investors also observed cotton plantation experiment on 5 hectares around Gerset that yielded fruitful outcome. Also in the course of their tour, they observed the Aligidir water diversion scheme and the farmlands it is irrigating, during which they received briefings. The Administrator of Gash-Barka region, Mr. Kahsai Gebrehiwet, briefed them on the existing communication infrastructure, social service and manpower that encourage investment in the area. Moreover, the Chinese investors visited the agricultural projects of Molober and Afhimbol, as well as Kerkebet sub-zone, and thus explored prospects of cotton development.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Olympic Boss affirm China Transformation: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): 5 August 2008.**

Three days before the official opening ceremony, IOC President Jacques Rogge has said the Beijing Olympics will be a historic milestone, affirming China's transformation on the world stage. In a speech at the opening ceremony of the Olympic body, Rogge steered clear of any of the contentious issues surrounding the games such as human rights, air pollution and media freedoms. With dignitaries, including Chinese President Hu Jintao, present Rogge referred only to "some challenges" facing China. "We are now just days away from what I believe will be a historic Olympic Games," Rogge said, speaking to the 120th General Assembly of the International Olympic Committee. "China's role as our Olympic host has opened a window to the world's most populous nation." Rogge said the games were a "landmark event" for the Olympic movement, hosted by a country with nearly 20 percent of the world's population. One billion television viewers are expected to watch live coverage of Friday's opening ceremony, he said. "I am equally confident that the games will leave a great legacy for China," Rogge said. "China is a nation in transition, with a great future, tremendous potential and some challenges. I believe history will view the 2008 Olympics as a significant milestone in China's remarkable transformation." Rogge cited the May 12 earthquake in Sichuan province, which killed almost 70,000 people, and praised the "courageous response by the Chinese people." "All of us in the Olympic family hope that the Beijing Games will help the healing process in China and deepen the world's knowledge of this remarkable country," he said. He noted the games will feature a record 205 Olympics teams, with women making up about 45 percent of the 10,500 athletes. In his speech, the Chinese president said sports has played a big role in China's "fast-track" toward modernization. "It is also our hope that through the games, we can show the world the sincere aspiration of the Chinese people to share the benefits of development and to join with the rest of the world in building a bright future," Hu said. Liu Qi, the president of organizing committee and the head of Beijing's Communist Party, said the Olympics had transformed the city. "All venues and facilities are now in operation, and all staff are in their posts," Liu said. "Volunteers and Beijing residents are greeting athletes and friends from all over the world with welcoming smiles. Now we are proud to say Beijing is ready!"

49. PAN AFRICA

WEST AFRICA

- **Mauritania: Nigeria, AU Condemn Coup: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 7 August 2008.**

Nigeria, United Nations (UN), Africa Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) have condemned yesterday's military coup in Mauritania. Renegade soldiers overthrew the first government to be freely elected in the West African country in more than 20 years. The junta spurned a call by President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua and the AU to revert to status

quo ante. The Army officers detained President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi and Prime Minister Yahya Ould Ahmed Waqef. Speaking while receiving the Chiefs of Defence Staff of member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at the State House in Abuja yesterday, Yar'Adua said the coup plotters would not be accommodated in the committee of nations. Yar'Adua said the coup could jeopardise the democratic gains that had been achieved in the West African sub-region so far. He said no nation in the sub-region could achieve meaningful socio-economic development without peace and political stability, adding that Nigeria would continue to lead the efforts to maintain peace and political stability in West Africa particular and the whole of Africa in general. Yar'Adua stated that Nigeria would facilitate the urgent establishment of the West African Stand-by Force. "Nigeria totally condemns the situation that took place in Mauritania this morning. Nigeria will not recognise and support any government that comes into being through unconstitutional means. The African Union (AU) pact has made it clear that AU will not recognise any government that didn't come into being through constitutional means." "Today our sub-region experiences political stability the type that has never been experienced before since we attained political independence. It is extremely clear that we in the African continent, issue of peace and security is critical to our development, especially in meeting the needs and providing for our people. The region and indeed its armed forces have made tremendous sacrifices in bringing this peace." "I want to assure you that Nigeria will continue to contribute its quota to ensure that the peace we are enjoying in the sub-region is sustained. This we will continue to do in the context of the heads of government of ECOWAS. We will give our total support to ensure that the ECOWAS standby force becomes a reality as soon as possible and become the first to be established in the continent which is advocating an Africa standby force." "Ensure that you establish this force. Its establishment will help provide our sub-region the wherewithal to sustain the peace we have been enjoying in the sub-region. In his reaction, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called for the immediate restoration of order in the country." "The secretary-general calls for respect for the rule of law and the immediate restoration of constitutional order in the country," a UN spokeswoman told reporters. She added that Ban regretted the coup. In the same vein, a statement issued at AU headquarters in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, said: "The African Union condemns the coup d'etat and demands the restoration of constitutional legality." The European Union (EU) also condemned "any attempt to overthrow a democratically elected institution or government by force." The coup in Africa's newest oil producer took place after the president and prime minister fired the country's top four military officials. Associated Press (AP) reports that the President was being held by the renegade soldiers at the presidential palace in Nouakchott and that soldiers also detained the prime minister. State radio and television went off air and witnesses said soldiers were deployed throughout the capital. No violence was immediately reported. Straddling the western edge of the Sahara desert, Arab-dominated Mauritania, with a population of 3.4 million, has been wracked by more than 10 coups or attempted coups since independence from France in 1960. While most of its people live on about \$5 a day, oil reserves were discovered in Mauritania in 2006. Abdallahi's civilian government took control from a military junta, which seized power in a 2005 coup and stepped down after 2007 elections. No official reason was given for firing the military officials. Among those fired was army chief staff Gen. Mohamed Ould Sheikh

Mohamed. In recent weeks, lawmakers have accused Abdallahi of corruption and poor governance, and 69 of the country's 95 parliament members called for his resignation. Lawmaker Mohammed Al Mukhtar told the Arab satellite television station, Al-Jazeera, by telephone that many people were supporting the takeover attempt. He described the government as "an authoritarian regime" and asserted that the president had "marginalised the majority in parliament". The US embassy urged Americans in Mauritania "to exercise extreme caution to ensure their safety. They should remain at home or where they are for the rest of the day and avoid crowds". Spokesman Romain Nadal said France's Foreign Ministry was in contact with French embassy officials in Nouakchott and that measures had been taken to protect the safety of French citizens living in the country. The bloodless 2005 coup, when Col. Ely Ould Mohamed Vall seized power, was widely popular, for many Mauritania had grown tired of the 21-year rule of former dictator Maaouya Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya. Although no junta members ran in the 2007 election, there have been rumours that some in the military were unhappy at being barred from the race. Newspapers also carried stories linking several of the 19 presidential candidates to Taya, now living in exile. Al-Qaida linked terror groups have also been active in the country, which is one of only three Arab League nations to recognise Israel. Mauritania blamed the 2007 Christmas Eve slaying of four French tourists on a terror group allied with al-Qaida. The attacks prompted French organisers to cancel the 2008 Dakar Rally, a famous transcontinental car and motorcycle race that brought pride and foreign currency into the country. Mauritania is a highly centralised republic dominated by a strong presidency. The 1991 constitution provides for a civilian government composed of a dominant executive branch, a Senate and a National Assembly. In 1984, Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya seized power as head of a military junta toppling Mohammed Khona Ouled Hidala, the then president. After multi-party polls in 1992, Taya headed a series of civilian governments. He was re-elected for a third time in 2003 in a poll which opposition groups said was marred by fraud and intimidation. A coup in 2005 ended Taya's two decades of authoritarian rule; the military junta that took over, however, pledged a full transition to democracy with presidential polls in March 2007. In a June 2006 referendum, overseen by the military rulers, voters approved constitutional changes limiting the president to two five-year terms. On August 3, 2005, Mauritania entered a transitional phase following the ouster of Taya's regime. During this transitional period, the Military Council for Justice and Democracy, led by Eali Ouled Mohammed Vall, took control and promised to restore power into the civilian hands through municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections. The Council granted itself a two-year transitional period, which was later reduced to 19 months. On March 11, 2007, the first round of presidential elections commenced, marking the end of the aforesaid transitional period.

- **World Bank Spends Over \$1.6 Billion to Fight Aids in Africa: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 5 August 2008.**

About \$1.6 billion has been provided by the World Bank since 2000 to fight HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa, a report from the bank said yesterday. The report which emanated from the 17th International AIDS Conference holding in Mexico City where experts gathered to discuss the "Changing HIV/AIDS Landscape in Africa" said Lifetime

treatment for AIDS costs about \$5,600 in Africa, while the cost to prevent a new infection is about US\$2,000 and is expected to decrease over time. In Nigeria, the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) said last month that the World Bank credit to fight HIV/AIDS in the country in the last five years amounted to \$90.3 million. The Director General of NACA, Professor Babatunde Oostimehin while presenting the HIV/AIDS profiles in the country and its budget over the years said while the \$90.3 billion expired in June, there was additional financing agreement signed for \$50 million with 2-year extension. The World Bank report said research has shown that there is a need for global and country-level political commitment and leadership to fight the disease. In Mexico, Robert Zoellick, the President of the World Bank group said: "We cannot talk about more inclusive and sustainable development in Africa without also committing to the long-term battle against AIDS, the largest single cause of premature death on the continent. Some of the Changing HIV Landscape's critical findings according to the bank is that a major reason for health care workers leaving government service is lack of protection from HIV, which include "standard protective equipment and access to post-exposure prophylaxis." The report concludes that nations, donors, and communities must understand their specific epidemics, rely on evidence to determine appropriate interventions, and coordinate much better when setting priorities.

- **HIPC Countries to Get Reprieve: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 7 August 2008.**

Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) would begin to heave a sigh of relief, if a proposed bill dubbed "Stop Vulture Funds Act" before the US House of Representatives, is passed to become an Act. The proposed bill seeks to end the greed and corrupt business practices of the Vulture Fund, which takes advantage of the world's poor countries. The bill, when passed into an Act, will clip the wings of the Vulture Fund, from further making excessive profits, off the debts of the world's poorest nations. Poor countries, who have been victims of the Vulture Fund, have publicly cried about their inability to repay back monies owed to the Fund, resulting in the seizure of state assets, coupled with litigation and political pressure on their respective countries. The Vulture Fund purchases defaulted debts of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), at much reduced prices, and then litigates against the debtor for greatly inflated sums. Through the seizure of assets, litigation and political pressure, the Fund seeks repayments that are far in excess of the amount that they pay for the debt. Presenting the bill before the House of Representatives, in the United States of America, the Jubilee USA Network, an alliance of 80 religious denominations and faith communities, development agencies, and human rights groups working for debt relief, said, "We welcome the strong leadership showed by the Congressional co-sponsors of this important new legislation." "Vulture Funds are grabbing the proceeds from the debt relief of some of the poorest countries in the world. This bill should make Vulture Funds think twice, before suing the poor for profit." Lead sponsor Congresswoman Maxine Waters said, "The Stop VULTURE Funds Act, would protect the world's poorest countries, from the predatory practices of vulture funds, and allow these countries to use their limited resources, to meet the needs of their people." The Stop VULTURE Funds Act (H.R. 6796) outlaws profiteering from sovereign debt, by capping the amount of profit that a fund can reap, through litigating against poor countries, to

collect defaulted debts. It also requires disclosures from any fund, which pursues Vulture Fund activity, through the U.S. courts. Introduced by the Financial Services Committee Member Representative, Maxine Waters (D-Calif), the bill counts original cosponsors Representative John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.), Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and Representative Donald Payne (D-N.J.), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health. The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and leading non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have all condemned the activities of the Vulture Funds. Secretary Paulson stated in a Congressional testimony, that he "deplores what the Vulture Funds are doing." "The profiteering tactics used by these Vulture Funds, are undercutting progress made towards relieving the debt burdens of the world's poorest countries," says Nicole Lee, Executive Director of Trans Africa Forum. He added, "HR 6796 is a key step in closing the legal loopholes, which has allowed these Vultures to operate in such a devious way."

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **'Exports Are the Best Way to Develop': [Inter Press Service \(Johannesburg\): August 2008.](#)**

Lack of export orientation in the past has caused economic failures in African countries, which is why these countries should focus on exports to build industries. This is the view of Dr Thandika Mkandawire, director of the UN Research Institute (UNRISD). IPS interviewed him after he delivered the opening paper at the Guy Mhone Memorial Conference held in Lusaka, Zambia, at the end of last month. Guy Mhone was an academic highly regarded for his writing on governance and others issues. Mkandawire pointed out that there have been a number of incorrect readings of African economic history over the years. After colonisation there were high rates of economic growth between 1960 and 1975. Africa's share in the global industry rose from seven to eight percent. However, African economies were based on import substitution instead of export-oriented industrialisation. Countries did not invest in manufacturing plants -- for example the motor industry, heavy machinery and mining. Instead the focus was on reducing imports and producing primary commodities such as tobacco or manufactured goods such as beverage and clothing and leather products. Import substitution led to "shallow industrialisation". There was also no cohesion of industrial projects and a failure to deepen import-substitution industrialisation through regional integration. Mkandawire said that countries in sub-Saharan Africa have largely failed to extend their markets through income distribution. When the oil crises and other market failures hit the world in the 1970s, Africa had no solid economic foundation. The economies of the developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa not only stagnated but actually declined. De-industrialisation took place and led to the demise of institutions and capacity. The harmful legacy of a lack of export-driven industrialisation is again becoming apparent in the current global economic climate. Although the World Bank cited an increase of exports from 5.7 billion dollars in 1990 to 12.5 billion dollars in 2005, there is a false optimism as the exports were mainly in the form of raw products by multinational companies whose headquarters are elsewhere. Unset diamonds, for instance, accounted for exports of USD5.5 billion in 2005. Export industries are also under-diversified. For example, clothing and textiles accounted for a combined total of 53 percent of all "narrow

manufacture" exports from sub-Saharan Africa. Mkandawire argued that although there has been growth in certain areas, it stems from improved productivities and efficiencies after privatisation and not from investment in new manufacturing activities. "Africa has not had industrial policies for the last 20 years," he told IPS. "The way forward is to look at where the continent is compared to the rest of the world and to identify areas in which to diversify industries in order to create a strong export base." According to him the role of industrialisation in the development process has been hugely downplayed to the detriment of developing countries. In a report in 1993 the World Bank even went so far as to say, "our assessment is that promotion of specific industries generally did not work and therefore holds little promise for other developing countries." There is also an argument that manufacturing does not play such a leading role in economic growth in the new economy. Some analysts argue that the services industry -- e.g. communication technology and tourism - is more important than the manufacturing industry. But, according to Mkandawire, there has to be investment in both kinds of industries. Corruption has also been identified as a hurdle to growth and development in Africa. There are many cases where top government officials hold on to goods meant for export or import at ports and airports until they get paid graft money. It is well known that certain multinational companies calculate bribe money into their budgets before they put in tenders for lucrative contracts. Mkandawire said that although one can make a moral case against corruption, its economic impact is less clear-cut. "In Asia corruption, or rent seeking and rent creation, is rampant." But in these countries rents were achievable through activities which served national interests and the realisation of rents was related to performance standards. In other words, money from corruption was kept in the country, which benefited the national economy. "In contrast many leaders in Africa have used graft money to open Swiss bank accounts, which does not benefit their countries." Mkandawire is not making a case for corruption. He strongly argues for coordination and combining forces in the quest for development and growth. "Africa needs development coalitions, which might consist of state actors, business partners and workers, that share some ideological position on development and collectively have the capacity and will to push the development agenda," he told IPS. "Africa has to rethink regional cooperation. Early ideas of regional integration assumed planned national economies that somehow allocated activities among themselves in a planned way. This failed." Current regional integration policies assume that the markets in neoliberal member states will grow if the state provides infrastructure and some regional regulatory bodies. However, this is not working, hence the need for a rethink."

- **Move to Criminalise Aids 'Bad for Africa': Business Day (Johannesburg): 8 August 2008.**

A wave of ill-considered new African HIV/AIDS laws criminalising the transmission of the virus were likely to backfire and end in more people being infected, Supreme Court of Appeal judge Edwin Cameron said this week. Cameron was speaking at the 17th International AIDS Conference, which ends today. "Just like condoms or faulty medical supplies, bad laws can spread the virus," said SA's Cameron, who is expected to give a plenary address on the issue later today. Africa bears the brunt of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and leaders on the continent are battling to curb the rate of new infections:

two-thirds of the 33-million people with the disease live south of the Sahara. Most don't know they are infected, and many African countries are desperately trying to persuade more people to get tested. Cameron said he hoped to use the "Champions for HIV" initiative that Botswana's former leader, Festus Mogae, started this week, to urge changes to recently passed laws in west, east and central Africa that criminalised HIV transmission. More than a dozen African countries have adopted legislation based on a much criticised "model" law developed by Ghana, and another four countries have bills pending. The Ghanaian laws contained "terrifying" provisions that made it a criminal offence (carrying a maximum seven-year jail term) for those knowing they were HIV-positive not to disclose their status to their partner before having any kind of sexual contact, said Cameron. The law did not define what such contact might entail. "One doesn't know whether it's holding hands, kissing, fondling or anything more extensive," said Cameron, who is openly HIV-positive and has been on antiretroviral treatment for more than a decade. Criminalising the transmission of HIV was misguided and would undermine much of the work of the past 20 years, to try to reduce the stigma associated with the disease, he said. It would also inhibit people from getting tested, as they could not be prosecuted if they innocently passed on the virus, he said. Several African countries had adapted Ghana's law, while others had adopted it wholesale, said Jonathan Cohen, director of the Open Society Institute's Law and Health initiative. Senegal, for example, had made it a criminal offence for an HIV-positive woman to transmit the virus to her baby. Other countries had passed laws that made it an offence to provide sex education to minors. In Guinea, for example, sex education for children under the age of 13 was now a crime. Togo had introduced compulsory HIV testing for sex workers, and in Liberia, physicians may disclose a child's HIV status "to anyone involved in their care or education," said Cohen. Zimbabwe recently sentenced a young HIV-positive woman to five years in jail for merely exposing her partner to the virus -- although he did not become infected. These laws discriminated against women, said Anne Gathumbi of the Open Society Initiative for East Africa. She said women were usually the first partner in a heterosexual couple to learn of their HIV infection, since they had more contact with health services. She described the laws as a cheap substitute for laws that would truly protect women, such as laws against marital rape and denial of property rights to divorcees or widows. Laws protecting women had been stuck in the legislative pipeline for years in a host of African countries because there was no political will to safeguard their rights, she said. Yet their legislators were intent on rushing through discriminatory bills on HIV/AIDS.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Global Aids Conference Opens as Ugandan Becomes IAS President: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 5 August 2008.**

The 17th International Aids Conference (AIDS 2008) opened on Sunday with a rejection that a lot of funds were being spent on HIV/Aids at the expense of health systems in resource limited countries. This was echoed by the outgoing International Aids Society President Dr Pedro Cahn saying despite the progress in saving lives and healing the sick in the poorest nations of the world, critics claim that HIV funding is creating more

problems than it solves."But we, who have worked so hard on HIV for so long, know what the critics seem to have forgotten. We know that health systems were weak and under-funded long before the HIV epidemic emerged," said Dr Cahn. What is required at a time when the world is faced with serious infections such as HIV and tuberculosis, he argued, is collaboration but not competition amongst public health programmes. Health systems are facing major challenges that have hampered the provision of health services for decades. But in recent years they have received renewed attention, as large sums of Aids money flows into the countries from global donors. As one of the major topics at the conference, experts including Uganda's Dr Freddie Ssengooba will on Thursday debate whether Aids money is strengthening national health systems or weakening them by establishing heavily resourced systems focused on combating a single disease. And according to the World Health Organisation Director General, Dr Margaret Chan, the response to HIV/Aids, especially the massive roll out of treatment has put into sharp focus the consequences of failure to invest in basic infrastructures. Meanwhile, Uganda's Dr Elly Katabira who has been Africa's representative on the IAS Executive will assume ISA presidency at the end of the conference.

- **Terrorism Cannot Destroy Strong U.S.-Africa Ties: [America.gov](#) (Washington, DC): 7 August 2008.**

The "unspeakable" bombing by al-Qaida of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 10 years ago strengthened the long-standing ties that bind the American, Kenyan and Tanzanian people, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said August 7. Speaking on the 10th anniversary of the bombings, Rice said the nearly simultaneous terrorist attacks on both facilities "did not destroy our spirit." "Today, we remain partners with the people of Tanzania and Kenya, and I witnessed the spirit of that partnership when I visited both Kenya and Tanzania earlier this year," she said at a memorial service held at the Department of State in Washington. "Secure new embassies have now been built in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam reflecting the enduring strength of these relationships. Bombs and bullets and terror can never and will never break our bond," she said. In Nairobi, the blast killed 218 Kenyans and Americans, while thousands were injured in the streets around the embassy. In Dar es Salaam, nine Tanzanians, one Kenyan and one Somali citizen were killed and 85 people were wounded. "On that dark day 10 years ago," Rice said, "the bombings of our embassies seemed merely to be the senseless violence of evil men, an organization called al-Qaida. When seen from today, however, 10 years later, after the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, the attack on Khobar Towers in 1996, the attack on the USS Cole in 2000 and, of course, the terror of September 11, we now see those bombings of our embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in a new light. We see them as they were, as the opening of a new twilight struggle between hope and fear, peace and hatred, freedom and tyranny, a struggle that has now finally fully been joined." In a White House statement issued on the anniversary, President Bush called the attacks "brutal examples of al-Qaida's tactics in its war against innocent people worldwide - carried out in the heart of two African capitals without regard to the race, creed or nationality of the victims." "This has been al-Qaida's method for more than a decade, indiscriminately attacking civilians throughout the world," he said. "The attacks in Kenya and Tanzania remind us that al-Qaida and its terrorist

affiliates continue to want to attack the United States and our allies," President Bush said. He said the anniversary "reinforces the need to confront the terrorists, to work with our allies to bring them to justice, and to prevent such attacks from happening again." Memorial ceremonies also were held in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. In Nairobi, U.S. Ambassador Michael E. Ranneberger told those gathered, "These unprovoked attacks by a hitherto largely unknown terrorist group called al-Qaida galvanized the United States, Kenya, Tanzania and countries throughout the world to undertake cooperative, coordinated efforts to fight terrorism." Today we recommit ourselves to preserve the memory of all the victims, we reaffirm our determination to bring those responsible to justice, and we rededicate ourselves to advance democracy and prosperity for all people," Ranneberger said.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Food Crisis - Continent Should Use Organic Fertilisers: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 5 August 2008.**

Organic fertilizers are good because they improve soil fertility by retaining it in its natural form and crop yields. They are also cost effective. According to Sambi Reddy, the senior marketing manager of JN Agritech International, a company that distributes organic fertilizers; a kilogram of packed organic fertilizers is sold between Frw.1500 and Frw2,000-depending on the quantity and content while inorganic fertilizers cost twice as much ranging from Frw3,500 a kilogram to Frw5,000. Organic fertilizers are relatively cheaper because they are not bulky hence are easy to transport. It is a biological fact that plants require 1 kilogram of nitrogen to produce 10 to 15 kg of grain. Our atmosphere is about 80% nitrogen. Most tropical soils "fix," or draw from the atmosphere, enough nitrogen to produce about 1 tonne of grain per hectare. To produce more grain, the plants must have more nitrogen, whether as organic or mineral fertilizer. Plants must also have phosphorus, potassium, and "trace" minerals. If the soil lacks or has insufficient amounts of these minerals, they must be added as fertilizers, or production will stagnate. As plants grow, they absorb and deplete or "mine" nutrients from the soil. Farmers harvest those same nutrients when they harvest crops. According to agricultural experts, African soils are losing an estimated \$4 billion worth of soil nutrients yearly. Three-fourth of the farmland in sub-Saharan Africa is plagued by severe nutrient depletion and 46 percent of the African continent suffers from desertification. This means African farmers desperately need to use fertilizers to bring life back to the depleted soils, and to feed the continent. Fertilizers, whether mineral or organic, nourish the soil by returning essential mineral nutrients. But the use of chemical fertilizers has raised mixed feelings among environmentalists and consumers. "Excessive and continuous use of chemical and inorganic fertilizers has a harmful effect on soil health. It produces an imbalance in plant nutrients of the soil, which affects the acidity or alkalinity of soils and reduces its fertility gradually," says Reddy. Inorganic or chemical fertilizers include sodium nitrate, mined rock phosphate and limestone while organic fertilizers include manure, slurry, worm castings, bone meal, compost and seaweed extracts. Application of organic fertilizers depends on the type of crop because different dosages in turn depend on the climatic conditions and soil type. Organic products also require the activity of soil microorganisms before nutrients are available for plant uptake. Microorganism activity is dependant on

soil temperatures greater than 500 F in the presence of sufficient soil moisture."Some organic fertilizers are high in one of the three major nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, or potash,) but low or zero in the other two. Some are low in all three macronutrients.The ingredients used to fortify organic fertilizers are organic materials, for example, rock phosphate to increase phosphorus, or greensand to increase potash," Reddy explains.Organic fertilizers depend on soil organisms to break them down to release nutrients, therefore, most are effective only when soil is moist and warm enough for the microorganisms to be active.Compared to synthetic fertilizer formulations, organic fertilizers contain relatively low concentrations of actual nutrients, but they perform important functions which the synthetic formulations do not.They increase the organic content and consequently the water-holding capacity of the soil. They improve the physical structure of the soil which allows more air to get to plant roots.Where organic sources are used for fertilizer, bacterial and fungal activity increases in the soil."The use of organic fertilizers as means of improvement of the fertility and productivity of land for farming is feasible and desirable.Whether we like it or not we are getting into a situation in agriculture where we shall intensify the use of agro chemicals to solve the problem of food insecurity but our farmers are poor and can not afford inorganic fertilizers.Organic fertilizers provide short and long term means of maintaining the land fertile," says Dr.Festus Bagoora, a specialist for soils and land use, at National Environment Management Authority (NEMA, Uganda).Organically derived plant nutrients are slow to leach from the soil making them less likely to contribute to water pollution than synthetic fertilizers.Apart from improving the soil structure, organic fertilizers reduce the problem of over fertilization that is associated with use of artificial fertilizers. The high solubility of chemical fertilizers also exacerbates their tendency to degrade ecosystems.In the recent past organic products have become highly rated on the global market and fetch high prices. These include fruits like pineapples, passion fruits, avocado, and vegetables like carrots and cabbages, animal and poultry products."Organic products fetch high prices in international markets and this should encourage the farmers to intensify generation, utilization and application of organic fertilizers.The world has increasingly realized that excessive use of chemicals may lead to poor health of the people that eat the food" says Bagoora.The more chemicals you use on crops the more chemicals go into the crops and the more chemicals people who consume the crops will take in.The affluent society in the developed world has started moving away from heavily dozed products in the developed nations to products from developing nations.

- **Corruption Eating at the Heart of East Africa: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 3 August 2008.**

In his opening remarks at the East African Heads of State Summit, held last June, Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, called on his colleagues in the region; to work towards the removal of 'corruption costs' as a way of reducing the cost of doing business in the region.President Kagame, who chairs the five member, EAC gave an example of an export truck from Kigali to Mombasa, that passes through 47 roadblocks; "While each type of roadblock was a potential occasion for bribes, weighbridges proved to be most devastating, accounting for eighty four percent of the total bribe value."The costly borders fall into three categories - namely, police check points, border gates and

weighbridges, said the President. President Kagame hit the nail right on the head in outlining through this example, how the EAC region is losing much revenue due to corruption in the form of bribes in the importation and exportation of goods, amongst the EAC partners. For the five countries; Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi, to achieve forthright economic ties, the biggest challenge lies in stemming corruption. Corruption is a worm eating at the heart of these countries. There is wide acceptance that corruption, in all its forms is the major setback for the regions developmental plans. In 2007, a survey done by a leading market research and media monitoring company, Kenyan based Steadman group, revealed that the east African region loses \$57730 to corruption for every 100 transactions in tax revenue at various customs points. "Uganda had an aggregated loss of \$48,384 per 100 transactions followed by Kenya \$5,439 and Tanzania \$3 867," disclosed the report. The question of corruption which the various summits ponder even resulted in Tanzania's warning in 2007, against the fast tracking of a political federation, citing ethnicity problems and corruption. President Museveni of Uganda the then Chairman of the EAC belittled the reasons. "The questions are easy to answer and cannot form an obstacle at all," Museveni said. With the subsequent resolution by the regional leaders that it was paramount to achieve a common market and a monetary union by 2012 before the fast tracking is given much weight. Individual countries face chronic corruption deepening income inequality and deepening poverty levels at the grassroots. Take recent press reports of a \$2.8m spending spree by Ugandan diplomats reveals how deep corruption has eaten into that system. The report published in an east African paper read; "The report shows that the country's foreign missions incurred a total of Ushs5 billion (\$2.8 billion) in excess expenditure that was neither approved nor authorized by parliament. Moreover this is not the first time that the foreign missions are over shooting their budgets." Quoted in the same story was the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Nandala Mafabi who echoed the protocol of a sleeping law. "When someone spends money but doesn't have authority to spend it, we treat it as a loss and the person who brought about the loss is held responsible." But what he didn't react to was why there had been a repeated act of overshooting the proposed budget without immediate intervention and action against those responsible. This raises suspicion on the credibility of the public accountant himself. Why should unscrupulous people be trusted to continue holding public offices, taxpayers' money wasting? The same fact file read; "It is estimated the average urban Kenyan pays 16 bribes per month. Most of these bribes are fairly small but large ones are also taken." Making corruption part of Kenya's life. The global corruption watch dog, Transparency International's, Corruption Perceptions Index, 2007 report, ranked Kenya at 150 out of 179 a drop of 8 points from 182 in 2006. Statistics that do not bode well for Kenya's anti-corruption drive made worse by the recent political turmoil involving key Government officials - the Grand Agency sale scandal. Finance Minister Amos Kimunya who was directly implicated had much top government protection, it is only because the fire of public outrage refused to die down that he was forced to resign. The National, an American tabloid also read; "The Grand Regency is seen as a symbol of Kenya's corruption-era politics. The government recovered the hotel this year from Kamlesh Pattni, a Kenyan businessman at the centre of the Goldenberg scandal of the 1990s, in which the government compensated him with millions of dollars in a fake gold export scheme." Mwalimu Mati, a Kenyan watchdog on corruption called it, "a political earth quake." Tanzania was right. When the borders are

opened, without an aggressive stance on corruption by the EAC, corruption will be a cancer that will spread slowing down the regions development efforts. So, to be sure that the developments of the EAC, will not be meddled with by the rampant corruption tendencies, a stringent mechanism to battle corruption is urgent. The mechanism should layout systematic measures to stamp out corruption with measures in place against those who violate these.

50. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Child-Trafficking - Disquiet On the Koma Hills: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 3 August 2008.**

The indigenes of Koma, a hilly settlement in Adamawa State are distressed and up in arms with some missionaries operating in the area. They are worried that the missionaries may be involved in child trafficking by taking away their children in the guise of giving them western education, allegations the missionaries have denied. Who is telling the truth? Matthew Onah writes The spirit of late Colonel Yohanna Madaki, former military governor of defunct Gongola State might not exactly be at peace with the recent happenings in Koma, the long forgotten hilly settlement on the verge of the Nigerian-Cameroonian border which he in 1986, with much military bravado drew attention of the world. The Koma people had existed on the remote hills for ages without any trace of civilisation, wearing leaves instead of clothes and not exposed to educational and health facilities, neither do they have roads through the rocky difficult terrains that will enable them fraternise with their brethren in other communities. At their locations consisting of 39 communities principally of Koma, Nassarawo, Mani, Tantalle, Tulli and others, spread over the mountains had little or no contact with modernity and had existed with their cultures and traditions preserved until a news item from then Gongola Broadcasting Corporation by a reporter named Aaron Artimas Abaare made the plight of the Koma people known. The news item also drew the attention of the people to Yohanna Madaki. Since then the Koma people have not rested. The governor renowned for his human right postures even then as a military officer took it upon himself to go to Koma hills to see for himself and see the veracity of the broadcast of the reporter, what he met on the hills was not only astounding to him, he was shocked beyond words. The governor was surprised to see that a group of Nigerians were still leaving in prehistoric conditions even in his territory of governance. He drew the attention of not only government authorities to the Koma hills but also other non-governmental agencies, especially religion organisations who perhaps pricked by there conscience went to Koma hills in droves. The missionaries both Christian and Muslim established schools, hospitals, and other facilities that have today not only change the lives of the Koma people, but also eased the process of transforming their cultures and traditions , and the Koma people are today in the dilemma of whether the activities of the missionaries and government is in their interest or not. Since 1986, missionaries have provided schools, hospitals, and other social infrastructures which have uplifted the standard of living of Koma people although roads are still virtually non-existence. Visitors to the area are force to use motor-cycle on the

Cattle Tracks on the hills or walk to the various communities. In spite of the good works of the missionaries in bringing civilisation to the Koma people, today there is serious crisis being ignited on the hills by the missionaries both among themselves and within the community that if not checked quickly will be capable of erasing all the good things and developmental projects that have transformed the lives of the Koma people. In fact, if the allegation that is coming out from the Koma hills is in any way true, it will be one of the follies of humanity that the man is capable of doing good and evil simultaneously. According to THISDAY investigation, there is a sinister plot among the various Christian missionaries to rubbish each other while they engage in their missionary duties. Recently some missionaries Koma hill had been engage in child trafficking and mass movement of the children from the community to the outside world. In fact the allegations are that hundreds of the children taken out of Koma have not been seen in the last nine years. The Koma community, which is in Jada local government area of Adamawa State, accused the Christian missionaries, involved in evangelisation on the hills, of child trafficking, following the discovery by the community that over 126 children taken away by one of the missionaries have disappeared in the last nine years. The community led by the district head of Koma, Mallam Hamman Joda Abba, alleged that hundreds of children have been taken away from the community in the last twenty years by religious organisations, under the guise of educating the children under exchange programmes. They specifically accused the project coordinator of Dominion Evangelical Organisation and one Pastor Kayode Momoloshu of spiriting away over 89 children without the permission and consent of the community or the parents. Corroborating the district heads allegations, the education secretary of Jada local government council, Alhaji Mahmud Abubakar, said that about 27 pupils in the primary and secondary schools of the dominion academy are yet to be accounted for by the school authorities. He said the organisations were fond of taking away children ostensibly on excursion or exchange programmes and not returning them. Abubakar explained that the organisation was about to take away another 16 children to unknown places when the community leaders intervened following massive protests from the parents of the children. He called for more stringent guidelines governing the operations of such organisations in the area. According to Hamman Joda Abba only recently the attention of the community was drawn to the issue of child trafficking for the first time when three children were caught in Gombe State being smuggled to a neighbouring country by an unidentified person. He said the member of house of assembly representing Jada local government and other stake holders in the community had to spend a large amount of money to bring back the children to the community. Joda said it was then that it dawned on them that a large number of children have left the community in the last twenty five years and they have not been heard from. He accused the missionaries of systematically taking away the children. Another Koma indigene Aliyu Misawa who claimed his sixteen year old daughter was taken away by one of the missionaries and have not been seen in the last nine years said what ever good the missionaries might have done in the past was capable of being rubbished unless the children taken away are brought back. To him, the traditions and cultured of the Koma people are fast being eroded as the children that are supposed to be inculcated with the cultural norms of the society are being taken away to other societies to acquire foreign influences which according to him are detrimental to the survival of Koma people. He also accused the missionaries of depleting the population of the Koma people through

their massive trafficking of children, something that has almost been institutionalised. Collaborating Misawa, another Koma indigene, Mohammed Duso particularly accused Pastor Kayode Momolosho of arbitrarily taking away their children and not returning them back to Koma people. Incidentally, the entire child trafficking allegations by the Koma community came about as a result of a petition written by Momolosho, project coordinator of Dominion Academy, Mani, Koma, to the Adamawa State Commissioner for Education and copied to the National Universal Basic Education Board, Abuja alleging some irregularities in the admission and withdrawal of people from the school in Koma hills. In the letter, pastor Momolosho stated that "it has become absolutely necessary to inform you of the arbitrary admission into junior secondary schools in Koma District, Jada Local Government Area by both the government and private secondary schools here. About twenty three pupils had been admitted to Government Day Secondary School, Nassarawo, Koma Hills, Al-Omega Junior Secondary School, Junior Secondary School Betti and some others within the environs. This admission is done for pupils who are yet to complete primary education." "None of the admitted children have successfully completed primary education; the fact is that some of them left school in primary two to proceed to Junior Secondary One. This has become a source of concern to us since 2005 as we are very clear on the terms of admission even now that we have automatic migration without common entrance." "At our last stake holders meeting you had cautioned that admission to JSSI will be based on the performance of pupils at the continuous assessment level (CA). We may not have cried blue murder if the schools have asked for transfer with details of continuous assessment before admitting the pupils. It is very sad that schools could indulge in this kind of admission thus destroying the destiny of our leaders for the tomorrow." "We pray that you intervene and compel the schools to send our children back. We had toyed with the idea of a court action but feels you are our first authority. If they will not hearken to you we shall be free to let the long arm of the law settle us. Some hard working pupils are following suit. They will not know those short cuts are at the end of the day not the best. Remember our academy is a free boarding nursery and primary school, so finance is not an excuse to withdraw a child for secondary education prematurely." "Attached are the least of the names of pupils and the schools that admitted them. While we await your response, we stand for sound educational foundation, believing in our children for a better Nigeria," Momolosho said in the correspondence. A stakeholders meeting was thus convened at the instance of the National Universal Basic Education Board to unravel why children were being massively withdrawn from the Dominion Academy. The Koma community led by their district head then used the opportunity of giving ventilation to their grievances. Speaking on behalf of the Koma community, the district head and the education secretary gave a graphic detail of their grievances why children are being taken away from Momolosho academy. Apart from the child-trafficking charges, another missionary, Gabriel Barau, accused the school authorities of engaging in immoral relationship with their pupils. According to him, one of the teachers in the Dominion Academy was allegedly said to have impregnated a school pupil. Barau said he has been in Koma hills for the last twenty five years, and accused Momolosho of negative influences stressing that the Pastor was unnecessarily arrogant and vain in his approach to issues that affect the Koma people. The district education officer in-charge of the area, Mr. Balanso said that Koma district had the largest collection of private primary schools

in the entire Ganye chieftdom and that they were over a hundred private nursery/primary schools in the area, and attributed the current impasse in the area as a fight among the various missionaries operating in the area to attract patronage and membership a situation he described as unfortunate. Balanso said that the Dominion Academy is one of the best schools in the area equip with computers and is on the internet and challenge the missionaries to come to term with each other in order not to rubbish their good works. Responding to all the series of allegations level against him Momolosho said it was one of the challenges that he is ready to face as a consequence of his achievement on the Koma hills. He said "we have put our lives on the line but what would we have achieve if only we turnout cooks and farmers, our objective is to turnout indigenous Koma that will be capable of transforming their society we are in the process of bringing out engineers, doctors and scientist." He admitted to sending out 89 children to various schools across Nigeria such as ECWA academy Ibadan, Redeemers College Lagos, and Cherubim and Seraphim College Ilorin, he stated that of the eighty nine children said to have being taking out and not seen for the last nine years, he said 37 are in schools in Lagos, 32 in Ilorin, four in Ibadan, seven in Abuja, one in Port-Harcourt and one in Ondo town. Although Momolosho decline to give the specific locations of the children, THISDAY checks however revealed that all the children are in fact in private homes names and addresses of whom Momolosho decline to give. According to the pastor, some of the children are being trained by private individual volunteers who had kindly accepted to train such children. He explained that a section of the Koma community and some of the missionaries are afraid of the impact the dominion academy is making on the Koma hills and thus the series of allegations against his mission and that most of the pupils being taken away on exchange programs by his mission are deliberately indoctrinated to come back to uplift the standard of living of the Koma people. He said his divine mission is to serve Koma and no body else and that most of those making the series of allegations are from Jada and Kojoli. Momolosho however could not give a time frame when and how these children will find their way back to their Koma community or even if they will ever return as the allegations are that some of these children might have in fact been long dead. According to Misawa, he said a pastor had approach one of the parent of one of the children taking away with an amount of money as compensation for a child who was said to have died on a plane crash by the pastor. Misawa said the missionaries on the Koma hills will have to be more open on the whereabouts of the Koma children if they want to continue to operate on the Koma hills. The Koma hills based Dominion Academy consisting of a nursery/primary school and a church has a total school enrolment of 216 pupils is connected to the internet and has over forty computer set and charges school fees of N300 per year. It has over 10 graduate teachers all missionaries and has a lot of sophisticated educational instructional materials and it sustained largely by donations from charitable organisation from within and outside Nigeria according to Momolosho. For now, however, as the Koma district head Joda stated, there was the need for government to seriously investigate the allegations of child trafficking against some of the missionaries for the Koma people to rest their restiveness as they are in a dilemma right now whether to ask the missionaries to leave Koma or allow them; to continue with their evangelical work. As Misawa said, the Koma people are on a cross road and the apparatus of government not only to investigate the allegation of the missing children, but also to ensure compliance by the missionaries or any private

non-governmental agencies that the good intentions and aspirations of late Colonel Yohanna Madaki, for the Koma people, is not just truncated on the alter of aggrandisement.

- **Togo: Human Rights Outlook is Improving, UN and African Experts Say: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 6 August 2008.**

The prospects for protecting and promoting human rights in Togo are improving, but defenders of rights still face serious obstacles to carrying out their work, experts with the United Nations and African Union (AU) have said after visiting the West African country. Margaret Sekaggya, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, and Reine Alapini-Gansou, the AU Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders in Africa issued a joint statement on Monday that voiced optimism after a week-long visit and offered preliminary recommendations. Mrs. Sekaggya and Mrs. Alapini-Gansou said "a conducive environment in which human rights defenders can operate has progressively emerged" since the violence that followed the death of the then president Eyadema Gnassingbé in February 2005. The two rapporteurs said the Government now acknowledges past human rights violations and is pledging to address them; attacks and acts of intimidation against rights defenders have "significantly reduced in number"; judicial reforms have begun; and the national human rights ministry has conducted a series of activities to promote and protect rights. But they said many defenders face ongoing stigmatization by authorities, especially if they are seen as belonging to the political opposition. "This misperception, more acute outside the capital [Lomé], generates a climate of mistrust between the State authorities and human rights defenders," according to the joint statement. "In addition, civil society at large is fragmented and lacks coordination." Past human rights abuses should be dealt with through a truth, justice and reconciliation commission, and the National Human Rights Commission should also receive greater funding, the rapporteurs stressed. In addition, Mrs. Sekaggya and Mrs. Alapini-Gansou recommend that the Government speed up the process of registration of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) so they can carry out their work. During their visit the rapporteurs met with President Faure Gnassingbé, Prime Minister Komlan Malley and other senior Government officials, as well as members of the National Assembly, the main political parties and the judiciary. They also held talks with human rights defenders, representatives of NGOs, journalists, trade union activists, lawyers and diplomats.

- **Gambia: No Media Spotlight For Shi'ate Doctrine: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 4 August 2008.**

The Gambia Supreme Islamic Council (GSIC), has ordered both the print and electronic media outlets in the country to stop all programmes propagating the Shi'ate doctrine in the country. This directive was contained in a dispatch transmitted to the Daily Observer by the Department of State for Local Government, Lands and Religious Affairs. The directive came in the wake of growing concerns about the apparent differences in the

Islamic faith in the country. Below is the full text of the press release: The Gambia Supreme Islamic Council (GSIC) decided to order all print and electronic media houses through your able office to stop all programmes advocating and defending the Shi'ate beliefs in The Gambia, with immediate effect, in accordance with its mandate as the principal advisor of government on matters of Islam and the umbrella of the Islamic Institutions in The Gambia.

- **Nigeria: Shekarau Counsels Shari'ah Enforcement Agents: Leadership (Abuja): 6 August 2008.**

Governor Ibrahim Shekarau of Kano State, has warned members of the Shari'ah Enforcement Agency (Hisbah) against corruption in the discharge of their duties. Shekarau gave the warning while declaring open a two-day retreat for officials of the agency and chairmen of the 44 local government areas. The governor urged them to embrace justice in the discharge of their duties. He also enjoined the citizens to have the fear of God irrespective of their religious leanings, to enable them to reap the dividends of democracy. Shekarau said shari'ah remained the spiritual assurance for peace, unity, equity and social cohesion, promising that his administration would continue to provide good leadership. The governor advised the local government councils to work in harmony with men of the Hisbah command for the overall good of the state. He said the retreat was aimed at bridging the gap in shari'ah implementation between the state and the local governments. The Commissioner for Local Government, Alhaji Salihu Sagir, said the retreat was designed to identify and provide solutions to the major problems militating against shari'ah implementation. The Commander-General of Hisbah, Sheikh Ibrahim Mu'azzam, said the retreat would avail the council chairmen the opportunity to advise on how to enhance the activities of the agency in their respective areas.

- **Ghana: Sharabutu Tells Politicians - Stop Creating Tension in the Country: Ghanaian Chronicle (Accra): 5 August 2008.**

The National Chief Imam, Sheikh Usman Nuhu Sharabutu, has emphasised the need for politicians and leaders of the various political parties to desist from acts and statements that create unnecessary tension and anxiety in the run up to the elections. According to him, since the country has chosen the path of democracy by agreeing to elect our governments through the ballot box, there was the need for us to show to the rest of the world that we are in control of our own affairs and that our conduct would give a full picture of what Ghanaians could accomplish for themselves in terms of peace and stability, and our claim of being the ambassador of African excellence. The National Chief Imam, who made this statement in a speech read on his behalf at the 2nd International Conference for Tijaniya Muslim Movement in Kumasi, noted that the conduct of violence-free elections the world over, comes with its own price, the most important of which include the commitment to peace and fairness on the part of all stakeholders involved in the electioneering process. The conference, which brought together leaders and representatives of the Tijaniya Muslim Movements across Africa, was under the theme "Unity, Peace, Development and Violence Free Election", the role of the Tijaniya Movement. He said, it was very important for leaders of the various

parties to educate themselves and their supporters that this year's election was not a matter of do or die affair, but rather a democratic test which we must all pass."The strive for violence-free election is the choice we shall make as a nation, whether to sustain our quest for economic freedom in a society devoid of threats and intimidations, or join the bandwagon of other sister countries who have seen their countries plunged into total anarchy as a result of parochial interest of politicians." He observed. Sheikh Sharabutu further observed that in government's effort towards solving the high level of poverty in our country and building a better Ghana, politicians should not only condition the minds of electorate with vain promises and vague slogans but should endeavour to inculcate financial discipline and proper planning as a major tool that would complement the government's effort in building better life for the individual. The national chief Imam further decried the phenomenon where the youth in the Zongo communities are often used by politicians to perpetuate their diabolical agenda during election periods, adding that such practices must be condemned and treated with the contempt they deserve. He therefore urged the various political parties to abide by the political party's code of conduct, which was recently launched in the conduct of their campaign and further appealed to Chiefs in the country to assume their role as symbol of unity to the people and make extra efforts to resolve all chieftaincy disputes before the crucial elections. On his part, the Executive Secretary of the Tijaniya Movement, Ustaz Ahmed Seidu, noted that over the years the Movement had taken a second look at its core activities and had discovered a volume of message that indicate the need for not only emphasising the abstruse meanings of Islam alone, but also the need to teach both Arabic and the secular educational system in Islamic schools. He said, in view of that the movement had purchased 26.50 acres of land at Asokore in the Sekyere East district of Ashanti for the sole purpose of building a GH¢600,000 state-of-the-art Senior High School, the first phase of the project had been completed through the contributions of the members of the movement. The Minister for Works, Housing and Water Resources, Hon. Boniface Abubakar Siddique, who represented the vice President, His Excellency Alhaji Aliu Mahama, asked Muslim leaders to pray fervently for peace, unity and violent-free elections. He noted that as the beacon of hope and bastion of democracy, Ghana was under the microscopic eye of Africa and the rest of the world in terms of upholding the principles of democracy and as such we could not afford to disappoint them. Hon. Boniface therefore asked religious leaders to lead the crusade in the fight against any form of negative tendencies that could jeopardise the peace of this country.

- **Nigeria: Clerics Condemn Incidence of Homosexuality: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 8 August 2008.**

Clerics in Nigeria have condemned the disturbing trend of homosexuality, lesbianism and incest in the country. In a communique issued yesterday at the end of their meeting in Lagos, the religious leaders observed that the increasing rate of homosexuality, lesbianism and incest was disappointing to the image of the country. "Such practice is illegal and repugnant to the norms of religion, tradition and culture", they stated. They said that determined efforts should be made by government and religious bodies to check the problems in order to protect the moral well-being of the citizens. The clerics met under the aegis of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC), established by the last

administration to douse tension between Christians and Muslims in the country. The communique was signed by the Chairmen of NIREC, Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Saa'd Abubakar, the Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, Dr. John Onaiyekan and NIREC Secretary, Prof. Is-haq Oloyede.

- **Nigeria: Neglect of a Language Village: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 5 August 2008.**

The Nigeria Arabic Language Village (NALV), Ngala was established in 1992 as an Inter-University Centre for Arabic Studies, under the tutelage of the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and National Universities Commission (NUC) for the study of Arabic. It was basically established to phase out the one-year study abroad for undergraduate students of Arabic in the country's universities. Its clientele however includes students of Arabic in universities, colleges of education and secondary schools; as well as public and private sector workers. It was also empowered to offer consultancy services in various areas of its specialisation. Created alongside the Nigeria French Language Village (NFLV), Badagry and National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), Aba, NALV runs immersion programmes for university undergraduates; acculturation for students of colleges of education; intensive Arabic course for interested Nigerians; language transition services; biennial workshops for Arabic teachers in primary and secondary schools; seminars, conferences and workshops; Arabic mass literacy programme; special programmes on request; Diploma Programme in Arabic and consultancy services. The Village has however been plagued by low patronage, coupled with inadequate funding. Observers say the low patronage was not unconnected with the school's location. Ngala, a town in Borno State, which shares borders with Chad and Cameroon is largely a desert. None natives therefore find it difficult to withstand the harsh weather. But the Federal Government chose Ngala because its inhabitants and others around them are Shuwa-Arabs and native speakers of a dialect of Arabic. This was expected to be a boost for students as the case is with French Village, located close to Benin Republic. A part of the training is close and dynamic exposure to the speakers of the language and their culture, particularly during guided tours to the market place, the farms, surrounding towns and during social activities. Another headache of the village is bad road network. The road leading to the town, and international road that runs from Maiduguri to Cameroon and Chad is, to say the least, impassable. A distance of just about 140 kilometres, it takes a commuter about two and half hours to travel on a good day. But during the rainy season, it may take days as one may get trapped in either direction. As if this is not bad enough, NALV is also constrained to spend a large part of its meagre resources on diesel to power its generators because Ngala is not connected to the National Grid. Telecommunication services and water supply are also very poor, not to talk about flooding and storm, when it rains; and the menace of termites and bats. Those who have been a part of the system since inception said, on condition of anonymity, that little or nothing happened in the first 11 years of centre's life. Its structures were the same that were inherited from the secondary school where it took off. The appointment of Prof. Tijani El-Miskin as its Director/Chief Executive in March, 2003 was said to have given the institute a new lease of life, having been a part of the planning. El-Miskin had served in both the ministerial committee that reported the establishment of language villages in

the country. He was also a member of the Academic planning committee of the NUC for the Arabic Language Village in 1989. His five-year scorecard includes the construction of three 500-seater multi-purpose lecture halls, one fully furnished and two under construction; construction of five language laboratories, three of which are fully furnished, while two are at completion stage ; two blocks of 100-capacity students hostel at 90 percent completion stage; four executive students' chalet, three of which are at the roofing stage while the construction of one is about to begin; the three winged one-storey library building is over 75 percent completed. Eight classrooms have also been completed at the Maiduguri liaison office, while its clinic has been upgraded. In addition to these, ICT facilities and internet connectivity have been provided, while the school has resorted to solar energy to check the expenditure on diesel. Every new building therefore has solar facilities. The power generators are to be phased out in the next four years. If its clients refuse to come to it because of the stated reasons, the NALV has decided to take itself to them by setting up liaison offices in the six geopolitical zones of the country, notwithstanding the fact that Arabic Language is not widely spoken in the South South and South East for example. This is still on the drawing board and would require the support of the federal government, to become a reality. Lamenting the low enrolment into the school, El-Miskin said the NUC makes one-year immersion programme mandatory, yet, many universities continue to shun that important aspect of the training of their students. "How on earth would the university be left to violate the rule that their Arabic undergraduates be sent to the village on the compulsory immersion programme and be allowed to award a degree, this is a violation of the rule and any degree awarded under this condition is questionable", he said. He also regretted that although the centre and its French counterpart were established to save the country the huge foreign exchange hitherto expended on training undergraduate students in French and Arabic speaking countries, NALV is in pains and has not been able to perform this role effectively due to too little funds. He would therefore like to see the Village placed on the front page of its proprietor's 'book of remembrance'.

- **Sierra Leone: Ministry of Education Trains Arabic Teachers: The Independent (Freetown): 1 August 2008.**

The ministry of education youths and sports has organized a training workshop for Arabic teachers in Makeni, north of the country. Supported by the Iranian Cultural Center, the workshop lasted for three days. It was a training of trainers so as to improve the teaching skills of Arabic teachers most of whom never had the opportunity to enter teacher training schools. The Assistant Director of Islamic Unit in the ministry of education said the teaching of Arabic in schools was an initiative of the ministry. He noted that there had been a lack of professional teachers in Arabic in the country. The deputy Secretary 11 Mr. Barba Fortune noted that the failure in the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Schools was partly due to the old method of teaching. He said with more pragmatic approaches adopted, more students would develop a liking for the subject. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of education Sheikh Ahmed Tejan Termu also criticized the old method of teaching Arabic. He said the essence of training trainers for the teaching of Arabic was to help them fast spread their skills and knowledge to other teachers in the country. Mr. Seima Bangura who chaired the occasion noted that

performance in Arabic countrywide had been poor up to school leaving level. He expressed the hope that the workshop would equip the teachers to teach the students practically. Hassan Bangura of the education Unit said the essence of the new syllabus was to enable students understand both written and spoken Arabic. The chancellor of the Iranian Cultural Consulate Mr. Mohamed Reza Ghezelsofla said the workshop would enable teachers to improve their teaching skills and face the challenges that awaited them. He urged participants to make use of the opportunities and facilities available.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Women Remain Marginalised in Workplaces:** [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 8 August 2008.

While government remains committed to empowering women and ensuring they are recognised, there are still many challenges for women in the workplace. This is according to Gauteng Regional Head in the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, Emily Dhlamini who participated in a march to the Pretoria City Hall on Friday. The march was a re-enactment of the 1956 Women's March which protested against the "dom-pass" laws. Ms Dhlamini said despite the advances made towards gender equality, women were still excluded from many areas of society, particularly the formal economy. She said women continued to make up the majority of the unemployed, and the majority of those employed were not given the same opportunities as similarly skilled and qualified men. However, according to government's 2008 Census, the number of women in government across all salary level totalled 649 718 in comparison with 536 688 for men. It highlighted that the representation of women in Cabinet had steadily increased over the years with women currently constituting 42 percent of ministers. Ms Dhlamini said the appointment of women in all levels of government was the evidence of President Thabo Mbeki's commitment to gender empowerment and the promotion of women in government. She said it was also an affirmation of the role of women in the country. The appointment of Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as Deputy President was a huge step forward for the empowerment of women and it was the first time in South African history that a woman has risen to such a high political office. "More women are playing key roles in all spheres of government than ever before and there is an impressive representation by women within the legislative, executive and judicial organs of state," said Ms Dhlamini. However, she said despite these achievements, women remain marginalised on certain social levels and were vulnerable to domestic violence. Senior Magistrate in the Pretoria Magistrate Court, Sibongile Raphahlelo said domestic violence was increasing roughly and this impressed more emotionally and financially on women. "Despite the existence of Domestic Violence Act, violence against women and children remain a major problem in our country. This had reached an uncontrollable proportion" said Ms Raphahlelo.

- **South Africa: Urban Women 'Are Primary Earners':** [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 5 August 2008.

THE majority of South African women living in urban areas are the main breadwinners in the family, according to a new study released by the country's largest women's website,

women24.com, yesterday. The survey, which polled 8400 women, shows that the lives of South African women across different race groups are increasingly similar once they earn a higher salary. The research sought women's views on money, career, sex and family, among other topics. The sample was weighted to provide a representative sample of 3 - million urban women older than 20 years of age, earning R2500 or more a month. More than half of women (52%) reported that they had been discriminated against "all the time" and the remainder selected other workplace problems they faced as women. Two-thirds of women (68%) believed that affirmative action favouring women was necessary, and just less than 10% of the women had been victims of crime in the past year. Sam Wilson, editor-in-chief of Women24.com, was concerned that almost half of the women who described themselves as "frequently depressed and anxious" were primary caregivers, while the happiest of all among those polled were married, child-free, self-employed women. "It is fascinating that the happiest of all women are those who are self-employed, rather than those who work part-time", Wilson said. Wilson believes that this indicates the answer to female happiness lies in the flexibility and integration of roles that self-employment brings.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Sudan: End Sham Trials By Anti-Terror Courts: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 6 August 2008.**

Sudan's Anti-Terrorism Special Courts in late July sentenced 30 alleged rebels to death in trials that fell far short of international fair trial standards, Human Rights Watch said today. Human Rights Watch urged the government to abolish the hastily created special courts and instead prosecute all cases in the regular courts according to the 2005 National Interim Constitution. The special court trials began on June 18, 2008 in Khartoum, Khartoum North and Omdurman. The chief justice hastily established the special courts on May 29 to try individuals accused of participating in the May 10 attack on the capital, Khartoum, by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) rebel group. The death sentences were handed down on July 29 and 31. "The special courts set up by Sudan to try alleged rebels who attacked Khartoum are a charade," said Georgette Gagnon, Africa director at Human Rights Watch. "The special courts don't meet even minimal fair trial standards, and yet they have the power to sentence people to death." The special courts imposed limits on the defendants' ability to make their case that in effect denied them the right to a fair trial. Defendants had only limited access to lawyers, some of whom withdrew from the court because the judge denied them access to their clients. Human Rights Watch documented cases in which the defendants were not allowed to see the evidence against them. Several defendants retracted their confession when giving evidence in court after allegedly confessing to the crimes under torture. The special courts did not apply the 1994 Evidence Act, relying instead on accomplice testimony and media reports, but refusing alibis for defendants and denying defendants the right to fully contest the evidence. One of the defendant's lawyers told Human Rights Watch: "If the normal evidence procedures were used in these trials, the prosecution would have no case." And some relatives of the defendants were not allowed into the courtroom despite the trials supposedly being open. On July 29 and 31, the special courts convicted and

sentenced to death by hanging 30 men, under various articles of the 1991 Penal Code, the 2001 Anti-Terrorism Act and the 1993 Weapons and Ammunition Ordinance (amended 1997). Under the Anti-Terrorism Special Courts procedures, defendants have only one week to lodge an appeal. The decision of the Court of Appeal is final. A month earlier, on June 29, lawyers for the defendants filed an application with the Constitutional Court to suspend the ongoing trials until the Constitutional Court makes a decision on the constitutionality of the Anti-Terrorism Act and the special courts. On July 23, the Constitutional Court rejected the application without providing any grounds for its decision. Some of the defendants' lawyers have been subject to harassment by the authorities. On July 8, the National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) summoned Satie al-Hajj, a lawyer representing the defendants, and told him to cease representing them. Meanwhile, hundreds of individuals remain in detention without charge, several of whom are feared to have "disappeared." In a June 2008 report, "Crackdown in Khartoum: Mass Arrests, Torture, and Disappearances since the May 10 Attack," Human Rights Watch documented the arrest and detention of more than 200 people by Sudanese security forces in the wake of the JEM attack on May 10. The fate and whereabouts of most detainees remain unknown. Human Rights Watch called on the Sudanese authorities to immediately release or charge those in detention with a cognizable offense, and to inform their families of their whereabouts. "Right now, those detained are suffering one of two fates: held incommunicado, mistreated, possibly tortured, or sentenced to death in an unfair trial," said Gagnon. "International law is clear - they must be charged and tried fairly, or released." Human Rights Watch opposes the death penalty in all circumstances, because of its inherent cruelty and irreversibility. International human rights law, as codified in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, favors the abolition of capital punishment and provides restrictions on its use.

- **Sudan: Bashir Finds Strong Support: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 6 August 2008.**

In its first ever move against a head of state, the International Criminal Court (ICC) prepared last month to indict Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes allegedly committed in Darfur. Since then, most Arab and African leaders have condemned the move, which some local commentators see as politically motivated. "It's an attempt by certain western countries to internationalise the Darfur problem for their own political ends," Ayman Shebana, political science professor at Cairo University's Centre for African Studies told IPS. On Jul. 14, ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo requested that the court's preliminary panel issue an arrest warrant for al-Bashir on charges of war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity. Violations, said Moreno-Ocampo, were committed by the Sudanese President through the use of military and paramilitary agencies linked to the state in Sudan's western Darfur region since 2003. According to widely quoted 'international experts', between 200,000 and 300,000 people have been killed in the region since non-Arab Darfuri insurgents took up arms against the government five years ago. The same experts are quoted as saying that some 2.5 million have been displaced by ongoing violence over the same period. Sudan has rejected the allegations, describing them as "null and false." It puts the number of casualties much lower, at about 10,000 from both sides. African and Arab leaders have

hastened to register their opposition to the ICC move. In the days following the announcement, both the Arab League and the African Union (AU) urged the ICC to delay indictment for a 12-month period to allow Sudan to carry out its own trials. Egypt has been particularly vocal in its support for al-Bashir, who has ruled over fractious Sudan since 1989. On Jul. 23, Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul-Gheit called the move to indict the leader "irresponsible and perilous." The court's accusations against al-Bashir, he warned, "will have negative impact on establishing justice in Darfur." Days later, President Hosni Mubarak reiterated Egypt's support for Sudan. "I reject the turning over of any African leader to the court," Mubarak declared at a joint press conference with South African counterpart Thabo Mbeki in Pretoria Jul. 29. He went on to say that efforts were being made to postpone the indictment and that "there are positive indications that the crisis will be resolved." According to Shebana, the situation in Sudan, which shares a roughly 1,200 km border with Egypt, is of extreme importance to security forces in Egypt. "Security in Sudan is considered a major part of Egyptian national security," he said. "Egypt plays an important role in keeping the peace in Sudan, both in the south and in Darfur." Shebana points out that Egyptian soldiers account for some 20 percent of the hybrid UN/AU peacekeeping force deployed in the troubled region. Based on the 1998 Rome Statute, the Hague-based ICC was launched in 2002 with the ostensible mandate of investigating and prosecuting leaders accused of committing genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. "The court is mandated with prosecuting individuals - leaders and high-ranking officials - rather than governments, parties or political regimes," Aymen Abdelaziz Salaama, professor of international law at Cairo University, told IPS. Sudan is not among 106 countries that have fully signed on to the ICC convention. "Sudan, like Egypt, has signed the charter, but its parliament has not ratified it until now," Salaama said. As a non-signatory, Sudan has argued that the court lacks jurisdiction over crimes allegedly committed on its territory. Salaama says this argument lacks legal foundation. "The court's jurisdiction extends to any country, whether an ICC signatory or not, if the UN Security Council - citing a threat to international peace and security - requests that the court investigate crimes committed in that country." In 2005, Salaama said, the UN Security Council did exactly that when it passed Resolution 1593, which called on the ICC to investigate crimes allegedly committed in Darfur by the Sudanese state since 2003. "This is why Sudan's claim - that, as a non-signatory to the ICC, the court lacks jurisdiction - is not legally accurate," said Salaama. Shebana, however, questioned the international court's motives. He said the Darfur conflict was being exploited - with the ICC's help - by foreign powers greedy for the region's mineral wealth. "Historically, the lack of development - rather than ethnic differences - has been at the root of the conflict," he said. "The west only began turning it into an international issue after the discovery of uranium and petroleum in Darfur." Shebana pointed to "considerable evidence of a U.S., French and Israeli presence in Darfur which has promoted rebel activity." He pointed to a move by the Sudan Liberation Party, a major Darfur-based rebel group, to open a representative office in Tel Aviv in Israel earlier this year. "If the rebels had not been supported and emboldened by these foreign groups, the crisis would have been resolved five years ago," he said. Shebana said the Sudanese government was not alone in committing violations in the troubled region. "War crimes are certainly being committed," he said, "but by both the government and the rebels." Shebana suggested that the humanitarian situation in Darfur was being exaggerated by both western NGOs

working in the area and media organisations."Some humanitarian agencies in Darfur are doing brisk business by inflating the numbers of victims and refugees to obtain more funding from the international community," he said. "Such exaggerations also serve the ends of the foreign powers that want to internationalise the problem with the aim of dividing Sudan."According to Salaama, one of two possible scenarios could play out in the event an arrest warrant is issued for al-Bashir."First, Sudan could simply turn al-Bashir over to the court," he said. "But if it refuses to do so, the ICC can request a UN Security Council resolution, under Chapter 7 of the UN charter, to impose gradual sanctions on Sudan."This would begin with the cutting of diplomatic relations," Salaama added, "but could eventually escalate into a naval blockade of the country and then - in a worst-case scenario - the use of military power to force Sudan into compliance with ICC demands."Tensions, however, appeared to ease on Sunday (Aug. 2), when the UN Security Council issued a decision to extend the UN/AU peacekeeping mission in Darfur by one year. The decision also called for discussions on the postponement of the case against al-Bashir for a 12-month period."The UN Security Council decision was a good omen for Khartoum," said Shebana. "Arab and African efforts must continue in order to stave off further escalation against Sudan."Salaama, however, was more cautious."Even if a delay is granted, this doesn't mean the case has been withdrawn by the Security Council," he said.

- **Tanzania: Mufti Staying Put – Bakwata: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 6 August 2008.**

Chief Sheikh Issa Shaaban Simba will not step down, the Muslim Council of Tanzania (Bakwata) said yesterday. Sheikh Suleiman Gorogosi, who is sitting in for the ailing Sheikh Simba, made this affirmation when briefing reporters at Bakwata headquarters in Dar es Salaam.His remarks were in response to demands by some sheikhs, especially those expelled from the body, and imams that the Mufti should resign due to failure to execute his duties effectively.Sheikh Gorogosi said Sheikh Simba would not step down since he was picked by all Muslims in the country, adding that the few who were demanding for his resignation had no authority to do so."The Mufti was constitutionally and legally elected by the Muslims of Tanzania and not those in Dar es Salaam alone," said Sheikh Gorogosi, noting that those who want him to resign were the nine sheikhs who were expelled from Bakwata's Ulamaa Committee.Sheikh Gorogosi insisted that the Mufti could only step down if Muslims all over the country wanted him to do so. Sheikh Gorogosi said that following the deadline set by those who wanted the Mufti to step down, the Bakwata leadership invited all those having such opinion to discussions instead of spreading rumours that sowed hatred among Muslims.He said most Muslims in the country had faith in Bakwata and that they still need the Mufti to stay in office. "We have 1,850 mosques in Dar alone yet those who want the Mufti to resign are just a few dozen," he said.On claims made by the expelled sheikhs that the Mufti was not fair in expelling them, Sheikh Gorogosi said Sheikh Simba had the authority to do so as he is the one who selected them. He said the Bakwata constitution gave such powers to the Mufti.Sheikh Gorogosi said that the Mufti has no hatred on any of the expelled sheikhs, citing an example that among those expelled is Sheikh Kilemile who visited the mufti and they had a long discussion full of joy."The Mufti told Sheikh Kilemile that there are no personal

biases in his decision as he only wants to make a better Bakwata," the acting Mufti said. He warned all those spreading the rumours to stop at once as the rumours will do no good, instead they must be patient and respect the Mufti's decision. "More changes are taking place and so they might find themselves put into other positions in the country if possible," he further affirmed. Sheikh Gorogosi questioned some early proposals on constitutional amendments suggested by the expelled Sheikhs, one from 2006 and the other put out this year, demanding them to be specific as to which provisions need to be amended. He added that though the proposals were submitted to the Registrar of Societies without the Mufti's notification but as the Council they were notified by the Registrar. The council leadership has agreed to some of the issues stated in the proposals "though they do not yet fully understand the proposals as they do not know which is to be the basis of amendments, if it's the blueprint of 2006 or of 2008." "Constitutional amendments can never be done without the Mufti's consent and these expelled Sheikhs made a mistake as they thought the amendments could be forwarded without the Mufti's signature," lamented Sheikh Gorogosi. Regarding the issue of redundancy that has recently hit Bakwata, Sheikh Gorogosi explained that the council reached the decision of reducing nine employees because of lack of income to support all its employees. "The headquarters is not that big to have more than sixty employees," he stated. "Some employees used to come and just sit around having nothing to do so we decided to reduce the number," he pointed out. Today, Bakwata will launch the pilgrimage program at the headquarters that will run for three months before the trip.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: 33 Senior French Officials Named in Genocide Report: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 6 August 2008.**

The government yesterday released the long-awaited report on the alleged role played by France in the 1994 Genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda. The three-volume scathing report was unveiled by the Minister of Justice, Tharcisse Karugarama, who was flanked by Louise Mushikiwabo, Information Minister. Hundreds of people thronged the Ministry of Justice conference room to hear the findings. The so-called 'Mucyo Commission' report names former French President Francois Mitterand, his son Jean Christophe Mitterand and several members of his cabinet as well as senior military officials as among those who should be held responsible for the slaughter of over a million people in 1994. The 500-page report which took over a year-and-a-half to compile, singles out 20 French military and 13 political figures it says have a solid criminal case to answer. It sums up the role played by France prior, during and after the Genocide. Among the accusations against the French was that they not only gave material and diplomatic support to the genocidal forces, they also took part in the killings and mass rape of Tutsi refugees. "It also shows the role played by France to protect the genocidal forces and to make it very difficult to apprehend them and bring them to justice," pointed out Karugarama. "French soldiers were involved in assassination of Tutsis and Hutus accused of hiding Tutsis. French soldiers committed many rapes against Tutsi women survivors." "These sexual abuses particularly targeting Tutsi women survivors were systematic; in other words, frequent, tolerated and a product of the standards and practices of the institution to which the men who committed them belonged," says the hard-hitting report. The government

commissioned the report in early 2006 when it set up an independent commission of inquiry led by former Minister of Justice, Jean de Dieu Mucyo. Karugarama was hedgy on whether they would institute criminal proceedings against those named in the report, but observers think that will be the next course of action. "This is a report of inquiry; it is not a criminal file. It is not a statement of guilt but on the basis of this report, other things can follow," said the minister. "We do not want to use this report as a comprehensive statement of guilt. You will see in this report a list of high ranking personalities who are implicated in this report, both in the political establishment and the military," he revealed. Karugarama denied claims that the Mucyo commission was in retaliation to recent indictments against important Rwanda officials by Spanish and French judges, explaining that the Mucyo Commission was set up before the two European indictments. "The indictments were very unprofessional and political rather than judicial," he said, adding that the Mucyo report was a "good basis for potential charges against individuals and states but not good enough in itself". Information minister Mushikiwabo on her part said that France should be able to use the report to get to the bottom of the truth. "Rwanda is committed to this report setting the historical record straight," she said. Not only did the French actively support the genocidal government, the report revealed, they also set in motion the mass movement of people towards the former Zaire. "French troops adopted a scorched earth policy. They ordered local authorities in the three prefectures of Cyangugu, Kibuye and Gikongoro to encourage the Hutu population to flee simultaneously to Zaire en masse." They also clearly requested to have Tutsi who had infiltrated in displaced population camps brought to them and have Interahamwe kill at least some of them. At different places in the three prefectures, they let Interahamwe kill Tutsi under their eyes."

- **Cameroon: Country Yet to Ratify Rome Treaty: [The Post](#) (Buea): August 2008.**

The 10th anniversary of the signing of the Rome Treaty that created the International Criminal Court, ICC, was commemorated on July 17, which was also the World Day of International Justice. Though created in 1998, the ICC started functioning in 2002 when more than 60 countries ratified the Rome Treaty. In a release issued by the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, CICC, it was disclosed that 107 countries have now ratified the treaty, with 30 of them being African countries. However, Cameroon that signed the Rome Treaty creating the ICC is yet to ratify it though its neighbours; Gabon, Nigeria, Chad and Central African Republic, have ratified it. The CICC has called on Cameroon and five other countries that signed the Rome Treaty to ratify it. Cameroon is the only African country in the group of six to which the call was made. This disturbing situation has raised the question as to why the Biya regime has not ratified the treaty. This was one of the issues in focus at a recent press conference which the Vice Coordinator of the Cameroon branch of the CICC, Barrister Roland Abeng, granted in Douala. Barrister Abeng said in spite of several promises, the Cameroon government is yet to ratify the Rome Treaty. He recalled that in September 2007, a CICC delegation visited some government officials amongst whom was the Minister Delegate in the Ministry of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, Maurice Kamto, urging the government to ratify the treaty. Abeng said the government officials gave the impression that Cameroon would

ratify the treaty before the end of the year, but nothing happened. Abeng, who is also a member of the International Criminal Bar, said the situation of Cameroon is embarrassing, considering that Prof. Kamto, a renowned international jurist, was one of those who drafted the Rome Treaty. According to him, no Cameroonian jurist can become an ICC judge since only member states select them. He also said that Cameroon cannot take a matter to the ICC because it is not a member. Besides, he said there are many things the country stands to benefit by ratifying the treaty. The barrister said the Cameroon branch of the CICC has made fruitless attempts to get some MPs to bring up the issue in parliament. On why government is reluctant to ratify the Rome Treaty, Abeng said even though no official reason has been given, the regime could be uncomfortable with the obligations on member states. According to him, the ICC is against the idea of immunity for any person, even a head of state, because the institution believes that no serious crime is supposed to go unpunished. The barrister recalled that when certain articles of the 1996 Constitution were amended in April, the Head of State was granted immunity for acts committed during the exercise of his functions. Abeng said that if Cameroon were to ratify the Rome Treaty and thus become a member of the ICC, it would be obliged to amend the constitution and discard articles that support impunity. Also, the legal mind said the Cameroon Penal Code, which, according to him, has become archaic, needs to be reformed if Cameroon became a member of the ICC. He said Cameroon is still using a Penal Code that says nothing about genocide as a crime.

51. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: 170 Granted Nigerian Citizenship: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 6 August 2008.**

No fewer than 170 people yesterday received certificates of Nigerian citizenship from the Minister of Interior, retired Maj.-Gen Godwin Abbe. The naturalised Nigerians are 39 females and 131 males from different nationalities. Speaking on the occasion, Abbe urged the beneficiaries to help create jobs for "our teeming unemployed youths. "You have the patriotic duty to ensure technology transfer to help make Nigeria one of the foremost countries in the world by 2020. "Your new status as bona fide citizens of Nigeria confers on you, the fundamental rights, privileges and immunities applicable to any Nigerian by descent". He further explained that, "Nigerian Constitution allows dual citizenship. You are therefore, permitted to retain the citizenship of your respective countries of birth or descent". The minister said their status "unofficially" bestowed on them, the responsibility to ensure and sustain solid mutually beneficial responsibility between their countries of birth and Nigeria. He asked beneficiaries with citizenships of other countries other than those acquired by birth or descent to renounce them within 12 months as required by the constitution.

- **Nigeria: Illegal Migration - '10,000 Nigerians Died in Nine Years': [This Day](#) (Lagos): 8 August 2008.**

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, has said that an estimated 10,000 Nigerians lost their lives in their desperate bid to enter Europe through the deserts and high seas in the last nine years. He also disclosed that the desperation has landed 1,461 Nigerians in various jails in the United Kingdom, 1500 in Libya prisons with 20 others on the death row in Indonesia for various offences ranging from illegal entry to drug trafficking. Maduekwe said this at the opening ceremony of a two day National Workshop on Information Campaign Against Irregular Migration organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in Abuja yesterday. The minister lamented the desperation of young Nigerians while wondering, "what is so bad about the country that everyone wants to get out." He urged Nigerians who wish to travel abroad to do so through legal means, adding that it is the sole prerogative of the embassies to grant visa. He also lamented that families, traditional and religious rulers have neglected their role of curbing materialistic tendencies in young people who are now encouraged to take actions that would have been considered abominable 20 years ago. "We have heard frightening stories of mothers who encourage their beautiful daughters to go into prostitution in foreign lands. We also wonder that men of God hardly ask questions about the source of money that worshippers bring into the churches or mosques; what they consider important is that the money has come," he said. Maduekwe disclosed that in most cases where the Federal Government had pleaded on behalf of condemned Nigerians in foreign countries, the answer had been negative and those countries had gone on with the executions. "Citizen Diplomacy does not include law breakers, all we can do for you is to insist you get your right to fair hearing; those countries cannot bend their laws because the offenders are Nigerians," he said.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: SA to Introduce Tighter Immigration Controls: Business Day (Johannesburg): 5 August 2008.**

SA PLANNED to introduce immigration controls such as transit visas to keep a tighter rein on the flow of people in and out of the country, home affairs director-general Mavuso Msimang said yesterday. The government will also set up a network of people trained to spot fake South African travel documents at airports around the world before the end of the financial year, in March next year. Airline liaison officers will work with immigration and airline officials to detect illegal South African passports. "We are working out a system of checking people as they board, even before they come into South African territory," Msimang said yesterday. It is unclear how far the measures - which Msimang said were part of efforts to tighten systems ahead of the 2010 Soccer World Cup - will go towards meeting UK concerns about people using false or illegally obtained South African passports to enter the UK. The British government has given SA until December to stamp out passport abuse - as many as 1000 non-South Africans enter the UK illegally on South African passports each year - or lose the automatic six-month stay South Africans get in the UK. Msimang said the two countries had settled on these measures at last month's SA-UK bilateral forum meeting between the two countries' foreign ministers. "There was a set of points that were agreed on at our recent binational summit. (The British) identified things we have started work on in preparation for 2010." Tightening immigration controls is one way to reduce the number of people who

come, or are trafficked, here and then travel elsewhere with passports bought from corrupt officials. Implementing transit visas means that travellers passing through an airport such as OR Tambo in Johannesburg en route to a country such as Swaziland will have to pass through South African immigration before doing so. At present, these people do not register in South African immigration records and anyone who is travelling to a country such as Swaziland has a back-door route to SA. If they are already "in the system", however, it will be harder to do so undetected. Msimang said he did not know if SA would retaliate if the UK instituted a visa regime for South Africans. The former SANParks CEO, however, smiled at last week's news that a van-load of British passports with a black-market value of Â£ 2.5m had been stolen from a van in Oldham, Greater Manchester, when the van's driver stopped outside a newsagent to buy a newspaper.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Sudan: Darfur - Attack On Convoy Leaves Six Civilians Dead, UN-AU Mission Reports: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 6 August 2008.**

A civilian convoy with seven vehicles was attacked on Monday, leaving six dead and 28 wounded, the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported today. According to UNAMID the seven Sudanese civilian vehicles were travelling from Nyala to El Fasher in North Darfur when they were ambushed by unknown men on camels, suspected to be Janjaweed militia. UNAMID helicopters evacuated eight of the wounded to a private hospital in El Fasher, with the bulk of the remaining casualties being evacuated to Nyala. The mission also reports that more than 170 Gambian soldiers arrived in El Fasher yesterday to take over security duties at UNAMID compounds. Meanwhile, the remaining personnel from an Egyptian engineering company are expected to arrive in El Fasher on 12 August. Last week the Security Council extended UNAMID's mandate by 12 months until the end of July 2009. Since taking over from an AU peace monitoring mission in the strife-torn region of western Sudan at the start of this year, UNAMID has deployed just under 10,000 uniformed personnel, well short of the 26,000 troops and police officers expected when the force reaches full capacity.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Returnees Short of Food - Militia Still Active: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 6 August 2008.**

Thousands of civilians who fled clashes between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) forces and militia groups in North Kivu Province are returning home but lack food, a humanitarian official said. "The food situation is deteriorating and the number of children admitted in the special centres for malnutrition cases has doubled in the last three months," said Olga Miltcheva, spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the DRC. Clashes in the Nyamilima area of Rutshuru, 50km north of the capital, Goma, this year have forced at least 40,000 people to flee their homes, according to aid workers. Many sought refuge in other areas within North Kivu and in neighbouring Uganda, living with other families or in internally displaced persons (IDP)

camps. Following a lull, many of the IDPs were now going home. Miltcheva said the ICRC had distributed at least 680 tonnes of food, along with seeds and farming implements. "These supplies will [support] their immediate food needs; the seeds will help the people to be self-sufficient as they prepare for the next planting season," she said. The situation, she added, had been aggravated by the bad harvest. Aid workers were also worried about security for the returnees following reports of militia movements not far from the area of return. According to Congolese army officials, the militias were suspected to be allied to dissident general Laurent Nkunda's National Congress for the Defence of the Congolese (CNDP). "These movements by CNDP troops are among several," Colonel Delphin Kahimbi, the deputy army commander in North Kivu, told IRIN. "Nkunda is still recruiting and training people, contrary to the Goma peace accord." The accord, signed on 23 January in Goma, called for an immediate cessation of hostilities, disengagement of troops and the creation of a buffer zone to separate the parties to the conflict in eastern DRC. Kahimbi denied reports that the Congolese had recently acquired more ammunition for the army, and delivered it in 10 planes to Goma. "The issue of the planes is a false allegation, the army has not yet taken any decision or step despite the movements and recruitments within the CNDP camps," he added. The UN Mission in Congo (MONUC) said the reported CNDP movements had not been confirmed. "At the moment, MONUC does not have information on the movements, but we have information on the recruitments and other violations of the ceasefire accord," Sylvie van Wildenberg, MONUC spokeswoman, said. This, she added, had resulted from "lack of trust between the different parties". According to aid workers, North Kivu is over-militarised, with up to 50,000 people bearing arms, most of them in the south. The Congolese army has an estimated 20,000 soldiers in the province, while the armed groups, including the Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda (FDLR), Mayi-Mayi militiamen and troops loyal to Nkunda, account for the rest. The FDLR comprises groups of armed Hutu groups, many of them remnants of militias largely blamed for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, and has been active in eastern DRC for more than a decade. The UN estimates the violence has forced at least 850,000 people to abandon their homes.

- **Chad: UN Provides \$1.2 Million to Replace Burnt And Looted Aid Supplies: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 7 August 2008.**

After aid supplies were burnt and looted during fighting in eastern Chad in mid-June, a United Nations emergency fund has stepped in to replace the supplies with a grant of \$1.2 million. The supplies include blankets, mats, mosquito nets, kitchen sets, plastic sheeting, tents, and soap. "This loss of humanitarian supplies is yet one more example of the difficulties that continued insecurity poses for our work to save lives in eastern Chad," said Eliane Duthoit, head of the local Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). "Through this grant, we will be able to supply emergency household items to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in need, by replacing those lost. But I must call on all belligerent parties to respect humanitarian assets and supplies," she added. The grant, which was provided by the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), will partly fund a project by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has primary responsibility for humanitarian assistance, managing

camps and protecting IDPs."These funds will enable us to provide essential household items covering some of the needs of the refugee and IDP population in the Goz Beida region, affected by the events on 15 June," said Serge Malé, representative of UNHCR in the landlocked African nation. Since its launch in 2006, the CERF has made available over \$890 million for rapid disaster relief, helping the UN save tens of thousands of lives in 62 countries struggling with disasters, armed conflicts, or both. Last week an additional CERF allocation of \$6.8 million was supplied to Chad through reserves held for under-funded emergencies.

52. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB)

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Free Malaria Treatment to Reduce Mortality – Imongan: Vanguard (Lagos): 6 August 2008.**

THE Edo State Commissioner of Health, Dr Wilson Imongan explained yesterday that the state government approved the free anti-malaria treatment for pregnant women and children in order to drastically reduce what he described as the unacceptable prevalence of maternal and child mortality rate in the state. Dr Imongan who spoke while declaring open a two- week multi-media materials Development Workshop organized by the state Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the UNFPA/CIDA project, said that government could no longer tolerate a situation whereby children and pregnant mothers finds it difficult to receive treatment at government's hospitals because of lack of funds. He therefore described the gesture as a concrete demonstration of the present administration's commitment towards providing quality and efficient health care delivery services to the entire citizens of the state. He added that it was the social responsibility of any government to secure the lives of its people and condemned a situation where a pregnant woman would have to lose her life while performing her biological responsibility of child bearing. "And I want to assure that the state government will continue to support laudable programmes that are geared towards the medical well being of the people. And I want to also commend the efforts of our partners like the UNFPA and the CIDA in ensuring that we succeed in our cause," he stated. Speaking earlier, the Executive Director and Consultant to UNFPA/CIDA project, Dr Fisayo Fagbemi, said the workshop was aimed at prioritizing reproductive health issues.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Botswana: Court Rules in Favour of HIV Positive Man: Mmegi/The Reporter (Gaborone): 6 August 2008.**

The Industrial Court has awarded an HIV/AIDS positive heavy-duty driver six months' salary as compensation for unfair dismissal by Hereon, a Chinese owned construction company. Details of the case are that 49-year-old, Benson Modukanele, was fired after revealing his HIV status to Hitecon managing director, Hu Zhongwen. Botswana Network on Ethics Law, HIV and AIDS (BONELA) legal officer, Uyapo Ndadi, represented

Modukanele whilst its financial manager, Tian, represented the company. During cross-examination, Modukanele revealed that he worked for the company for eight months, working Monday to Sunday, 11 hours per day. He told court he never absconded nor misbehaved and that the company management, especially the managing director, were pleased with his service. "I took an HIV/AIDS test and was found to be positive. The doctor gave me a week's sick leave so I could go for medical attention. When I told the managing director about my condition and that I would be on leave for a week, he said he wouldn't work with someone who was HIV/AIDS positive," he said. Modukanele said that his pleas for mercy fell on deaf ears; so he approached BONELA for help. When asked if he ever underperformed after disclosing his HIV/AIDS status, he said his performance levels never changed. He pleaded with the court to order the company to compensate him with six- months salary, leave pay and overtime pay. Justice Tebogo Maruping ordered that in terms of Section 24 of the Trade Disputes Act, the company must pay Modukanele P10, 800, as six months' compensation. He also ordered that he be paid P192.40 as leave pay, which had been unlawfully withheld. The company was also ordered to pay him P3, 347.55 overtime pay, and P10 085.90 as payment for working on holidays and during days off. "The respondent is hereby further directed to pay the amounts referred to, totalling P24, 425.85 to the applicant, through the Office of the Registrar of this court on or before August 29, 2008," he said.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Tanzania: Country Is Counselling On Responses: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 6 August 2008.**

The Joint United Nations Programme on Aids (Unaids) has urged Tanzania to consider decriminalizing homosexuality and prostitution so that they could be involved in planning national Aids responses. It said the move could lead to availability of statistics which would help in setting up programmes and regulations to help such groups which public health experts say are at great risk to contract HIV. Unaids is the joint United Nations programme on HIV/Aids, an innovative joint venture of the UN family. The chief of monitoring and evaluation evidence in the monitoring and policy department, Ms Deborah Rugg, said in an interview that there was evidence of positive results in countries with non-discriminatory laws against prostitutes and homosexuals. She said if Tanzania maintained discriminatory laws against such people, HIV/Aids cases might increase undetected. Therefore the government would require a lot of resources in future to control the epidemic among these groups, she said. "African leadership in countries where discriminatory laws and policies are still in place would later fail to control the spread of the disease among homosexuals, drug users and prostitutes," said Ms Rugg. She, however, warned that the decision to review such laws and policies would need bold leaderships. Her comments come hardly a week after the Unaids released its 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic. The report singularly mentions Tanzania as one of the countries having discriminatory laws or regulations that "do not protect populations most at risk of HIV." It said such laws hindered the Unaids from accessing statistics from such countries on the groups. However, non-governmental informants in 26 percent of the countries report the existence of laws that protect men who have sex with other

men. Further, anti-discrimination laws for sex workers and injecting drug users are reported in 21 percent and 16 percent of the countries, according to the report. Conversely, the UNAIDS recommendations are likely to face strong opposition in Tanzania where sexual acts between men are illegal. In particular, sections 154 to 157 of the Penal Code criminalize sexual activity between men, stipulating a maximum sentence of 14 years in prison. The penal code is applicable on Tanzania mainland but not in Zanzibar. In 2004, Zanzibar enacted a law criminalizing female homosexual acts. Sexual acts between women are punishable by a maximum prison term of five years - the same as that which men face for homosexual acts in Zanzibar, according to Amnesty International. Ms Rugg said there was hope of reducing transmission of HIV among homosexuals, injecting drug users and prostitutes if such restrictive laws were repealed. She said having restrictive laws and policies would not help control the spread of the disease among such groups rather than fuelling it. "It is hard to acquire statistics from countries with such restrictive laws and policies in place. I think it is the responsibility of civil society organisations to help change the situation," said Ms Rugg. The issue of prevention of HIV/AIDS among homosexuals, prostitutes and drug users injecting themselves was one of the widely discussed topics at the conference. As part of Tuesday's plenary session, the head of Mexico's National HIV and Aids Programme (Censida), Dr Jorge Saavedra, provided a multi-dimensional overview of the HIV epidemic in men who have sex with other men. He specifically highlighted hidden epidemics among these men in low- and middle-income countries, and factors that increase HIV risk and vulnerability across cultures. "I think one of the prevention strategies includes community-based interventions," Dr Saavedra told a well attended session. In the light of these challenges and opportunities, he called for a number of specific policy changes. These include greater involvement of men who have sex with other men in the planning of national AIDS programmes. On Tuesday the International AIDS Society, organizers of the 17th International AIDS Conference, said in a press release that 25 years into the AIDS epidemic, only one in 20 men who have sex with other men have access to HIV prevention programmes. The statement further said that 91 out of 128 low- and middle-income countries fail to report on access for men who have sex with other men to HIV prevention programmes. "The invisibility of men who have sex with other men in many low- and middle-income countries across the globe is contributing to inadequate resources being given to HIV prevention programmes despite MSM accounting for significant proportions of new infections in those countries." Homophobia continues to fuel the spread of HIV in countries with concentrated epidemics and in countries with generalized epidemics alike," the International AIDS Society (IAS) executive director, Mr Craig McClure, said in the statement. He said research has demonstrated over and over again that men who have sex with other men have an average 19 times greater chance of being infected with HIV than the general adult male population in low- and middle-income countries. In some countries, he said, men who have sex with other men are over 100 times more likely to be infected. He gave an example of Senegal where men who have sex with other men were 27 times more likely to contract HIV.

- **Uganda: More Married People Getting Aids, Says Report: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 9 August 2008.**

Married Ugandans over 30 years have a higher risk of contracting HIV /Aids than their single counterparts, according to the UNAIDS 2008 global epidemic report. This situation now presents a new challenge for policy makers and programme implementers who have been focussing on young people and advising them to get married to avoid the disease. The report, which was released last week, notes that between 1995 and 2006, the proportion of men and women who reported having had sex with someone other than their spouse increased from 12 per cent to 16 per cent for women, and from 29 per cent to 36 per cent for men. New infections are found highest among the cohabiting/married/widowed group at 42 per cent, 22 per cent among commercial sex workers, while mother to child transmission (MTCT) and casual sex contribute 21 per cent and 14 per cent respectively. The report is a compilation of national progress reports by governments across the world, which member states committed themselves to compile every two years for presentation to the United Nations General Assembly. The Ugandan report, which was submitted in January, shows that most new infections are among people aged between 30 - 34 years and 40 - 45 years. "Most countries, including Uganda, have targeted young people in prevention strategies," says Dr Kihumuro Apuuli, the director general of the Uganda Aids Commission. "So now we need to change the emphasis because the demographics of the epidemic have changed." Uganda's ABC model - Abstain from sex, Be faithful (to one partner) and Condom use - saw prevalence rates decline to 6.5 per cent from over 20 per cent, but experts say there is now need to adjust the prevention strategies. "We want to expand voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) to combat the spread [of HIV] within marriage," Dr Kihumuro said. Most critical is the fact that anecdotal indications from the national surveillance system corroborated by data from longitudinal cohort studies indicate "an apparent increase in HIV prevalence and incidence during the last few years."

Drivers

The report says some of the factors driving the epidemic in Uganda include behavioural factors, social-cultural, socio-behavioural, economic and geographic factors. These include higher risk sex (which include non-marital sex, extra-marital sex, non-consensual sex, commercial sex, transactional sex, intergenerational sex and sex for survival), mother to child transmission, among others. It is also estimated that about 130,000 new infections occurred during financial year 2006/07 alone. Three in ten of Ugandan infants born to HIV-infected mothers are reported to be infected with HIV. Only 12 per cent (10,289) of HIV positive pregnant women receive Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) to reduce the risk of MTCT as of the end of 2005. The report shows that about 40 per cent (91,500) of those needing ART are receiving it as of the end of 2006. By September 2007, there were 106,000 active clients on ART from 286 centres. Of the patients, 11,000 were HIV positive children. Voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) is still a challenge; only 4 per cent of women and 3.8 per cent of men aged 15-49 received an HIV test in the last 12 months.

Condom use

Only one woman in ten aged between 15-49 who had more than one sexual partner in the past 12 months reported the use of a condom during their last sexual encounter, compared to about 16 per cent for men. This indicates that women are still most vulnerable to infection than their male counterparts. Less than half of sex workers reported using a condom on their last sexual encounter. During the reporting period of January 2006 to December 2007, 96.6 million condoms with an additional 40 million in the pipeline, were procured with support from the United States Agency for International Development (Usaid), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Global Fund. As a way forward, policy makers want HIV/Aids to be incorporated in the day-to-day activities of various institutions and organisations. The report says a national policy on "mainstreaming" the disease is being developed. Also, a National Communication Strategy for HIV/Aids prevention, care and treatment is in the early stages of development.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Campaign on ARV Adherence Support Underway: Cameroon Tribune (Yaoundé): 8 August 2008.**

It will run from August 4 to 13, 2008 under the auspices of the German-Cameroon Health/AIDS Programme.

Few people are ok aware of the Anti Retroviral Treatment (ARV) on HIV/AIDS despite the reduction of cost for treatment. Sophie E. was diagnosed of HIV/AIDS some three years ago. She was prescribed the ARV treatment which she later abandoned after two years of treatment. According to her, she was advised by some friends to seek treatment from a native doctor who is well known for curing the AIDS disease. She however admits that for the past one year, there has been no improvement in her health condition. The story is similar to Maggie M. who is also HIV positive. Even though she takes her drugs, she does not respect the time required for taking her treatment. Maggie's case is not different from many in Cameroon. According to statistics from the German-Cameroon Health/AIDS Programme, about 50,000 people out of the expected 75,000 are currently under ARV treatment. However, some of these patients under ARV abandon their treatment because they believe they can be healed by traditional healers, charlatans or in prayer groups. Apart from seeking other means of treatment, some patients simply forget to take their treatment or skip the doses out of negligence. The consequence can be the development of resistant viruses. Such a situation may cause an increase in morbidity rates of people infected with HIV and can push patients and their caretakers to have doubt concerning the effectiveness of ARV. It is for this reason that a campaign on ARV treatment Adherence Support was launched last Monday in Yaounde. The campaign which runs from August 4 to 13, 2008 is organised by the German-Cameroon Health/AIDS Programme. The campaign was launched by the Secretary of State for Health, Alim Hayatou. During the campaign period, journalists are expected to sensitise patients and clients under ARV treatment or their entourage for a better treatment adherence. Some of the aspects the journalists should make known to patients, clients and the public include: forgetfulness, informing neighbours or relatives of their situation, irregularities and failure of treatment, charlatans or traditional healers, among others.

They are also expected to convince patients that ARV is the only effective treatment against HIV/AIDS today. The campaign targets about 50,000 patients or clients under ARV treatment and more than 50,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Cameroon as well as their entourage.

53. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **Côte d'Ivoire: Toxic Waste Sites Still Not Cleaned Up, UN Rights Expert Says: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 8 August 2008.**

The sites around Côte d'Ivoire's biggest city where hundreds of tons of toxic waste were illegally dumped two years ago have still not been decontaminated and continue to threaten the health of residents, a United Nations human rights expert warned today.

Okechukwu Ibeanu, the Special Rapporteur on the adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes, said many residents of Abidjan complain of headaches, skin lesions, digestive difficulties and nose, throat and lung problems. In a statement issued after a week-long visit to the West African country, Mr. Ibeanu said that decontaminating the seven sites around Abidjan where the waste was dumped must be a priority. "The people of Abidjan need urgent assistance," he said. "After two years, they continue to live in precarious conditions and their right to a healthy and safe environment continues to be violated." At least 16 people were killed and tens of thousands other were sickened or affected in August 2006 when hundreds of tons of toxic waste were dumped after the Probo Koala ship, which began its journey in the Netherlands, unloaded in Abidjan. Mr. Ibeanu said he was particularly concerned about the situation of women, many of whom have complained of an increase in premature births, early menopause and miscarriages. Ivorian authorities told the Special Rapporteur this week that they do not have the technical capacity to quickly decontaminate the sites, and he urged the international community to provide immediate technical assistance. Mr. Ibeanu also said much more needs to be done to compensate the victims, as many have reported that they have not been able to register for funds or they have not received adequate amounts. Others have not received any money at all. "Many victims, apart from feeling the direct threat to their health, have also had to leave their homes and businesses," he said. "Some have returned to their homes and businesses and continue to live and work next to these toxic waste dumps. They do not have the means to relocate or rebuild their businesses elsewhere. The Government needs to do more for its people." He added that health ministry officials should carry out a survey of the affected population and provide urgent medical assistance to those who need it, including by setting up intensive care units in hospitals to treat victims. As part of his investigations, Mr. Ibeanu plans to travel to the Netherlands later this year to speak with Trafigura, the company concerned with the Probo Koala. He stressed that the Ivorian Government should intensify its pursuit of criminal proceedings against both individuals and corporations implicated in the dumping. "This is to send a signal to other transnational corporations and individuals that such crimes will not go unpunished and that Africa is not a cheap dumping ground.

The victims must get the justice they deserve."Special Rapporteurs such as Mr. Ibeanu serve in an independent and unpaid capacity and report to the Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council.

- **Ghana: LPG Poses Serious Threat to Life - EPA Director Raises Alarm: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 6 August 2008.**

THE EXECUTIVE Director of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Mr. J. A. Allotey, has stated that the proliferation of Liquefied Petroleum Product (LPG) filling plants in the country, particularly in the urban centres, poses a great danger to lives and property due to its "volatile nature" and potential to cause fire outbreaks. According to him, the consumption of LPG has been on a steady rise since its introduction in the country, thereby attracting huge investments in the sector, which has led to the current large number of LPG outlets. "This situation poses serious threats to lives and property due to the volatile nature of LPG and the potential to cause fire outbreaks," he affirmed. Speaking at the opening of a two-day workshop for LPG marketing companies and operators on guidelines for establishment and operation of LPG Refilling Plants in Ghana, the EPA boss said the case of gas explosion at the Asokwa based Engas Filling Station, which claimed three lives, is still fresh on the minds of Ghanaians. The workshop, which was organised by the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) and the Environmental Agency, aimed at creating awareness on the new guidelines and equipping LPG marketing companies and retailers with the knowledge and skills to promote best practices in the industry. According to Mr. Allotey, the tragic event had generated concerns among the general public, and attributed the concerns to factors such as improper siting due to non-acquisition of relevant documents prior to the commencement of activities; non compliance of permitting conditions; as well as inadequate technical knowledge and skills on the part of persons employed to operate such facilities, among others. He therefore, called on operators of LPG plants to collaborate fully with regulators, in the face of the introduction of "new guidelines" to ensure safe and sound operation of the sector. Mr. Allotey, however, indicated that despite the concerns raised, the use of LPG could not be proscribed because it has positive contribution in Ghana's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He argued that six out of the eight goals are still linked strongly to poverty reduction by using LPG. The Chief Executive of National Petroleum Authority (NPA), Mr. J. D. Attafuah, on his part stated that the NPA would not accept to be presented with compliance by existing operators. "When an operator constructs a filling plant or a retail outlet without going through the due process, we would request to see what has been buried- like pipes and tanks, and certify that they have been done according to our requirements before we even begin to talk about penalties," he pointed out. He disclosed that in the past some operators constructed their plants without recourse to requirements of any of the regulating agencies- like the NPA, EPA, Town and Country Planning, Ghana Standard Board and the Ghana Fire Service. According to Mr. Attafuah, the NPA, at the moment is the last in the "permitting hierarchy" and therefore, expects operators to secure permits from the other regulating agencies before they could come to NPA for the construction permit. He entreated participants to participate fully to ensure that the document expected to be produced at the end of the seminar becomes workable for all stakeholders.

- **Nigeria: 1,260 Oil Spills Identified in Niger Delta: [Leadership \(Abuja\)](#): 5 August 2008.**

A total of 1,260 oil spill sites have been identified in the oil-producing areas of Niger Delta. The break down of the figure includes in 2006, 253 Oil Spill incidents were reported, in 2007 588 were reported; while in the first two quarters of 2008, 419 were reported. In addition, the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) has certified 327 oil impacted sites since October 2006 when the agency was established. Minister of Environment, Housing and Urban Development, Ach. Halima Tayo Alao, disclosed this in Calabar in her keynote address at the Stakeholder's Consultative Workshop. She said the Federal Government, having considered the negative effects of oil spills in the communities and the country, is embarking on protecting land, water and atmospheric resources of Nigeria. She noted that the workshop was the first of the nation-wide exercise that would be conducted across the six geo-political zones. The minister further said that the effect of socio-economic well-being has been less than desirable, resulting in restiveness in many crude oil producing areas. The effect of these phenomena has in the last decade had a negative impact on national economic development, she said. In his welcome address, the Director General and Chief Executive of NOSDRA, Dr. B. A. Ajakaiye, said the main focus of the workshop was to explore ways of establishing an enduring mechanism for preventing and responding to oil spill incidents in Nigeria. Furthermore, the workshop is to also identify more effective ways of collaborating with oil companies, host communities, state and local governments, civil societies, non-governmental organisations and volunteers in implementing appropriate oil management. "One of the root causes of the problems in the Niger Delta is the environmental degradation which emanated mostly from oil pollution. You will agree with me that there are challenges in oil spill management ranging from detection and reporting, vandalism, security, compensation and restoration of impacted elements amongst others", the DG stated. Declaring the workshop open, the acting governor, represented by the Commissioner for Environment, Dr. Julius Okputu, said the oil spill impact especially from off shore facilities can not be localised due to the nature of oil, wind and tidal wave actions. He said effective management of any spill therefore, requires the collaboration of all coastal states, the Federal Government and most times, the cooperation of the regional and international community.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Move to Allow Mining of Xolobeni Sands Under Fire: [Business Day \(Johannesburg\)](#): 6 August 2008.**

CONCERNED nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and local residents plan to lodge strenuous objections to the minerals and energy department's decision to permit mining on about a third of the controversial Xolobeni heavy mineral sands project on the Wild Coast. If their objection failed, they would take the issue to court, Sustaining the Wild Coast campaign spokesman John Clarke said yesterday. I-Net Bridge reported yesterday that the Democratic Alliance (DA) had also voiced its disappointment over the granting of the permit. Xolobeni covers 22km of spectacular coastline stretching from the Wild Coast Sun to the Mkambati Nature Reserve, but the area is poor, with an unemployment

rate of about 71%. Mineral Commodities, which is listed on the Australian Stock Exchange, said this week its South African subsidiary, Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources, had been notified by the department that a mining licence would be granted over the Kwanyana block. It would hold a prospecting licence valid until 2010 over the other portions of Xolobeni. Mineral Commodities planned to fast-track development of Kwanyana, it said. Kwanyana is one of five blocks making up the Xolobeni project area, which in total contains a measured resource of 346-million tons of mineral-bearing sands, sufficient for 22 years of mining. Kwanyana itself holds about 139-million tons of the total resource. Sustaining the Wild Coast, a coalition of NGOs and individuals opposed to the Mineral Commodities mining plan and the siting of the proposed N2 toll road, has been campaigning against this project for more than a year. The lobby does not believe it complies with the notion of sustainable development and argues the public participation process was seriously flawed. Complaints of flaws in the consultation process were taken to the Human Rights Commission, which earlier this year subpoenaed the land affairs minister, and the departments of minerals and energy and environmental affairs, for more information on the process. Commission spokesman Vincent Moaga said yesterday the report was still being prepared. Xolobeni lies within a valuable botanical site, and the Wild Coast has been identified by the government as a conservation area of regional and national importance. The effects of mining made it likely it would have a negative effect on tourism in the area, the campaign said. Clarke said the campaign was unhappy that Mineral Commodities' Australian shareholders were informed of this decision before the department informed the local communities. The controversy has also highlighted differences between the minerals and energy department and the environmental affairs and tourism department. According to a report from the latter department, quoted on the campaign website, it concluded mining was a short-term activity with negative long-term effects, whereas ecotourism had an unlimited life span. The departmental report on the project, though, was only submitted to the minerals and energy department after the December 21 deadline. This was ascribed to an "administrative error". DA environment spokesman Gareth Morgan said it was a pity environmental affairs and tourism had bungled its opportunity to participate in the process.

- **Namibia: Plans to Conserve Coastal Areas Approved: [New Era \(Windhoek\)](#): 7 August 2008.**

Government has approved plans to improve the conservation status of the area between the Kunene and the Orange rivers. This would include the incorporation of the National West Coast Tourist recreational areas and unproclaimed state lands into the Skeleton and Namib national parks. Although the improvements are mainly geared towards protecting the ecologically sensitive coastal areas, it is also hoped they would halt uncontrolled off-road driving in the dune belt area as well as the National West Coast Tourist Recreational Area. Minister of Environment and Tourism, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, revealed this at the recent launch of the coastal awareness campaign at Walvis Bay. Nandi-Ndaitwah informed the gathering that Cabinet has, in principle, approved the move. To date, considerable progress has been made, which includes the finalisation of coastal strategic environmental assessments for Kunene and Erongo regions. Assessments for the Hardap and Karas regions are at an advanced stage. Nandi-Ndaitwah committed her ministry to

the initiative, noting that various mechanisms will be put in place to safeguard the fragile area. Such mechanisms include concessions and a permit system to allow people to utilise and manage different land zones within the area. She said her ministry would be guided by the principles of stakeholders' consultations and fair and equitable access to natural resources. "I would like it to be clearly understood that proclaiming this area as a national park does not mean that the different existing land users will be terminated, but it will be managed better," said Nandi-Ndaitwah. She said the area will be zoned for different uses, and relevant regulations would be developed under the new Environmental Management Act and proposed Parks and Wildlife Management Act. The Namibia Coast and Management Project (NACOMA), in consultations with other stakeholders, have been leading plans to finalise the implementation of the Namibian Coastal Management White Paper. The white paper is the forerunner to a coastal policy that will lay the template for the management of coastal resources. It will also guide the sustainable development of the Namibian coastal areas. It will become a government document stipulating future policy on the management of the coast and from which possible legislation may flow. The area, which is endemic to some of the world's endangered insect, bird and reptile species, has been under constant threat from especially off-road drivers and quad biking, which destroy their natural habitat. One of the initial planned outcomes of the white paper development process is to define "coastal zone" in the context of developing a Namibian coastal policy. Although there is no single definition of the coastal zone, relevant parties have to agree on the geographic area that the policy will address. Experts reasoned that since the influence on the coast can originate way beyond the coastal zone, the policy may not be restricted to the coastal zone itself. It, however, remains vital to create a uniform definition of "the coastal zone". Although the NACOMA project has a strong biodiversity management and conservation focus, it is clear that a Namibian coastal policy needs to be much broader and address sustainable development issues including environmental, social and economic grounds. Environmental issues, for example, may have to be addressed in a so-called "ecosystems approach" context, which would take upstream environmental issues into consideration, noted marine experts. The Namibian coast is one of the few remaining places on earth with vast stretches of undeveloped wilderness. The waters of the Namibian coast support some of the greatest concentrations of marine life found anywhere in the world. These rich coastal ecosystems are, however, extremely fragile and can be easily disturbed by human activities. Although Namibia has an exceptionally low and geographically concentrated coastal population compared to other countries, increasing presence of human pressure over the years highlights the urgent need for sound coastal planning and management.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Eritrea: Over 20,000 Different Tree Seedlings Planted in Embaderho Through Campaign: Shabait.com (Asmara): 5 August 2008.**

In line with the ongoing soil and water conservation activities in different parts of the country, over 20, 000 different tree seedlings have been planted in Embaderho, Serejeka sub-zone. The chairperson of the NUEW branch office in the area, Ms. Alganesh Andemichael, indicated that more than 450 members of the Union took active

participation in the campaign aimed at promoting sound ecology. She further explained that different tree seedlings that could make due contribution in boosting bee farming have also been planted through the undertaking. Ms. Alganesh went on to say that the members of the NUEW are also actively engaged in the construction of embankments and terracing. Reports indicated that over 700,000 tree seedlings have already been distributed to farmers so as to reinforce the national afforestation program. 85% of the trees planted earlier have already mushroomed, the reports added.

- **Uganda: Illegal Nets, Fish Burnt: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 5 August 2008.**

Illegal fishing nets and immature fish worth sh800m were burnt on Saturday at Katosi Landing site on Lake Victoria in Kojja subcounty, Mukono district. This action marked the launch of an operation to curb illegal fishing methods on the lake. The operation covered Koome, Ntenjeru and Bweema islands. Lawrence Serwanga, the secretary for island developments, said the operation followed clearance by the district that "reasonable force" be used to curb illegal fishing. "This year alone, we have lost six beach management unit officers, who have been killed by fishermen after they confiscated their nets." He identified one such officer as John Kamulegeya, the chairman of Mpenja fishing camp beach management unit. According to Serwanga, Kamulegeya was surrounded by fishermen after confiscating their nets and they beat him to death. He named Kigaya fishing camp in Najja sub-county and Bulutwe camp in Ngogwe sub-county as the deadly areas. The district fisheries officer, Deo Mutumba, said some officials conspire with fishermen and abet the use of undersize nets after soliciting bribes from them. However, many fishermen complained that they could not afford the recommended five-inch nets that cost over sh1m. The illegal types, which are locally made by the fishermen, go for sh800,000. Mukono has three sites that handle fish export at Katosi, Senyi and Kiyindi. The fisheries department says fish catches have reduced by six tonnes in a period of two years. "The situation is majorly caused by use of small nets."

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Forum On Water, Sanitation And Environment Launched: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 8 August 2008.**

The Nile Basin Discourse Forum-Rwanda (NBDF) has launched a non-governmental forum on water, sanitation and environment that will promote proper water access and sanitation. The forum that amalgamates different water, sanitation and environmental stakeholders in an all inclusive way was launched at the Kigali Serena Hotel on Thursday. According to the National NBDF Coordinator, Frank Habineza, the forum will act as a single voice representing the civil society (private and public) and government in improving access to safe and clean water in Rwanda. "It will be easy to enhance resource mobilisation and capacity building as well as information sharing and advocacy amongst players in water, sanitation and environment," he underscored. The forum was launched in collaboration with the African Civil Society Network (ANEW) on Water and Sanitation, a continental body recognised by the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW). NBDF is the office that facilitates the involvement of civil society in

planning and development processes under the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI). During the launch, Habineza revealed that efforts to initiate this forum with the proposal from the Ministry of Lands have been in place for sometime but had failed to take off. Habineza, also the Chairman of the Rwanda Environmental Conservation Organisation (RECO) and board member of ANEW, disclosed that all players were eligible to join the forum. Clement Kirenga, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist from the ministry of Finance, said the forum is very necessary in improving the lives of Rwandans through further access to safe drinking water. He explained that it will seek to achieve sustainable economic growth and social development. "It is an EDPRS oriented initiative to bring about an increase in water access from 64 percent, to about 86 percent by 2010," Kirenga explained. Jean Marie Vianney Mushinzimana, the Officer in Charge of Water and Environment in the ministry of Natural Resources, commended the efforts of NBDF in preserving the environment while ensuring sustainable natural resources and growth. He also acknowledged the need for a forum where different players would amicably discuss how to manage and conserve water, sanitation and the entire environment. Mushinzimana urged for collective efforts against environmental dilapidation that has greatly roused world concern due to climatic changes. At the launch, a constitution was drafted and office bearers elected.

54. ENERGY

WEST AFRICA

- **West Africa: World Bank Acknowledges West African Gas Pipeline Flaws: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): 6 August 2008.**

Civil society activists in Nigeria are welcoming the World Bank's acknowledgement of a series of damaging mistakes during the building of the World Bank-financed West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP) running from Nigeria through Benin, Togo, and Ghana. But they also said the report does not go far enough in answering crucial questions. A report by the Bank's independent Inspection Panel outlines serious errors made by the West African Gas Pipeline Company (WAPCo) as it took possession of lands in Lagos and Ogun States in Nigeria and displaced already impoverished residents. In its response to the report of the panel, the World Bank's management admits that residents were paid just 10 per cent of the established value of their land. The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors discussed the report yesterday. The Panel also criticized the Bank's refusal to consider the impact of the pipeline on communities in the Niger Delta, the source of the gas. The Bank management has continued to defend the refusal on the grounds that the multi-country pipeline was a distinct project from the wells and the older pipeline to Lagos that connects to the WAGP. "The Inspection Panel has clearly laid out the reckless manner in which WAPCo disrupted the lives and livelihoods of villagers in Nigeria," Nnimmo Bassey, Executive Director of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth (ERA/FOEN), a Nigerian non-governmental organisation (NGO) that was among the groups that filed the initial complaint with the World Bank said. He said "We take satisfaction in the fact that the

Panel validated our claims, and that the Bank's management accepted responsibility for allowing WAPCo to trample people's rights. But we still don't have an explanation on why such grievous violations of World Bank policy were allowed to occur."Bassey's colleague, Mike Karikpo added, "The World Bank should explain why it failed to effectively present the case for 'land-for-land compensation' that Bank policy calls for, and should prove its claim that now, after the mistakes are acknowledged, there is no more land available for the displaced people. Even after reading the Bank's version of events, it is hard to believe the Bank did not collude with WAPCo to slash the already very conservative valuation of the villagers' property."Karikpo said, "Let's remember that WAPCo is not a struggling local enterprise, but a consortium of some of the world's richest companies, including Chevron and Shell. It is stunning to see them, and the World Bank, deny impoverished people their due."Nasiru Jimoh, a member of the Igbesa community that comprises the bulk of the people displaced by the WAGP, noted that, "The World Bank quoted us the prices we should be paid, and then reneged without consulting us. They have sown confusion and despair in my community. Now that they are admitting mistakes, they must publicly disclose how they decided on their valuations of our trees, crops and lands."The Panel also found that the project was initially promoted as an instrument to reduce the gas flaring that afflicts Niger Delta communities with unending noise, heat, light, and pollution. Actual reductions in gas flaring will be, as the Bank's management acknowledges, substantially less than was implied before the project was begun.Mr. Joshua Klemm, Program Associate at Bank Information Center, a Washington non-governmental organisation (NGO) that monitors the World Bank and other international financial institutions said the WAGP case has implications far beyond Nigeria."The Bank is now in the process of finalising its strategy to address climate change, and clearly wants to take the lead on the issue. But will this be the pattern we see when the strategy gets implemented: promises made to end climate-damaging activities like gas flaring which then evaporate once the project gets built?", he queried.

- **Nigeria: Oil Sector to Witness Major Reforms - Ipman President: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): INTERVIEW: 8 August 2008.**

How would you assess the programme of the present government in the oil and gas sector in the past one year?

President Umaru Musa Yar'adua has encouraged change in the oil and gas industry. This is more so because it is part of the Seven-Point Agenda which he wants to achieve for the country. As a matter of fact, a lot of things have been put in place to achieve the desired reforms in the industry, particularly the down stream sector as it relates to the unbundling process of NNPC and PPMC which Nigerians see as institutions that have been handling upstream and downstream oil and gas sector.It's against this background that we in IPMAN have started the awareness campaign in line with the president's reforms agenda. That is why we put a workshop in place some couple of months ago to create awareness among our members.

Can you explain to us some of the things the Oil and Gas Implementation Committee (OGIC) has done?

I believe in the committee headed by Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman and all the chieftains of the government agencies in the oil and gas sector. I knew they have had a lot of sessions even with the stakeholders at repositioning the upstream and the downstream sector.

How have your members in the IPMAN fared in the last one year?

IPMAN members in the last one year have not had enough of petroleum products as they used to have in those days because of the ageing pipelines system and increasing vandalizing of pipelines. I believe within a short while the Aba-enugu too will open up for effectiveness and we believe that with little effort some of these things would be achieved soonest.

Are you concerned about the astronomical increase in price of diesel? How does it affect your members?

The international prices of petroleum products have actually influenced the increasing pricing structure of the Automotive Gas Oil (Diesel) in Nigeria. Besides, because AGO is fully deregulated, we wouldn't have expected anything short of a drive and a move to raise the pricing structure of the international price, that's exactly what is happening to diesel now. I know that Saudi Arabia has decided to increase its output so that the prices could come down; but more still need to be done. In Nigeria, Niger Delta uprising has further worsens the situation of oil supply.

Some marketers are complaining of being marginalized. How about the issues of off takers appointed by Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG)?

I can tell you that the NLNG issue is a welcome development because there is no need for Nigeria to import gas from overseas, when we have NLNG here. I think what is required is a situation where anybody interested in that business should sign up agreement adequately with them. I think this is a welcome development because we are all working towards achieving the same goal for the government, so that the bulk of the gas that are being flared now can be utilized in the right direction to ensure that we reposition Nigeria oil industry effectively.

What is your take on the issue of product supply to NNPC depots nationwide?

The issue of product supply is a very pertinent issue in the energy situation of this country today and I believe that NNPC is doing its best. They have actually asked marketers to go on importation. We have to understand where we are coming from to be able to appreciate what NNPC and PPMC are doing. We shouldn't forget that years back all the refineries were down except Port-Harcourt. Today, two other refineries have come up and some of products have been made available, but the ratio is still very low compared to the imported components. I make bold to say it is at the region of 30-70 local supply about 30%, where importation is still about 70% moving around that figure. I believe that if you look at that figure, it is an improved version of what we have some years back. But marketers have been duly given all the incentives that is required by the

PPPPRA and through the Petroleum Support Fund to actually subsidize effectively for the differentials that exist on imported products. In line with that, we know we are not having enough; we are ready to increase the supply chain, through massive importation, to complement whatever NNPC could give to our members nationwide.

It appears there is a division in IPMAN who is the authentic President between you and Engr. Runsewe?

This is a very funny question. Funny in the sense that Runsewe has since been removed at Yankari Game Reserve on November 23, 2007. And against this background, he was giving a vote of no confidence in line with our constitution. Runsewe is out there pulling strings, trying to insult everybody in government circles. We in IPMAN dissociate ourselves from that and it is against that we have public disclaimer on him that anybody who does business with him does that at his or her own risk. He is currently being investigated by the law enforcement agencies.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Fuel Deal Collapses: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 7 August 2008.**

As negotiations continued between Zimbabwe's main political parties, talks of a different nature failed this week. ZimOnline reported on Thursday that a deal between the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) and two international petrol companies, to supply fuel to Zimbabwe, have fallen through after talks collapsed over pricing. NOCZIM was reportedly about to close a deal that would have seen petrol supplied by the Independent Petroleum Group of Kuwait and BP Shell of South Africa - but the two companies pulled out this week after NOCZIM insisted the lending rate be 60 US cents a litre. The international groups apparently refused to budge on a fee of between 70 and 90 US cents per litre. Alternative sources for fuel are now being targeted, including Equatorial Guinea, which, together with Libya, has been on the Government's list of possible alternatives in recent months. In the past Mugabe's government obtained, but failed to pay, for fuel from Kuwait, Libya and other countries, resulting in supplies being stopped. Efforts to secure fuel from Iran, Sudan, and Angola also failed because of Harare's poor payment record. The country has been without adequate fuel since 1999 due to lack of foreign currency and the severing of lines of credit by foreign banks and international money-lenders. Zimbabwe cannot get lines of credit due to its poor credit rating and high political risk. In March, the government came up with a plan to use diamonds illicitly mined from Marange in Manicaland province, in exchange for fuel from Equatorial Guinea. Zimbabwe received fuel worth US\$24 million from the country which it was unable to pay for, resulting in the government coming up with three options to settle the debt - all involving the trading of diamonds. While the energy ministry was in support of the first option, to source fuel through the purchase and sale of diamonds, the central bank opposed it saying the process was flawed. In turn, the RBZ said it could come up with a debt settlement agreement with the West African nation "rather than be part of an illegal process". As usual it's been impossible to get any official comment or statement on the fuel crisis which is a daily nightmare for all Zimbabweans.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Ethiopia: Ministry, Foreign Company Sign 50 Million U.S. Dollars Petroleum Exploration Agreement: [The Daily Monitor](#) (Addis Ababa): 8 August 2008.**

The Ministry of Mines and Energy (MoME) and Falcon Petroleum Limited, a company from Cyprus, signed an agreement enabling the later explore and develop petroleum in the Abay Basin, around Wollo, in the Amhara regional state. Alemayehu Tegenu, Minister of MoME and Radhawan Sadik Hadi, Deputy Managing Director of the company signed the agreement which grants 50 million USD for initial phase of the project on Thursday at the Sheraton Hotel Addis Ababa. "The ministry has granted Falcon Petroleum Limited, an exclusive right that enables the company to engage in exploration and development within the license area for the period specified in the agreement and will have the right to extend as per the agreement", said a statement from the ministry which highlighted the main elements of the agreement. According to the agreement, covering an of 25,875 square km, the initial term of exploration period will be four years with possible extension twice each for two years. The development and production period shall be 25 years with possible extension of 10 years, the Minister said. Accordingly the company shall give preference to the employment of Ethiopian qualified nationals. Alemayehu also said, "Today's event marks an extension of the exploration in areas other than the historical Ogaden basin which in itself contributes to our mind set as such petroleum opportunities could exist in volcanic terrains and we will continue working in a similar manner to attract oil companies to explore other parts of the country." To date, exploration agreement have been acquired which collectively covers more than 70% of the surface coverage of the country, and this is a significant success following which Ethiopia is foreseen to be one of petroleum producing country in East Africa, he added. Falcon petroleum Ltd is a company registered in Cyprus and is involved in petroleum exploration in different parts of the world. In accordance with the petroleum agreement signed, Falcon Petroleum Ltd shall have exclusive right in the area to undertake petroleum exploration and development. This agreement encourages other companies to engage in petroleum exploration on the surrounding areas of the basin, the statement added.

- **Uganda: More Oil Discovered in Butiaba Region: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 6 August 2008.**

TULLOW Oil has discovered more oil and natural gas deposits at Kasamene-1 exploration well in Butiaba region in the Lake Albert Rift Basin. Aidan Heavey, the chief executive, in a statement yesterday, called the discovery the most important result to date in the Butiaba exercise. "While the deep exploration objective in the Kingfisher 2 well at this location did not find additional hydrocarbons, this well has proved a significant discovery." He said the result showed potential for more discoveries in the Victoria Nile delta area. The company announced over 31 metres of oil and at least six metres of gas in the area. Kasamene-1 is the second successful test within the Albert Rift Basin. The first being the Ngenge 1 oil well. The latest discovery is one of the many in the western region

since the first was announced in June 2006. Statistics from the Ministry of Mineral Development indicates that the country currently has 300 million barrels of oil. Uganda is scheduled to start an early production scheme in 2009 to generate over 4,000 barrels of oil per day. The oil will be refined into heavy fuel for use in power generation.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Burundi: Government Sets Sights On Oil: [East African Business Week](#) (Kampala): 4 August 2008.**

Burundi could become a leading oil and minerals exporter of the region following a protracted exploration and prospecting exercise kicked off by government recently. According to Burundi's Director for Geology and Mines Mr. Damien Riragonya Burundi potentially large oil deposits are said to be existing on the Burundi side of Lake Tanganyika area. Oil sips have been sighted and satellite images have added weight to earlier studies. Oil has been sighted on the Rusizi basin along the border with the DRC. Interest has grown in exploring Burundi's oil and already companies have flown in and laid papers to government for exploration and prospecting licences. "We have four applications for oil exploration. We have divided the oil zones into four blocks. Three blocks are in the lake area, i.e. BCD and Kisizi Basin Delta as a Block A. Block D has been awarded to Surestream Petroleum. Surestream Petroleum is a private exploration and production company headquartered in London. At the moment for many various reasons, mining is predominantly in the hands of artisanal mining groups, earning only a paltry over a million dollars... Prominent of which is the instability that hit the country and lack of a comprehensive strategic framework for the oil and mining industry. But thanks to a renewed interest by government, and a need to diversify the economy away from agriculture, the department of mines and geology is working overdrive to revive and grow this industry to a billion dollar industry employing over a million people. The East African Business Week visited the department in Bujumbura and had an indepth discussion with the with Director General of Mines and Geology Engineer Damien Rirangoya who explained that the country was endowed with unknown quantities of nickel, cobalt, tangsten, tantalum, gold, tantalum, casterine (tin), cobalt, and peat. Prospects exist for uranium, and oil prospecting is underway. Lots of nickel deposits exist in Burundi in the Musongati region in Central and south eastern parts of the country. We signed a contract in 1999 with an Australian company Andeover Resources NL. They stopped work because of insurgency. They were charged with carrying out a feasibility study for three years and did not deliver. In June 2007, government terminated their contract. However, Andeover has now sued the government at the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris. Apart from that we have many companies that have shown interest and some have arrived and are carrying out feasibility studies, prospecting and others actual activity. In 2006, the government granted a permit to do research on nickel. There are potentially huge deposits of nickel in the north eats of the country, known as the nickel belt. An international company Danyland Ltd working with a BHP Bilton, have taken up the venture to exploit nickel here. In the southern Makamba region, BHP has also been granted a mining permit to mine Nickle. In 2004, another company a British company, Mineral Search of Africa was given a permit for nickel in Rutovu near Musongati. Vanadaium deposits exist in Mukanda). A permit has been granted to

International Gold Exploration AB from Sweden. International Gold Exploration AB has been granted a permit to prospect for gold in the north west of the country in Butara area in 2006. Another company operating in the same area was given a licence for gold. Caracal Gold, an American firm, has started operations. International Gold has similarly been given a permit for uranium exploration in the Musongati area. We also have deposits of peat in the Kagera area north east of the country. This is being handled by the National Office for Peat. Peat has been exploited since 1978 and consumed 100% by the army and police as fuel energy. About 10,000 tonnes is mined annually. Another mineral with in Burundi is bastnaesite, used in the manufacture of electronic parts. This was mined between 1948 and 1978. It is no longer commercially viable. Government is looking at more areas for exploitation as studies show that it exists in other places in the country. Tin, tantalum and tungsten deposits exist in the northern part of the country and government is looking for investors in this area. According to Rirangonya, cement rocks are spread out through out the country. Phosphate is also available but has been discovered very deep in the ground and the department is still looking at the commercial viability of the mineral. We are now reviewing the mining code expected in October. The project is being financed by the World Bank and PAGE (Economic Management Support Programme - (EMSP). In the mining code, we are looking at lowering the fiscal terms required by investors. Under the existing code, they were too high for investors. We want it lowered from 7% and make it conducive for investors. Today acquiring a mining licence is much easier. Once a company makes an application to the department, it is studied by the relevant authorities and experts and sent to cabinet and parliament for debate and onward transmission. Since 2006, we have signed concessions with many companies have made invitations for many others. In the last four years we have received lots of applications.

- **Rwanda: Country's Gas Project Gets IFC Nod: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 5 August 2008.**

The International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group has pledged to work closely with the Rwanda Investment Group (RIG) to expedite the extraction of methane gas, from Lake Kivu. The extraction of the methane gas is expected to boost Rwanda's energy sector by producing at least 100 Mega Watts of electricity by next year. At a meeting last week with Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, IFC officials said Mr Kagame was briefed on IFC and RIG's engagement on the extraction of methane gas for purposes of doubling the production of electricity in the country. IFC was among others represented by the Director for East and Southern Africa Jean Philippe Prosper. Early this year, the IFC Vice president Rachael Kyte after visiting the pilot Gisenyi Methane extraction plant, was told that the quality and quantity of the gas extracted from the lake was way above 50 per cent. 60 per cent of the country's energy is thermal based due to the current low water levels. Consequently, power outages are frequent and a major concern to investors. The partnering of IFC and RIG S.A, an investment group that has committed as least \$27.2m to investments in Rwanda will be seen as a positive development to the methane gas project. Expediting the process with RIG would help generate some 35MW. According to the World Bank Group a methane-fueled power plant could make economic sense for a country that is a net importer of fuel

to run its thermal generators. Electricity and water distribution in Rwanda is monopolized by state-run Electrogaz. Only five per cent of the population is currently connected to the electricity network, mainly in the capital Kigali. By late 2005, the available power generated totalled 33MW against a national demand of 55MW. Early this year the World Bank recommended that Rwanda would have to explore usage of geothermal resources to avert the pending energy crisis as the country moves into a critical stage of industrialisation.

55. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

WEST AFRICA

- **Sierra Leone: Students Link Prophets Virtues to Development: The Independent (Freetown): 1 August 2008.**

A cross section of Muslims in the country on July 31 joined students from Fourah Bay College at a one -day workshop where they extolled the virtues of the Holy prophet Muhammad which they said were necessary to be emulated by all nations. Sheikh Alimamy Sesay elaborating on the theme "Attitude Towards Development" , said, "Nations are struggling today to find methods for development' .But there is a lot we could learn from Prophet Muhammad's examples", he said. He said prior to the emergence of Islam there was class distinction in Arabia, political exclusivity and lack of women's rights. He added that Islam transformed Arabia and laid the foundation for development and put the country on the rail of civilization. "Women at that time were like ornaments", he said. According to him, Islam today gives women the right to choice in marriage, divorce and many issues. He said Islam is a comprehensive religion. "It teaches hygiene, biology, technology and many things about reality", he said. Sheikh Amja Tunis from Kenema, in the east of the country, urged Muslims to practice their faith in the correct way. He established a link between attitude and development, which he said are inextricably interwoven. The chancellor of the Iranian Cultural Consulate Mohamed Reza Ghezeli Sofla said there is a link between attitude and development. He said migration plays a great role in the development and underdevelopment of any nation. He spoke on what he called popular equality and freedom which are also recognized by Islam. The seminar was jointly conducted by the Sierra Leone Iranian Students Cultural Society and the Iranian Cultural Center in Freetown.

- **Togo: High Cost of Living Exacerbated By Floods: [Inter Press Service \(Johannesburg\)](#): 8 August 2008.**

Recent flooding in Togo caused the collapse of over 10 bridges connecting the capital of Lomé to the north of the country. The consequences have been increased transportation costs and a steady climb in the price of consumer products. Lomé has been almost completely cut off from the northern part of the country after torrential rains last month destroyed numerous bridges and roads in southern Togo. As a result, people traveling north must make a lengthy detour to the west through the town of Kpalimé. "We increased the price because of the 100 km detour when leaving Lomé," explained Gérard Akohin in

a conversation with IPS. The transportation union's decision to increase all fares to all destinations by 1,500 CFA francs (approximately \$3.60). The cost of shipping goods has also increased in the West African nation, which has inflated prices for consumer items, especially maize. Northern Togo is the country's bread basket, and with that region cut off, very few distributors are traveling to the area for agricultural products. The flooding also affected maize fields which further reduces the amount available on the market. The cost of one kilogramme of maize went from 850 CFA (about \$2) before the floods to 1,500 CFA (\$3.60) last weekend. Other items, such as beans and charcoal, have seen increases as well. These new price hikes come in the midst of a global food crisis that is already having a devastating effect on the poorest populations. "We're holding on by a thread and on the verge of famine -- our buying power shrinks every day whereas prices keep climbing. The situation is critical," says Komla Alagbé, a teacher in Lomé. "It is a highly volatile situation," declared Aladjou Agouta, Secretary General of the Association togolaise des consommateurs (Togolese Consumers Association), commenting on "a wave of speculation never before seen in the country." According to him, steps should be taken against speculation and price hikes. Kossi Messan Ewovor, Togo's Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, agrees. "Market women are setting the prices at levels we deem unacceptable," he says. "It is true that bridges have collapsed and access routes have been destroyed, but the prices are not justifiable," he added. In addition to destroying roads and bridges, at least 10,000 people were affected by the flooding, including nine deaths. Angèle Mensah, a market woman from Djagblé, a village 20 km Northeast of Lomé told IPS: "The water was too powerful, all our belongings were carried away and our homes destroyed." Many evacuees were rescued by Ghanaian and French army personnel (from Ivory Coast's Operation Unicorn) who came to support Togolese troops. Evacuees found shelter in nearby schools and churches. The main opposition party - the Union des forces de changement (UFC) - quickly sent its representatives to affected areas. The UFC criticized the dismal state of Togolese roadways, which it said were inadequate to the country's needs. In a public declaration made after the floods, the UFC called for the resignation of the current government. Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Yaovi Agboyibo's party, the Action Committee for Renewal, called on the government to launch a solidarity fund in support of flood victims. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations are providing support locally to evacuees. Amitié et action pour le développement (Friendship and Action for Development), based in Lomé, offered blankets, mosquito nets, shoes, bedsheets and clothes. "We're hoping to alleviate the victims' suffering and ensure that they are well protected during the rainy season," said Koumana Bogra, the Executive Director. While authorities and NGOs rush to help victims in southern Togo rebuild, the north has started to see torrential rains, also. Two bridges collapsed at the beginning of the month in two northern cities, Sotouboua and Kara.

- **Liberia: UN Helps 30,000 Find Work Through Road Repair Projects:**
UN News Service (New York): 7 August 2008.

More than 30,000 women and men across Liberia have found short-term work this year in road rehabilitation projects supported by the United Nations. "The jobs created have had a positive impact, engendering a feeling of security in the communities and have promoted cohesion, as people from different groups participated jointly," Andrea Tamagnini, Director of Reintegration, Rehabilitation, and Recovery with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), said today. The initiative, which took place during Liberia's dry season, focused on the main roads from Voinjama in the northwest to Fishtown in the southeast, and generated more than 1.3 million working days from September 2007 through May 2008. The projects were carried out by Liberia's Ministry of Public Works, UNMIL, the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), and the UN World Food Programme (WFP). Mr. Tamagnini pointed out that incidents of petty crime declined considerably during and after the projects, since the projects provided legal income-generation opportunities for war-affected youth. During his recent visit to Liberia, Dmitry Titov, UN Assistant Secretary-General with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), said that "the combination of infrastructure and employment and the contributions these interventions make to recovery and rehabilitation should be seen as a microcosm of peacebuilding." With massive unemployment and underemployment affecting all parts of the country, Liberia's Minister for Public Works, Loseni Dunzo said that "the number one priority in Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy programme is roads - a priority that is due to the major role played by road rehabilitation in the political stability of Liberia."

- **Nigeria: Poor Policy Implementation, Bane of Development - Yar'Adua: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 8 August 2008.**

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua yesterday admitted that, Nigeria's failure in the past has been due to poor implementation of strategies rather than lack of strategies. He made the disclosure as the Vice President, World Bank, Africa Region, Mrs. Obiageli Ezekwesili painted a gloomy future for Nigeria in her quest to achieve the targets of Vision 2020, saying the nation has a long way ahead of her to be able the league of world's top 20 economies by the year 2020. Yar'Adua who declared open Nigeria Infrastructure Summit (NIS) organised by the Ministry of Finance and National planning Commission yesterday in Abuja cited the National Independent Power Project (NIPP) intention with laudable but contributed next to nothing to the power sector due to absence of planning, corruption and poor implementation. He said, he strongly believed that all the blame should not be put on the government alone but also on the private sector, which connived with government officials to perpetrate corruption. To stem this ugly trend, he vowed that the Federal Government will deal with corrupt practices in the private sector through the criminal law process, stating that, if found culpable, individuals or firms will be prosecuted and ban from government contracts. "Often our failure in the past has not been due to lack of strategy but due to poor implementation. The walls of our ministries are lined with consultants' reports. For example, while the intentions of the National Integrated Power Project were laudable, the project so far has made only a negligible contribution to our power sector because of lack of planning, corruption, and poor implementation." Not all of the blame lies with government because, in many cases, private companies have conspired with officials to deny other Nigerians their share of the

nation's resources. We will therefore deal with corrupt practices in the private sector through the criminal law process. If there is evidence of corruption then the individuals and firms involved will not only be prosecuted but also be debarred from future government contracts", he said. Speaking on Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Yar'Adua who was represented by his Economic Adviser Dr. Yakubu Tanimu Kurfi, said the Summit was an opportunity to launch the Federal Government's policy statement for PPP. While stating that, PPP was more than just providing additional finance to meet our gaping infrastructure deficit, he explained that, "it is also one of the tools that we will use to reform our public services, and in the long term our economy." According to him, "It is this theme of reform, therefore, that I want to talk about today, because there is no doubt that the Federal and State governments in Nigeria have often failed to meet the needs and aspirations of all Nigerians." Not only has policy sometimes benefited the few over the interests of the many, but it has damaged the country's reputation and standing in the international community". Earlier in her presentation, Ezekwesili while emphasising on "Vision 2020: The Infrastructure Gap illustrated : "How does Nigeria compare to Turkey, currently the number 17 economy in the world, the closest emerging market country to the number 20 rank? As you can see, Nigeria is close to half way in roads and rail, and more than a quarter there in telecommunications, where progress is rapid. In power, however Nigeria is at one fifteenth only"

- **Ghana: AngloGold Ashanti Up for Grabs?: [Public Agenda](#) (Accra): 8 August 2008.**

The chief executive of AngloGold Ashanti, Mr. Mark Cutifani has hinted that the world's third largest gold producer and the miner will consider all merger and acquisitions options, including a takeover deal by a rival. When asked if AngloGold would consider a takeover deal by another company, Cutifani told Reuters that : "Of course, you have to consider. We have to do the right thing by our shareholders." "And if at the end of the day, the opposition starts to wake up ... and somebody wants a piece of the action, of course we have to consider it," Cutifani said. A takeover of the AngloGold Ashanti could also lead to a change of identity and for Ghanaians, the loss of the trademark Ashanti in a new merged company could reignite the debate over sale of Ashanti Gold to AngloGold. Cutifani said that the price of gold will likely trade above \$1,000 an ounce by the end of the year on strong market fundamentals and that now is a great time to buy back its money-losing gold hedges. AngloGold, Ashanti posted a second-quarter loss and would be open to considering any value-accretive acquisitions, Cutifani said. Cutifani, who took the helm of AngloGold in October 2007 after Bobby Godsell retired, said a lack of cash and capital among some miners could pressure near-term gold production. "I still think we have an industry that's under stress. We have seen declining production in the last six years. We will probably see production decline in the next three to five years continuing because there hasn't been enough investment," Cutifani said. AngloGold expects its gold output in the third quarter to tick up to 1.27 million ounces from 1.25 million ounces in the second quarter. It expects full-year production of between 4.9 and 5.1 million ounces. Looking forward, Cutifani said the price of gold had an "absolutely" good chance to trade above \$1,000 an ounce at year end, and the bullish outlook explained why AngloGold decided to buy back its hedge book. On the other hand,

Cutifani said that AngloGold shares were "terribly undervalued" and trading at a significant discount to the rest of market. Cutifani also said the company probably would hold its current dividend policy for the remainder of the year, and will look at its cash flow and reset its dividend distribution if needed. "We are committed to paying dividends," he said. On Thursday, AngloGold surprised the market with an interim dividend of 6.7 cents (50 South African cents) per share. Hedge buyback, rights issued. AngloGold, formed in 2004 after AngloGold Ltd merged with Ashanti Goldfields, posted a worse-than-expected loss for the second quarter after trimming forward sales. AngloGold has one of the biggest hedge books among its peers globally. Steadily rising bullion has turned gold producers away from hedging in favor of direct exposure to spot prices. AngloGold said it expected to cut its hedge book a further 0.8 million ounces to 6.1 million ounces by December. "I think it's a great time (to buy back hedges). The fundamentals are very strong for gold and there is a strong possibility gold will break through the \$1,000 mark," Cutifani said. In addition, AngloGold in mid-July raised \$1.7 billion through a rights issue to help cut its forward sales. Cutifani said the company will use \$1.2 billion from the rights issue to replace cash flow related to forward contracts settlement; \$300 million to pay back short-term debts; and the remaining \$200 million for new projects.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Mozambique: Capitalise On Favourable Scenario for Coal: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 8 August 2008.**

To date, the Mozambican authorities have issued 125 licences for coal exploration, mostly in the western province of Tete (96 licences) and the northernmost province of Niassa (18), announced the Minister of Mineral Resources, Esperanca Bias on Friday. Speaking at a meeting with the holders of coal licences in Maputo, Bias added that "75 of these licences were issued more than three years ago, which means that some of the companies are, or should be, in the phase of pre-viability or viability studies for their projects". The international market, she said, "is recording a noteworthy increase in demand for minerals, and particularly for coal, which is why we should join our efforts in order to overcome urgently the current constraints, and capitalise on the favourable scenario of coal demand". Bias added that the government hoped to see value added to Mozambican coal inside the country, rather than simply exporting it all. She urged companies to design projects that would maximise the use of coal within Mozambique - these could include, for example, "the extraction of methane and its use, as well as gasification and the production of diesel from coal". There are known to be enormous reserves of high quality coking coal in Tete province - but currently only one small mine is in operation. This is Chipanga XI, a mine once run by the now defunct state-owned coal company, Carbomoc. The current leaseholder is the private company Minas de Moatize, which has employed 200 former Carbomoc workers. This mine has a production plan of just 5,000 tonnes of coal a month - and its representative told the meeting that current production was around 4,500 tonnes a month. 30 per cent of this is used by the Mozambican sugar and tobacco industries, and the rest is exported to Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Such small amounts can be moved by road - but that is not an option for the huge projects that are on the drawing

board. Most advanced is the Brazilian mining giant, the Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD), the only company that has moved from an exploration licence to a mining concession. Its concession area in Moatize district has known reserves of at least 2.4 billion tonnes. The Australian company Riversdale says that the area covered by its licence at Benga, just 10 kilometres from Moatize town, has inferred reserves of 1.9 billion tonnes. Changara Investments, a subsidiary of the London-based CAMEC (Central African Mining and Exploration Company) says that it has inferred reserves of over 900 million tonnes in one licensed area west of the Zambezi. All these companies face the same problem - how to move coal for export to the coast. The Sena railway line, from Moatize to the port of Beira, was comprehensively sabotaged by the apartheid-backed Renamo rebels during the war of destabilisation. Reconstruction of the line will not be complete until mid-2009. Even then it will only have the capacity to move eight million tonnes of coal a year. Upgrading the line could bring the capacity to 12 million tonnes by 2011. But the mining companies are thinking in terms of much greater volumes - on one estimate, when the CVRD, Riversdale and CAMEC projects are at full production, they could be exporting 40 million tonnes of coal a year. So other transport options are being considered. Riversdale is looking seriously at using barges to take the coal down the Zambezi, and points out that coal barges are frequently used in the United States and by Latin American coal producers. Changara Investments had floated the idea of a new railway line west of the Zambezi, dedicated exclusively to coal, which would head south wards, and connect with the Beira-Zimbabwe railway in Manica province. West of the Zambezi some coal could be moved by truck. East of the Zambezi this is not possible on any significant scale. For in order to reach Beira, the trucks would have to cross the Zambezi using the Samora Machel bridge in Tete city, and the bridge simply will not take heavy coal trucks. Another possibility would be to use the northern Mozambican port of Nacala. This is regarded as the best deep water port on the east African coast which, unlike Beira, does not need to be dredged. It is grossly underused at the moment, and so has plenty of spare capacity. But it is a very long way from Tete. Using Nacala would involve heavy capital expenditure in building a new railway from Moatize, across southern Malawi, to link up with the Malawi-Nacala line. Adelino Mequita, a spokesperson for the publicly owned rail and port company, CFM, said CFM believed the Sena line was "the natural route" for Tete coal, but stressed that the company is open to looking at all other transport possibilities. He said CFM is committed to building a new coal terminal at Beira. The existing terminal is hopelessly inadequate, with a capacity of only a million tonnes a year. The new terminal, he added, would be run by a special purpose company, in which the mining operators would hold shares. He assured the meeting that the Sena line would be ready to carry coal trains all the way from Moatize to Beira by September 2009. Mesquita announced that the reconstruction of the Dona Ana rail bridge over the Zambezi (once the longest rail bridge in Africa), which Renamo had sabotaged in 1986, was now complete except for the repainting. Mesquita warned that no company could expect special treatment from CFM. It would not sign an exclusive deal with any of the coal companies, nor would there be any "reserved slots". The coal would instead be carried on a simple "first come, first served" basis. The Sena line is currently operated by the Beira Railroad Company (CCFB), a consortium between Rites and Ircon International of India (with 51 per cent of the shares), and CFM (with 49 per cent). CCFB is currently engaged in tough

negotiations with CVRD over the tariffs for moving the coal wagons. So far there is no sign of an agreement. Despite the logistical difficulties, the companies are optimistic, Riversdale describes the Zambezi Valley in Tete as "one of the largest undeveloped coking coal regions in the world", and mines here could meet "the long term demand for coking coal and for high quality thermal coal".

- **Southern Africa: Reliable Infrastructure Need to Boost SADC Region: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 8 August 2008.**

A reliable infrastructure network is needed to further promote economic development and integration in the South African Development Community (SADC) region. This emerged at the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)/Southern African Development Community (SADC) Infrastructure Projects conference held in Johannesburg on Friday. Delivering the keynote address on Transport Minister Jeff Radebe emphasised the need for market integration to be premised on the availability of efficient border infrastructure and services to allow for the free movement of persons, goods and services. Developing networking infrastructure and its human resources is a must for the smooth movement of goods and services to enhance the region's competitiveness in the entire Africa and the world. "This will ensure the elimination of all the inconveniences brought about by inefficient infrastructure and services as our border posts will thus pave the way for a more economically-productive region," the minister told the delegates. For this to happen, the minister said the southern region governments must put in place various infrastructure projects pertaining to the networking industries, transport, energy and ICT as well as basic infrastructure such as water, sanitation and shelter. Hosted by the NEPAD Business Foundation, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Trade and Industry, in partnership with the NEPAD and SADC Secretariats, the conference was aimed at analysing regional integration. According to Thembekile Simelane, Marketing and Project Coordinator at the NEPAD Business Foundation, the conference forms part of a consultative process and will explore mechanisms to promote investment in cross-border infrastructure and enhance trade opportunities. "The conference provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders to find out what prospects are available for infrastructure projects in Africa and which funding institution best suits a project." Under the theme "Addressing the significance of regional integration", the conference looked at some of the infrastructure developments to link some of the SADC countries. These developments include the Maputo Development Corridor and the North-South and Central Development corridors. Providing the delegates with some of the information and progress of on the Maputo Development Corridor which Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Maputo province with the Mozambican harbour, Programme Coordinator, Dave Perkins said the project was progressing well. "The corridor which is a true transportation corridor comprising road, rail, border posts, port and terminal facilities is well in place and once completed it will boost trade investments between the two countries," said Mr Perkins. He said the primary focus of the pact will be on creating institutions and maximising investments opportunities. Other subjects under discussion included the prioritisation of infrastructure projects for immediate action, and defining modalities for the establishment of effective and action-oriented Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

- **Namibia: Diamond Industry Faces Diminished Reserves: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 7 August 2008.**

The decline in land-based diamond mining has affected the quality of rough diamonds supplied to site holders in the country. Chief Executive Officer of the Namibia Diamond Trading Company (NDTC) Shihaleni Ndjaba yesterday told [New Era](#) that the reduction in land-based production remains a worry to NDTC as a supplier of diamonds to cutting and polishing companies who have in the past few months bemoaned the poor composition of stones in terms of size. Fears are that any failure by NDTC to supply the desired size of diamonds to site holders might eventually lead to a forced reduction in cutting and polishing, and subsequently in the number of workers by site holders. For a while, government has encouraged value addition to the country's natural resource products, including the cutting and polishing of diamonds before exports. Ndjaba told [New Era](#) that sometimes it gets lesser products than planned, a confirmation of diminishing diamond reserves. "We can no longer guarantee big stones because mines are giving more of small stones," Ndjaba added. Hundred years after the first discovery of a diamond in Namibia, Managing Director of Namdeb Inge Zaamwani-Kamwi confirms that the primary onshore deposits are depleted. Currently, the industry is mining remnants at high cost and under extreme conditions. "We need to move over 100 tonnes for every little carat diamond. With increased cost of fuel and electricity mining is a very capital intensive business," she said. Under the circumstances, Zaamwani-Kamwi said Namdeb would continue investing heavily in exploration to discover new mineral deposits. NDTC supplies rough diamonds to 11 site holders or companies in localised cutting and polishing factories. NDTC sales represent 10 percent of the total Namdeb diamond production per year to local cutting and polishing factories. The NDTC was formed at the beginning of last year and is owned by De Beers-owned Diamond Trading Company (DTC) International, and the Namibian Government in a 50/50 venture. It is the sole agent selling Namdeb diamonds. Before its establishment, DTC International had an exclusive agreement to sell Namdeb diamonds. It is envisaged that a total sale of N\$2.1 billion worth of diamonds will be made inside Namibia, which constitutes five percent of the Gross National Product of the country. Ndjaba said by June this year, NDTC had sold N\$1.2 billion worth of diamonds to the Namibian industry. He added that the industry has employed 1 166 people representing 38 percent increase in employment from October last year. However, labour unrest at one of the site holders, namely Lev Leviev Diamonds (LLD), Namibia has reduced the level of employment to 1 039 (11 percent). Ndjaba bemoaned lack of skills in the industry, urging the relevant ministry to stress the need for companies to train workers in what he calls a sensitive industry. NDTC says it has the capacity to manage any expansions in terms of the received product. Apart from the 10 percent it sources from Namdeb, the company also is supplied with aggregate diamonds from NDTC International based in London. These are diamonds that come from other countries such as South Africa and Botswana. Meanwhile, Minister of Mines and Energy Erkki Nghimtina, together with his deputy Bernard Esau, yesterday undertook a familiarisation tour at NDTC.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: EAC's 5 Billion US Dollars Lake Basin Plan: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 8 August 2008.**

A multi-million dollar plan to transform Lake Victoria basin into a special economic development and growth zone has been unveiled. The \$5 billion (Sh5.5 trillion) plan is also part of a broader programme aimed at accelerating the East African region into a middle-income economy in the immediate to medium term. Unveiling the plan, East African Community secretary general Juma Mwapachu said Lake Victoria has great potential to spur economic growth in the region. The 69,000 square kilometre water body is the second largest fresh water body in the world after Lake Superior in Canada and has a gross economic potential of \$5 billion. He said the lake basin development master plan's feasibility study would be launched immediately and implemented on a priority basis. "The master plan would involve, at its core, the expedited implementation of regional projects and programmes under the Lake Victoria Basin Commission in, among others, the roads, lake transport, tourism, fisheries and agricultural sectors," he added. According to him, the centre-piece of the Lake Victoria development master plan would be the implementation of the ongoing ring road around the lake with feeders leading to the shores of the water body. The road network would link with tourist facilities, hotels, lodges, cruise ships as well as strategic industries that would involve private/public sector participation by local, regional and international investors. The Lake Victoria development master plan was launched in Mombasa, Kenya, on Wednesday during his discussions with the deputy commander of the Kenya Navy, Brigadier Ngewa Mukala, at the Kenya Navy headquarters. Mr Mwapachu is currently visiting defence institutions and establishments in Kenya. His delegation comprises of members of the EAC Defence Liaison Unit from the five Community partner states of Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi and Rwanda. The SG was briefed on the operations of the Kenya Navy as well as the strategic significance of the EA Indian Ocean coastline and the important initiatives Kenya is undertaking within the EAC, African Union and global frameworks to safeguard the regional security and maritime interests. Brigadier Mukala said with the situations of instability in Somalia and Yemen, anti-piracy and counter-terrorism operations had assumed large proportions in the East African and Horn of Africa coastline. Maritime security services had come to the fore with the realisation that disturbances and interference with sea routes gravely impacted the world trade. Brigadier Mukala said the East African coastline, in particular the port of Mombasa, had assumed great strategic significance. The stabilisation of Somalia needed to be undertaken as a regional effort in the EAC context, he said, adding that with the current global food and fuel prices crisis, the resources of the sea had become critical. The resources of the East African maritime zones remained largely untapped by the EA countries. There was "low maritime domain awareness" in terms of the fisheries, oil and gas resources potential of the EA maritime area under the provisions of the UN Law of the Sea. For instance, the Brigadier said, the best tuna fish resources were found in the Indian Ocean with Kenya having a potential of 150,000 tonnes per year, translating into Kenya Sh30 billion per year but which were currently being exploited virtually exclusively by foreign interests. "The EAC boss observed that in the event Kenyan territorial waters were destabilised, the rest of the EAC region would be affected. He pointed out that EAC was in the process of re-establishing a strong East African Marine and Fisheries Organisation,

such as the one that existed under the former EAC (1967-1977). The new body would involve research and development to tap maritime and fisheries resources of EA water bodies - both offshore and inland - for the benefit of the people of the region.

- **Uganda: Benefits From the OIC: New Vision (Kampala):**
INTERVIEW: 5 August 2008.

THE Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UNCCI) recently hosted the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). James Odomel talked to the UNCCI president, Olive Kigongo.

QUESTION: What have Ugandans achieved from hosting OIC?

ANSWER: A lot has been achieved. The forum ran for three days and from day one, there was a lot of networking. Information was exchanged and many presentations were made by Ugandan institutions like the Uganda Investment Authority and the Capital Markets Authority. The foreign participants got interested particularly in coffee. This was after the keynote address by the President who is an advocate of value-addition to our produce.

Which delegations showed interest?

Delegations from Pakistan, Oman and Saudi Arabia expressed interest in coffee, mining and real estate. Talks are going on between Bugisu Coffee Growers Association and Star Coffee on one hand and the Islamic Development Bank on the other hand for assistance in promoting and processing of coffee. Also, a memorandum of understanding was signed between a company in Bangladesh and a Ugandan company. Also, a Pakistan engineering company called Mirza Associates Engineering Services (PVT) is interested in the construction sector. Some people don't advertise their deals and there are more deliberations taking place. As a follow up to the OIC, Honourable Isaac Musumba has led a delegation of Busoga business people to Jeddah for talks with the Islamic Development Bank for possible financing. The benefits are enormous in terms of joint ventures and financing.

Are there any joint ventures in banking?

The Islamic Development Banking has teamed up with the National Bank of Commerce. They are in the process of opening up the Islamic bank here. It is complicated so they have to do a lot of training, studies and sensitisation. The bank will be opened in two to three months. The deal has already been signed. There is also ICD, which is the finance arm of the Islamic Development Bank. They participated in the forum and held a presentation. They are coming here to meet central bank officials to see how they can set up an institution. ICD normally caters for small and medium enterprises, so we are excited about that.

Tell us about the Kuwait fund to the OIC low developed countries?

In April, I attended the Islamic Economic Forum in Kuwait. During the presentations, one of the things that was mentioned was the Hunger Fund, which is supposed to be accessed by the OIC members especially low developed countries like Uganda. We can access some of this money to promote agriculture, which is more essential, not only for our consumption but also for export. I request the Government to consider it carefully because we have to work with them to access this money.

What does it take to access this money?

It can be accessed through the Government. I request the Government to do it jointly with the private sector since we are stakeholders.

Why has the Government taken long to request for the money?

It is not too long. It was announced in April so it is about three months ago. We are going to access it. This will make us a garden of the Gulf countries since our backbone is agriculture.

Were there some shortcomings during the OIC?

Yes, there were many problems. We received the funds two days to the opening. That was late. Also, the campaign took too long for people to understand. It was only towards the real function that people responded. We were overwhelmed by the numbers. It turned out to be colourful.

- **Uganda: Oil Line to Be Built Sept: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 6 August 2008.**

CONSTRUCTION of the 350km Kenya-Uganda oil pipeline from Eldoret to Kampala will start next month, sources have said. Libyan-based Tamoil is to lay the pipeline in 12 months at a cost of \$120m (about sh195b). The pipeline is expected to ensure constant supply of fuel to landlocked countries and will have a terminal at the Jinja oil storage depot. The depot will supply the eastern region. "Almost all documentations are in final stages. The Government is surveying the land for right of way," the source said. The Government has two options, either to purchase the 25km strip of reserve where the pipeline will pass or exercise its right to use the land (easement). "This is because the 10-inch diameter pipeline is going to be laid 10m down so the top soil can still be used to grow crops without hampering the progress of the pipeline." "The fuel is not going to move to Kampala by gravity but by pumping the oil in any direction. The direction of the pumps can be changed at will," the source explained.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **East Africa: Economic Pragmatism Needed to Spur EAC Integration – Expert: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 2 August 2008.**

A leading British expert on regional economic integration, Lord Lea of Crondall, has called on EAC leaders to adopt a more pragmatic approach, not necessarily tied to politics, in order to achieve economic benefits for the region. Lord Lea, who was this week paying a courtesy call on Juma Mwapachu the Secretary General of the East African Community in Arusha, observed that in spite of its structure of strong political authority and emphasis on sovereignty of partner states, the EAC was not short of things that could be done outside purely political considerations. He said that the EAC could identify and focus on practical issues, among them immigration, free movement of persons, the environment, infrastructure, health, education and social security, without getting distracted or bogged down with lengthy conceptualisation and indulgence in metaphysics over intricate political and sovereignty issues. He also added that African regional economic communities needed to go for "opt outs" on some of the sticking issues, and concentrate on the areas of "intermediate comfort" where movement would be demonstrated without compromising the unity of the regional economic blocs. Lea added that there was need for resolute action to get things done and demonstrate concrete benefits and achievements of integration while using the success stories to get people more interested and involved in the regional integration process. President Paul Kagame has on several occasions called on EAC members to reform business procedures so that there's increased speed in the delivery of basic services especially along commercial terminal routes in the region. Kagame has stated that with faster service delivery along border points in the region, there would be faster development. Lea's remarks come only days after a lobby group of small scale farmers in East Africa called on the EAC secretariat in Arusha appealing to the Secretary General that they were being kept out of the EAC integration process. They also lamented that the EAC currently belonged to political leaders with no practical feature with which the citizens of the EAC could identify with. The British expert advised that the EAC needed to learn from the evolution and development of the EU which is political but whose engine is propelled by a pragmatic focus on the economic necessity. The EU, he said, was launched more with economic expression than with political fanfare. It was a trade-off between political abstraction and the push to get things done, particularly on the economic front. While responding to Lea's remarks, Mwapachu said the current EAC was learning from the mistakes of its predecessors. The EAC which started in 1967 collapsed in 1977 after disagreements between EAC leaders at that time. Mwapachu said the EAC this time was proceeding "with caution, on a step-by-step basis, with consensus established at every stage of the integration." He noted that the National Consultative Process of Fast Tracking the East African Federation carried out in 2007 was found to be acceptable to the people of the EAC countries. He continued that the EAC was currently committed to re-engaging the East African people about the whole question of political federation through deeper sensitisation on the benefits of integration. The EAC budget presented to the East African Legislative Assembly reserved over US\$600,000 for its re-branding campaign throughout the region.

- **Gabon: Gabon Bank Leak Sparks Row with Anti-graft Groups: [Infos Plus Gabon](#) (Libreville): 6 August 2008.**

The leaking of personal bank records of Gabon's chief prosecutor this week has sparked a new row with anti-graft groups, months after the oil-rich African country suspended 20 organisations for meddling in politics.

After the leak last weekend, the prosecutor visited television stations that had discussed the contents of his accounts in an attempt to find out who was behind the publication of his bank details.

But the records were soon published in the local press and on the internet, and transparency campaigners say they show transfers worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Local rights activists were summoned by the police for questioning in what international transparency watchdogs say is the latest in a pattern of state harassment and intimidation of anti-corruption campaigners. Gabon became one of Africa's first oil exporters in the 1960s and its population of 1.5 million has, in theory, one of the highest per capita incomes on the continent. But according to the United Nations, one third of the population still lives in poverty. The government's tolerance of criticism of the way it spends the state's resources ran out earlier this year when it suspended 20 non-governmental organisations for interfering in politics. The suspension was lifted after a week. "This incident is the latest in a series of recent attempts by the government of Gabon to restrict the work of transparency activists," Publish What You Pay (PWYP), an international coalition calling for transparency in the oil, gas and mining industries, said in a statement on Thursday. Neither Chief Prosecutor Bosco Alaba Fall nor the police have commented publicly.

SUMMONED

Marc Ona, one of the campaigners in Gabon, said that no formal charges had been made but he and two others who issued a statement calling for an investigation into Fall's accounts had been accused by the police of insulting a public official. "He (Fall) must resign and explain the movements of money through his account," Ona told Reuters after he was questioned. Two other transparency campaigners had also been summoned by the police, he added. Ona heads the local branch of PWYP, which was one of the groups suspended in January after they criticised the state over the size of the government, environmental damage and the lack of funds for roads, schools and hospitals. "We are very worried about the safety and well-being of Marc Ona and his colleagues in Gabon," said Radhika Sarin, PWYP's international coordinator. "The international community must send a strong message to the government of Gabon that this campaign of intimidation and harassment against civil society activists is simply unacceptable," Sarin said. With Gabon's oil reserves dwindling, a new \$3 billion iron ore mining deal with China is seen as increasingly important. But environmentalists have raised questions over the impact of the project on Gabon's part of the Congo Basin, the second largest forest in the world.

- **Cameroon: Cocoa/Coffee Production - FODECC Pumps in CFA 5.6 billion: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): 6 August 2008.**

The Cocoa and Coffee Development Fund yesterday broke the long silence after its creation in 2006 by bringing in an oxygen balloon support to the cocoa and coffee sector. An agreement worth CFA 5.6 billion was signed to that effect between the fund, represented by its Management Committee president, Pierre Tsimi Enouga and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, represented by the Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Jean Nkuete. The agreement which is the first of its kind sets the pace for the effective takeoff of the activities of the fund. "This first agreement will create a base for a veritable revamping of cocoa and coffee production in Cameroon", Pierre Tsimi Enouga said during the signing ceremony. The financial assistance will help support the acquisition and distribution of in-puts, notably high yielding seeds to farmers for the next three years. "Our hopes lie on the transparent and rigorous management of the money we have pumped in", Tsimi said, stating inter alia that the content of the agreement is quite assuring. "The committee will, on its part, ensure the smooth functioning of the fund and a better follow up of the engagement taken in this agreement", he said. Created in March, 2006 by Presidential Decree, the Cocoa and Coffee Development Fund, has not been able to take off as quickly as expected for obvious reasons. As explained by the president of the Management Committee, the late start is blamed on the delay in the extraction of export charges for the fund. That notwithstanding, the management did not sit hands crossed. So far, several actions have been taken to keep the organisation afloat. These include: measures to secure the funds from export charges, voting of the fund's budget for 2008 and 2008, putting in place internal management procedures and an appropriate working framework for receiving and handling projects and programmes, putting in place of a global fund of CFA 3.5 billion for the 2008 projects and building up a CFA two billion-forecast fund for cocoa and coffee revamping. In his speech at the signing yesterday, the Vice Prime Minister underscored the importance of the assistance which he said is coming in at the time government has been called upon to mobilise all the resources to redress the economy and where the first fallouts of the economic resumption are already being confirmed. Jean Nkuete expressed the wish to see FODECC work in good collaboration with other institutions and actors. The money will enable MINADER to increase its seed production and distribution capacity. The financial assistance, he said, will equally help in building the capacity of actors on the field.

- **Rwanda: Coffee Can Transform Rwandan Economy – Clinton: [The New Times \(Kigali\)](#): 3 August 2008.**

Former US President Bill Clinton has said that coffee can transform the economy. He said this Friday evening while meeting a group of Rwandan coffee growers who, through the Clinton Hunter Development Initiative (CHDI), had their coffee branded and marketed in Europe and other parts of the world. CHDI is an initiative that was jointly founded by Clinton and Scottish billionaire philanthropist Tom Hunter. "Rwandan farmers grow great coffee and deserve all the credit if they control their own production cycle here then they can fundamentally change the economic prospects of this country," Clinton explained that the initiative strives to ensure that farmers get fair prices for their coffee. "Rwandan coffee is very highly regarded by professional coffee tasters and judges but typically farmers just sell their coffee, they could fetch much profit if the coffee was roasted and

processed here," the former US leader said at a function that took place at Kigali Serena Hotel. The initiative recently branded Rwandan coffee 'Rwanda Farmers' and has spread to at least 1,000 stores across the United Kingdom. It has been reported that former South African leader Nelson Mandela drunk this coffee at his 90th birthday celebrations in London last month. "The hope is that we would be able to get donors for more farmers and actually do the roasting and the processing operation; then profits would be greater and spread to more farmers and find more retail outlets like US, Africa and the Middle East and other high consumption countries," Clinton said. According to Costazia Nyirandekwe, one of the farmers who met Clinton, branding their coffee has helped them overcome frustrations of middlemen who set their own prices. Rwanda is hosting the Cup of Excellence competition, the world's biggest coffee quality competition, which is scheduled for August 29. According to Alex Kanyankole, the director general of the coffee marketing board, OCIR CAFÉ, the initiative is timely because the competition will further expose the country's high quality coffee. "Rwanda is graded among the best quality coffee producers and we are going to use the cup of excellence competition as a platform to expose our product on the international market," Kanyankole said in an interview briefly before Clinton's meeting with the farmers. said that during the competition which will attract international coffee tasters from different continents, 107 cups from different farmers who have gone through the preliminary phase will be tasted. They will be first tasted by national jurors during the week beginning August 20. As per the arrangement, the best cuppers will be awarded with the Cup of Excellence award which will assist them marketing their coffee online. "The gains from having this competition here are enormous because they will spill to the Rwandan coffee farmer which in turn will have a significant impact on the country's balance of trade and payment," Kanyankole said. The Cup of Excellence competition took place for the first time in Bolivia in 1999 and has since then been held annually. Rwanda will be the first African state to host the competition.

56. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Wasu Expresses Worry Over State of Judiciary: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 9 August 2008.**

African students under the auspices of the West Africa Students Union (WASU), have expressed worry over the weakening profile of the judiciary in Nigeria, calling on the president of the Appeal Court, Justice Mustapha Abdullahi to intervene to save the image of the noble profession from collapse.

While noting the importance of Nigeria in the ECOWAS sub-region, WASU said if Nigeria failed to provide the needed leadership role, especially in the areas of credible election and transparent judicial system, the region would be faced with a lot of problems. Daniel Onjeh, president of WASU, who was speaking against the backdrop of recent rulings by the Appeal Court judges on the governorship elections in the country which tended to favour the candidates of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), said

the Appeal Court divisions of Abuja, Kaduna, Enugu and Plateau States called for special appraisal. Onjeh pointed out that there was no gainsaying the fact that unpopular rulings have gradually become a recurring decimal at the Nigerian Appeal Court as evident most recently in the Jos Appeal Court, noting that, "most failed states of Africa today can be attributed solely to electoral politics and their attendant crises." Lamenting the rulings of some Appeal Court judges, especially that of Justice Bukachuwa, the body said that it was apprehensive the same judge may be assigned to preside in the cases of Com. Adams Oshiomhole and Olusegun Mimiko coming up in the Appeal Court, Benin, Edo State. Speaking further, Onjeh, who hails from Benue State, said that similar ploy being hatched to dislodge the only non-PDP member representing the Otukpo/Ohimini federal constituency in the House of Representatives, Hon. Nelson Alapa should not be allowed as it may cause bad blood in the state. He alleged that an aide to the Senate president, one Hon. Agbo Ogah, was bent on scuttling the victory of Hon. Alapa, and has dragged him to the Court of Appeal sitting in Jos. According to him, since the outcome of the Otukpo and Ohimini local government areas elections were never in contention by both Alhaji Usman Abubakar of ANPP and David Mark of PDP, and the federal constituency elections took place concurrently with the senatorial elections where Hon. Alapa, though from the same LGA as Sen. Mark but in ANPP and Hon. Agbo Ogah of PDP, it is only natural that the results should tally. "But in spite of this logical sequence, we are alarmed by the rumours making the rounds that the chief of staff to the president of Senate is bent on seizing the opportunity of being in the corridors of power to influence the pending Appeal Court judgement in Jos." We call on the president of the Court of Appeal, Justice Mustapha Abdullahi to note the bad eggs that are gradually dragging the integrity of the judiciary to a state of disrepute.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Hints of a Power Sharing Deal: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 7 August 2008.**

Negotiations for a power sharing deal between President Robert Mugabe's government and Zimbabwe's main opposition parties have nearly been concluded, people involved in the talks told IRIN. An agreement is expected to be signed in the next few days between both factions of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the ruling ZANU-PF party, which has been in power since independence from Britain in 1980. The parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 21 July, which paved the way for talks and committed the negotiators to a news blackout. However, speaking on condition of anonymity, a negotiator said: "We are just dotting the i's and crossing the t's. We should be forming a government in which we will be sharing power within the next few days." Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the main MDC faction, is expected to return to Zimbabwe from South Africa, where the talks were conducted, on 8 August; Thabo Mbeki, appointed as mediator by the Southern African Development Community, is expected to arrive in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, the following day for the signing ceremony. If the power-sharing parameters were concluded in time, the agreement could be signed on 8 August. According to the negotiator, in terms of the deal Mugabe would be retained as executive president, while Tsvangirai would occupy the post of executive prime minister. Arthur Mutambara, leader of the MDC break-away faction, was expected

to be given an influential ministerial post."We have agreed to adopt a system which is almost similar to the French model, in which both the president and the prime minister wield a lot of power," the negotiator said. The power-sharing deal was expected to last for five years, after which internationally supervised elections would be held. He said despite public posturing and claims that there were serious differences on the formation of a power-sharing government, the opposite was true. "Generally, we have been agreed on many issues, and that is why we have almost completed the talks in a short time. Everybody involved in the talks acknowledges that the people have suffered for too long as a result of the political and economic hardships caused by the political stalemate."

Amnesty for all

Mugabe had demanded that all people implicated in politically motivated crimes, himself included, be exempted from any trials, although the MDC believed there should be some form of accountability, a senior ZANU-PF official told IRIN. Mugabe and his government have been implicated in Operation Gukurahundi (The rain that washes away the chaff before the spring rain) in 1983 - also known as the Matabeleland Massacres - when the North Korean-trained 5th Brigade was the vanguard unit in a campaign against alleged dissidents. At least 20,000 people were killed in the operation. Operation Murambatsvina in 2005 - also known as Operation Restore Order, and officially described as a slum clearance programme - left more than 700,000 people homeless after houses and shacks were bulldozed. United Nations Special Envoy Anna Tibaijuka, after visiting Zimbabwe, said the operation had breached both national and international human rights law. The talks have gained so much momentum that it would almost be impossible to abort them. All parties have increased the number of negotiators and technical committees, while support staff have been flown in [to South Africa] to prepare for the signing ceremony expected by Saturday. In 2008, ZANU-PF lost its majority in parliament for the first time since independence and Mugabe came off second best in the first round of presidential voting. The military, war veterans and ZANU-PF militia were implicated in the deaths of scores of MDC supporters in the period before the run-off ballot, which led to Tsvangirai withdrawing his candidacy in protest. "The talks have gained so much momentum that it would almost be impossible to abort them," the ZANU-PF official said. "All parties have increased the number of negotiators and technical committees, while support staff have been flown in [to South Africa] to prepare for the signing ceremony expected by Saturday. As ZANU-PF we have started inviting guests who should attend the ceremony where the power-sharing deal will be signed." The negotiator said two key security ministries, defence and intelligence, were deemed "non-negotiable" by security chiefs, who are believed to have influenced Mugabe to cling to power after he lost the first round of voting. "The MDC responded by saying home affairs, which controls the police and justice, were 'non-negotiable', as they wanted to safeguard themselves from possible unfair treatment before the justice delivery system," the negotiator said. "That is why very few people are surprised by reports that the homicide section of the country's largest police station in Harare was bombed over the weekend." No one has claimed responsibility for the bombing, but the blast destroyed the records of investigations into the recent political violence. ZANU-PF has offered the opposition the ministries of finance and trade; the opposition declined the offer but were interested in the local

government and foreign affairs portfolios."The MDC felt ZANU-PF needed to clean up the mess that it had created by running down the economy. Local government was preferable, as the MDC now controls most of the local authorities and it would give them influence to consolidate its presence countrywide."Under ZANU-PF rule the economy has gone into meltdown, with the official annual inflation rate estimated at 2.2 million percent - although independent economists believe it could reach 50 million percent by the end of August - and unemployment is estimated at more than 80 percent, with shortages of food, electricity, water and fuel commonplace.

Civil society unhappy

However, civic society organisations warned that the power-sharing deal could be rejected by the electorate, as a transitional authority was preferred, with a shorter timeframe before elections would be held. The Zimbabwe Human Rights Association said in a statement: "We humbly suggest that the outcome of the ongoing talks should lead to the setting up of a transitional authority, headed by nonpartisan technocrats mandated to come up with a people-driven constitution, as well as create an environment conducive to the holding of truly free and fair elections within a period of not more than two years." McDonald Lewanika, the spokesperson for Crisis in Zimbabwe, a coalition of 350 civic organisations, said 'quick fixes' were not a solution to Zimbabwe's crisis. "We reiterate our calls for the establishment of a transitional authority with a specific mandate of taking Zimbabwe to a lasting democracy, as opposed to a power-sharing Government of National Unity (GNU)," he said. A Government of National Unity is a stopgap measure which gives the ruling ZANU-PF party breathing space before reverting back to its war path on the opposition supporters. "A GNU is a stopgap measure which gives the ruling ZANU-PF party breathing space before reverting back to its war path on the opposition supporters and the broader pro-democracy movement," Lewanika commented. "The transitional authority must run the state for a period not exceeding 18 months before going into fresh elections, to be held under a new constitution and supervised by regional and international observers."

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: Cabinet Minister Resigns in Puntland: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 9 August 2008.**

A Cabinet minister in Somalia's Puntland regional autonomy announced her resignation on Friday, but declined to give an official reason. Asha Ghelle, the Women and Family Affairs Minister, resigned from the administration of President Mohamud "Adde" Muse after being in office since 2005. Inside sources tell Garowe Online that Ms. Ghelle's resignation came after a dispute with the Puntland leader. On July 29, President Muse issued a decree giving Ms. Ghelle "temporary, full authority" as the President's representative in Mudug region. In recent months, there have been targeted assassinations and bomb blasts in Galkayo, the capital of Mudug region. Security sources linked the Puntland leader's decree, which temporarily handed over his constitutional authority over Mudug to the Women and Family Affairs Minister, to President Muse's inability to

resolve growing insecurity in Galkayo. But Ms. Ghelle resigned after Muse interfered with her efforts to change senior officials in Mudug, including the region's treasurer and the mayor of Galkayo. Muse's intervention reportedly angered Ms. Ghelle, the only female member of the Puntland government, the sources added. A security committee recently established by traditional elders in Mudug has threatened to resign if the Puntland leadership fails to accept Ms. Ghelle's decisions. The Ministry of Women and Family Affairs owns a building in Garowe, the capital of Puntland, and regularly pays its employees, according to recent parliamentary hearings on the 2007 budget. Puntland lawmakers have accused the Ministry of Finance of misusing public funds and failing to pay government employees, a charge denied by Finance Minister Mohamed Gaagaab.

57. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **West Africa: Ecowas Defence Chiefs Meet On Security: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 6 August 2008.**

Minister of Defence, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, yesterday in Abuja, charged West African chiefs of defence staff to make the sub-region safe for trade and difficult for terrorists and human trafficking. The Minister gave the charge while declaring the ECOWAS Committee of Chiefs of Defence Staff open, at the ECOWAS secretariat in Abuja. He said even though threats have become more diffuse and trans-national crimes heightened, the ECOWAS sub-region should be made secured to enable member countries harvest the dividends of democracy. While congratulating the visionary initiative of the service chiefs, he said the quarterly meeting, which is the 22nd edition, will attest to the will and readiness of West African nations to collectively face the challenges of security in the sub-region. According to him, the 21st century is characterised by a number of strategic challenges which impinge on security not only at the global level, but also at sub-regional and national levels. "Threats have become more diffuse, technology has transformed the world into a global village with serious implications on our perceptions and the way to react to issues." Earlier in his address, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Andrew Owoye Azazi, said the outcome of the meeting will go a long way to advance and enhance sub-regional security.

- **Nigeria: 'Comprehensive Ceasefire Will End Niger Delta Crisis': [This Day](#) (Lagos): 7 August 2008.**

A comprehensive ceasefire by stakeholders and those engaged in armed struggle in the Niger-Delta, has been recommended as the first and most important step towards resolution of the crisis in the region. This was the highpoint of a communique at the end of a one day meeting by leaders of the region, in Sapele, Delta State, to find solution to the crisis. The meeting, which was convened by Senator David Dafinone, had eminent Nigerians, including Mr Gamaliel Onosode, rights activists and university don, Dr Festus Iyayi, and ex-NBA Chairman, Mr Sam Okpoko as speakers. The leaders said mineral oil

exploration and exploitation in the Niger-Delta are at the root of Nigeria's national malaise, including corruption, inept leadership and regional rivalry. In a 10-point communique, the leaders noted that years of injustice and insincerity perpetrated by various leaders and opportunists from within and outside the region, have been responsible for the armed struggle and intensified crisis in the Niger-Delta today. The Leaders, however, suggested a number of steps that ought to be taken to engender lasting peace needed for meaningful development in all ramifications, including a consensus among the Niger-Delta people to close ranks, irrespective of diversity. They called for amendment of Sections of the Land Use Act (1990), as well as the Petroleum Act of 1969, Section 308 of the 1999 Constitution.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: UN Envoy Told He 'Is Not Welcome in Zimbabwe': [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 8 August 2008.**

DESPITE negotiations on a power-sharing deal progressing well, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe has barred a United Nations (UN) envoy from visiting the country to assess the talks between Zanu (PF) and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The blocking of the visit this week by UN assistant secretary-general for political affairs Haile Menkerios is likely to heighten tensions between Harare and the world body. Menkerios, an experienced Eritrean diplomat, flew to SA on Tuesday to monitor the talks, UN spokeswoman Michele Montas said this week. He was recently appointed part of President Thabo Mbeki's three-man "reference group" on the talks which was set up as a condition for continued participation by MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai, who had accused Mbeki of not being an impartial mediator. Last night the MDC could not be reached for comment. Yesterday, Zimbabwe's permanent representative to the UN, Boniface Chidyausiku, confirmed that Menkerios was blocked from visiting Harare. "The talks have now reached a delicate stage and we don't want any interference. Why does he want to engage in a parallel process?" he said. Diplomatic sources said Menkerios -- who was due in Harare today -- was told by Zimbabwean authorities he was "not welcome" and there was no need for him to visit the country since the reference group worked with Mbeki, not Mugabe. He was told that even if he arrived there, no official would meet him and his visit would not be regarded as authorised. "Menkerios was to have meetings with Mugabe, government officials and opposition leaders. "But government told him he was not welcome because the mediator was in Pretoria," a senior diplomat said. UN spokesman Farahan Haq said yesterday Menkerios was in Pretoria and "arrangements are still being made for his visit" to Zimbabwe. UN representative in Harare Agostinho Zacarias is expected to travel to Pretoria today to meet Menkerios. The fallout from Harare's decision could give ammunition to the US and UK, which are keen to impose UN-backed sanctions on Mugabe and his cronies in response to disputed elections, political violence and killings. The two, together with the European Union, recently stepped up sanctions, although they failed at the UN when Russia and China vetoed a US draft resolution. The resolution, which called for an arms embargo and financial and travel restrictions on Mugabe and 13 officials, was backed by nine nations but foundered on the vetoes.

- **Zimbabwe: MDC Spells Out Terms for Deal at Talks: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 5 August 2008.**

Zimbabwe's opposition has broken silence on its demands at the ongoing power-sharing talks with President Robert Mugabe's ruling Zanu PF saying it will not accept anything short of executive powers for its leader. The two factions of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Zanu PF resumed negotiations on Sunday after a short break and indications are that the proposal to have the opposition leader, Mr Morgan Tsvangirai as prime minister is top on the agenda. The protagonists had made a commitment not to discuss the progress of the talks in public but the outbursts by senior MDC officials could signal serious disagreements on the way forward. Monday was the deadline to conclude the talks but both sides have indicated that more time would be needed to thrash out the stick points. "The MDC will not accept any deal that denies Tsvangirai executive powers," said Mr Sam Sipepa Nkomo, an MDC executive member. "The talks would rather collapse or not move forward unless Mugabe is offered a ceremonial post or forced to retire." We have said if Mugabe refuses to give in we will just say 'go ahead and govern.' Mr Tsvangirai's deputy, Mrs Thokozani Khuphe was also quoted by the international media expressing similar sentiments during an address to the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Observers say the issue of who would wield "real" power in the negotiated settlement was one of the contentious issues that led to the reported breakdown of the talks last week. Mr Mugabe last week accused Western countries of using "local puppets" to demand that he step down despite winning elections. The veteran leader has in the past labelled the MDC a creation of Western imperialists pushing for a regime change in Zimbabwe.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: Opposition Leader Calls for Arab Peacekeepers: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 8 August 2008.**

The leader of Somalia's divided Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, has called on Arab states to support the ongoing peace process in the war-torn Horn of Africa country. Sheikh Sharif and an ARS delegation spoke in Cairo, Egypt, on Thursday with officials from the Arab League and the Egyptian government about peace prospects in Somalia. "I urge Arab countries to send soldiers [peacekeepers] to Somalia and to take part in UN efforts to withdraw Ethiopian troops [from Somalia]," Sheikh Sharif said. Dahir Mohamud Ghelle, spokesman for the ARS wing led by Sheikh Sharif, told reporters that Arab leaders called on Somali opposition leaders to "unite as one." He indicated that there are ongoing efforts to bring together the ARS wings, one based in Eritrea and the other based in Djibouti. The group, established in Eritrea in 2007, divided into two rival camps after Sheikh Sharif signed a peace agreement with the Ethiopian-backed Somali interim government. The June peace agreement, signed in Djibouti, called for the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia after being replaced by a UN peacekeeping mission. Meanwhile, insurgents attacked a military installation in Mogadishu Friday afternoon, sparking a gunfight that included artillery barrages hitting surrounding neighborhoods. Separately, al Shabaab insurgents claimed responsibility

yesterday for six mortars that hit the airport and the presidential compound in Baidoa, 250km northwest of Mogadishu. One soldier confidentially told Garowe Online that government troops stationed at the Baidoa presidential compound launched shells toward the origin of the mortars. There were no casualty reports from either incident, but thousands of Somalis have been killed in a bloody insurgency that erupted after Ethiopian troops invaded Somalia in December 2006. Eritrea-based Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, who declared himself ARS chairman last month, has called on Somali rebels to continue the insurgency until Ethiopian troops leave the country.

- **Somalia: Mogadishu Protestors Support PM's Peace Efforts: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 8 August 2008.**

Hundreds of people gathered in the Somali capital Mogadishu on Friday to showcase their support for Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein, Radio Garowe reported. The demonstrators carried placards and chanted words supporting the Prime Minister, who is tangled in a political crisis with President Abdullahi Yusuf following Nur Adde's decision to dismiss Mohamed Dheere as Mogadishu's mayor. 'Let Peace Reign,' read one of the boards carried by the demonstrators. Mogadishu city officials spoke at the demonstration, including Deputy Mayor Abditafah Shaweye, who condemned a bomb blast that killed at least 20 people earlier this week. "I urge the people of Banadir [Mogadishu region] to support peace," Shaweye told the protestors. Meanwhile, the political rift between Prime Minister Nur Adde and President Yusuf has led to the halt of local government operations in Mogadishu, according to various sources. Mohamed Dheere continues to claim that he is the legitimate mayor of Mogadishu, after President Yusuf issued a directive backing Dheere's claim. Abdullahi Dahir Barre, the Attorney-General, issued a document calling the Prime Minister's decision to fire Mohamed Dheere as "illegal." But Prime Minister Nur Adde told a Mogadishu-based radio station that it is not the job of the Attorney-General to intervene in the "small dispute" with President Yusuf, but welcomed intervention from a "constitutional court." In June, Somalia's Prime Minister inked a peace agreement with an Islamist-led opposition alliance that called for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops, pending the arrival of UN peacekeepers. Two Cabinet ministers accused President Yusuf of opposing the Prime Minister's ongoing reconciliation efforts, while 10 Cabinet ministers resigned after complaining about the Prime Minister's work ethic.

- **Uganda: Government Forgives Top Kony Rebel: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 5 August 2008.**

THE former leader of the LRA peace team in Juba, Dr. James Alfred Obita, was yesterday granted amnesty after 22 years of fighting the Government. Obita said he returned because he believed in what the Juba peace agreement had achieved. "After the peace talks, I thought I would set an example. My returning is not a betrayal (of the LRA cause). It is time to come back home," he said. Together with five others, two men and three women of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), Obita received his amnesty certificate from the chairman of the Amnesty Commission, Justice Peter Onega, at the commission headquarters in Kampala. The former ADF fighters included Silver

Mumbere, Fatuma Nakajubi, Hanifa Nalukwago, Sularia Nakimera and Abdlazak Bassajja. They looked well nourished and smartly dressed. Obita raised the number of LRA rebels who have benefited from the amnesty to 12,841, since the establishment of the Amnesty Commission in 2000. A total of 22,921 fighters from various rebel groups have benefited from the amnesty. "My word to you is that you are welcome back to Uganda. Help us convince the others to come back home. The choice you have made is a correct one. Wherever you go, home will always be the best," Onega told the six former rebels. Onega, flanked by commissioners Ganyana Miiro, Thomas Kisembo and Grace Ociiti, explained that the amnesty exonerates them from any crimes they committed during the rebellion. "I have always said this country is ours and everybody has a right to live here. If we have any problems, we can solve them here. I can assure you that after the grant of amnesty, you will be free people. Feel free and you are welcome to start life afresh," he said. A beaming Obita, clad in a grey, striped suit, commended the commission and pledged to work with Onega to help woo LRA fighters out of the jungles and end the 22-year-long war that has ravaged the north and eastern parts of the country. "I will use my presence here to convince those still in the bush to return home. I will be the commission's ambassador," he said. He added that the commission should be strengthened and facilitated to look after returnees. The six received packages, including a mattress, jerrycan, two saucepans, a plastic cup and plate, a hoe, packets of beans and maize seeds and sh263,000 each. Obita said President Yoweri Museveni had directed the internal affairs permanent secretary to help him recover \$2m (about sh3.5b) that he lost when the Government froze his Uganda Commercial Bank account in 1987. Obita said he was convinced that the Juba agreement was good and achieved what the guns could not achieve. He blamed some Ugandans both at home and in the Diaspora for misleading the LRA leader, Joseph Kony, not to sign the final peace agreement. Obita said he wanted "to sort" himself out shortly before he could travel to his home district of Kitgum. Commenting on the LRA former commanders, who returned through the DR Congo and are reportedly still held by security agencies, Onega said after receiving amnesty, there was no justification for detaining the former rebels. "We were surprised when we received the information that some of these ex-rebels were being kept by security agencies. If you receive amnesty, that means you are free. If there are any other charges then they should be taken to court. Let this not confuse the public that when you get amnesty, you get detained."

Who is Obita?

- Obita has been with the LRA for the last 22 years.
- He worked for the external wing of the LRA, based in Nairobi and London.
- Was the LRA spokesperson in the mid-nineties and later secretary for external affairs and mobilisation.
- In 1988, he fell out with LRA chief Joseph Kony, who accused him of trying to make money out of the LRA cause.

- Was re-appointed as technical adviser to the LRA peace team in Juba in 2006.
- Obita replaced David Matsanga as chairman of the LRA team in Juba on April 10 2008.
- He applied for amnesty in July 2008.

- **Sudan: UN-African Union Officials Confer With Country On Darfur Peace Force: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 4 August 2008.**

The military chief of the United Nations-African Union (AU) mission in Darfur (UNAMID) today paid a condolence visit to members of the Nigerian company operating in Foro Baranga in West Darfur state following the loss of their commanding officer three weeks ago. Major Shehu Gada was shot dead on 16 July while on an administrative patrol. During today's visit, UNAMID Force Commander General Martin Luther Agwai said that it would be a disaster to allow what happened to Major Gada to happen again and reminded the UNAMID peacekeepers that personal security is paramount. "It is everybody's business and continues to be the collective responsibility of each one," he added. The General's visit follows other visits from the UNAMID's headquarters to express deep sorrow and sympathy to all those in the mission's Nigerian contingent. In a related development, a team from UNAMID's sector south headquarters conducted an air patrol to parts of South Darfur to investigate reports of aerial bombardment by the Sudanese Government. UNAMID said the visit was successful, and that a full report would be communicated soon. Last week the Security Council extended UNAMID's mandate by 12 months until the end of July 2009. Since taking over from an AU peace monitoring mission in the strife-torn region of western Sudan at the start of this year, UNAMID has deployed just under 10,000 uniformed personnel, far short of the approximately 26,000 troops and police officers expected when the force reaches full operations.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: IRDP, Stakeholders Discuss Means Against Negation of Tutsi Genocide: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 8 August 2008.**

Prof. Paul Rutayisire speaks at the workshop organised by IRDP at Hotel Novotel while IRDP Director Prof. Pierre Rwanyindo looks on.

The Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), an organization striving for peace through dialogue and consensus, Thursday held a two-day consultative meeting aimed at establishing measures to fight negation of Genocide crimes and putting clear the laws and legal framework against revisionism with its stakeholders. The meeting held at Hotel Novotel Umubano was in line with the release of a draft report on the "mechanisms to fight against the negation of the Tutsi Genocide". Speaking to reporters at hotel Novotel Umubano, Prof. Pierre Ruzirabwoba Rwanyindo, the IRDP director explained that the event largely aims at looking into ways of attaining long lasting peace in the country. He emphasized the importance of looking into the "roots of genocide" in an attempt to finding long lasting peace. Rwanyindo observed that these fall into some four

major sets including the distortion of Rwanda's history."The history of Rwanda was written and taught by both the missionaries and colonialists - they divided Rwandans into groups," he said, adding, "What happened in the country was also due to bad leadership."Rwanyindo pointed to the coming of "a democracy" that was based on divisionism and propping up of ethnic hatred during the colonial era as crucial elements that led to most of the country's present problems."We are still continuing with the research in order to have clear information because sometimes we get contradicting information. We also have to include views from the participants in the final report," IRDP researcher, Bernadette Kayirangwa said.The conference also intends to revitalize efforts in fighting the Genocide ideology, negation of the Tutsi Genocide and revisionism propagated by the Genocide perpetrators and some sections of the international community.According to Kayirangwa, after carrying out the research, they made recommendations among which is the need to revise the punishment mentioned in article 4 of chapter 11 of the Organic law relating to Genocide crimes and sanctions that they considered as insufficient as far as dealing with revisionist crimes is concerned.It was also pointed out that appropriate measures should be taken in order to make people seek clarity in differentiating between revisionism, genocide ideology and discrimination related crimes then strategies to disseminate and sensitize people on risks associated with revisionism could succeed.Kayirangwa also said that there was need for promotion of forgiveness and reconciliation as opposed to revenge and capital punishment as a means of restoring justice and social reconstruction.Observance of human rights was also emphasized. That if rights are put into consideration, values like tolerance and fundamental rights including a right to life will be observed."We should also put away anything that creates difference and favoritism among people it was one of the causes of the troubles that befell Rwanda," Kayirangwa recommended. Having a principal connection to national stability, the researchers also ventured into possible ways through which poverty could be overcome through job creation for effective poverty reduction.According to the researchers, unemployment can be a destabilizing factor which can affect national unity and long lasting peace.On the "Hutu - Tutsi question" and peace-building in general, Prof. Rwanyindo said that they consulted historians and other experts, they realized that much of the written history was faulty."We have realized that this is how things happened - now the question is, what can we do to rectify things?" he asked, "Research into peace-related matters will not stop here simply because enemies of peace are always there."Prof. Emmanuel Habimana, a psychologist from the Canadian Diaspora, pointed out the culture of denial as one factor behind the denial of Genocide .Habimana underscored that the culture of debate on matters that are especially raising contradictory ideas was "positive." "Revealing the truth about our country's history will be very helpful in healing wounds," he said.Interpeace, an international peace-building alliance, collaborated with IRDP to hold the event.

58. REBEL, MILITANCY AND “WAR ON TERROR”

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Group Cautions Yar'Adua On N-Delta: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 8 August 2008.**

A SAPELE- based pressure group, Niger Delta Youths Assembly for Peace and Justice (NDYAPJ), has admonished President Yar'Adua's administration to tread the path of caution and justice in its efforts towards handling the volatile situation in the Niger Delta region. In a statement made available to Vanguard at Sapele, signed by Messrs Ejio Akpomiemie, Sisan Nanna, Eno Akpan and Ngozi Akani, the group advised the Federal Government on how to relate with ethnic groups in the region, wondering why the Federal Government had refused to learn from history, and continued to bow to what it described as "dictates, whims and caprices and territorial imbued hegemonic aspirations of war-mongers of some ethnic group in the region. Recalling its earlier advertorial of September 5, 2007 in the Vanguard Newspaper, the Sapele-based group claimed that "government has ceaselessly embarked on the mission of appeasing only the Ijaw ethnic group to the detriment of all the other ethnic groups in the Niger Delta, such that they are uncharitably consigned to endlessly wait for the crumbs from the table of the master tribe, when it is clear that no crumb will ever fall." "The alleged Federal Government pro-Ijaw stand-point, it opined, "is a precipitate of what it described as the present mind-set of the government to the effect that Niger Delta region is synonymous with the Ijaw ethnic group," adding that "the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), for example, has become synonymous with Ijaws, given the fact that the two most important positions, the Managing Director and Director of Administration and Finance, among other key positions, have become the exclusive preserve of those of Ijaw extraction." "According to the youth group, "it is sad that the Federal Government has demobilised all antenna and sources that can bring to its knowledge the cries and lamentations of other ethnic groups to such ridiculous dimension whereby the Niger Delta Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee has Ijaws as both chairman and secretary, respectively, including all the members." "The group wondered "why the Federal Government has not realised the futility of its pro-Ijaw appeasement strategy, particularly when experience has shown that the more the Ijaws are appeased, the more the militants amongst them are encouraged into recklessness, ethnic cleansing, blood-letting and territorial expansionism." "The Federal Government must not be oblivious of the recent history of the region specifically those pro-Ijaw appeasement actions of governments; all of which smacks of legality and justice and have not yielded any positive dividend." "The breach of the 1999 Constitution by Government of Delta State whereby the headquarters of Warri South Local Government Council was illegally relocated by Chief James Ibori from Ogidigben (an Itsekiri town) to Ogbe-Ijo (an Ijaw town), which was the demand of the Ijaw militants as the only condition for the cessation of hostilities against the Itsekiri in 1999 did not achieve any positive result." "Conversely, the relocation of the local government headquarters only served as war-catalyst with Itsekiri at the receiving end until balance of terror did the magic of putting the fears of the Lord into the minds of the belligerents."

- **Nigeria: Navy Kills Four, Sinks Two Speedboats in Rivers: Leadership (Abuja): 9 August 2008.**

The Nigerian navy yesterday shot dead at least four militants and sank two boats in an encounter along the Cawthorne Channel, about 19 kilometres (12 miles) off Port Harcourt, the Rivers State capital. According to Spokesman of the Nigerian Navy, Lt. Way Obliabisi "The militants, who were in three speed boats, opened fire on sighting the naval

men, who were on a routine patrol . The naval gunboats, in self-defence, therefore, engaged the militants in a gun battle, some militants dead."He added, while two of the militant's boats were destroyed, the third, which contained a machine gun with a large quantity of ammunition, was seized.He explained that Naval patrols were stepped up in the oil- rich Niger Delta region to stop the illegal smuggling of oil to ships and piracy, as well as to protect oil pipelines.It could be recalled that attacks on pipelines and production facilities in the region have disrupted oil output since 2006. Groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), are targeting facilities run by Royal Dutch Shell plc, the biggest foreign producer in the country. Last month, militants attacked Shell's Bonga field, which is 120 kilometres (75 miles) off the Nigerian coast, abducting a number of foreign and local oil workers.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Botswana: Country Gets U.S. Terror Cash: [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 7 August 2008.**

Botswana is one the African countries set to receive military assistance from the United States, according to the US's Budget Request for the 2009 Financial Year released by the White House in February.The US has allocated the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) about P4 million as part of the global war on terror by President George W. Bush. Botswana and other African countries, will receive arms deliveries and increased military training from the US. The budget request by the US State Department and Defence Department for the financial year 2009 indicates that America will spend about P3.1 billion on military equipment and training in Africa. The budget request is awaiting approval by the US Congress. The other countries included in the military aid are Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda. Among the programmes to be financed under the African phase of the controversial war on terror will be the expansions of the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership, the East African Regional Security Initiative and Anti-Terrorism Assistance. In addition to direct assistance, the US will licence private commercial sales of military and police equipment of up to P620 million through the State Department.The budget covers foreign military financing, international military education and training, and peace-keeping operations. Many African countries would have their shares and programmes expanded as the US government seeks to extend its strategic interest in the continent.A major facet of the budgetary request is the Africa Command, which is projected to require over P2 billion to set-up. These include creating an intelligence capability for the controversial command centre, launching a stand-alone operations command, deploying support aircraft to the continent, building a presence on the continent and establishing two of the five regional offices under the command.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Two Arrested as Top Terror Suspect Flees: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 4 August 2008.**

Al-Qaeda mastermind Fazul Abdullah escaped a police dragnet at the weekend only three hours after two of his accomplices were arrested and interrogated by the Anti-Terrorism Police in Malindi. Two men were arrested on Saturday as the officers foiled a plot they believe would have resulted to a terrorism attack in Kenya. Fazul is wanted over the August 7, 1998 bomb attacks on the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-salaam. A Sh325 million reward has been offered to anybody who helps the police to capture Fazul. Security officers have asked anyone with information to reach them on telephone number 0714746144.

On the run

Police believe that Fazul is now on the run and he has neither money nor a passport. During the weekend crackdown, the squad of 25 officers backed by the GSU's Recce Company, raided a house in Malindi where Fazul was believed to have been hiding. They were acting on information they received after interrogating the suspects identified as Ibrahim Mahfoudh and his father, Mahfoudh Ashour. The officers narrowly missed Fazul but found two passports and a laptop computer they believe were abandoned as the terror suspect escaped the police dragnet. The foreign passports bore photographs of Fazul while the computer had not been switched off. On Sunday, a police source told the Nation that those in custody had earlier in the day met "al-Qaeda chiefs for an unknown mission." On Sunday evening, Human Rights Forum official Al-Amin Kimanthi said Mahfoudh was being held alongside his wife, Lutfia Abubakar and their eight-year-old daughter. He described Mahfoudh as a restaurant owner in Malindi. Mr Kimanthi said it was illegal to hold a child in custody just because its parents were under arrest. Initially, the suspects were taken to Malindi police station where they were held overnight and interrogated. On Sunday, they were moved to Mombasa under a heavy police escort. During the 1998 attack on the US embassy in Nairobi, 206 Kenyans were killed while another 5,000 were injured. Since then, authorities have always believed that Fazul has been hiding in Somalia but there have been indications that he could have sneaked back to Kenya. Sources said Fazul may have crossed the border to escape US intelligence officers who have been concentrating their search in Mogadishu, the Somalia capital. Other sources said the man could have fallen ill and was seeking treatment in Kenya.

Mahfoudh, also believed to have been running errands for Fazul, is expected in court Monday on accusations of harbouring a fugitive.

The weekend arrests mark another dramatic development in the fight against terrorism in Kenya. In the past, security officers have foiled several bombing plots on Kenyan soil. They include a planned aerial attack on the new US embassy at Gigiri, an attempt to bomb a tourist hotel at Diani in Mombasa, and plans to detonate a bomb at a strategic Mombasa location during the World Cross Country Championships held in the town early last year. All the three attempts have been traced to Fazul, who has also been accused of masterminding the November 2002 bombing of Mombasa's Paradise Hotel that left 15 people dead. Sources say plans to bomb the new US embassy in June 2003 had been uncovered six months in advance and a trap laid to capture the plotters. Counter-

terrorism agents learned of the attack in late 2002 after interrogating two suspects who had been arrested in connection with the bombing of Paradise Hotel.

Detained in Cuba

Using vital tips extracted from the two — who are now detained by the US in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba — the agents intercepted vital communication between Somalia and Mombasa in regard to the plot. Key names in the plan included Fazul, Swaleh Nabhan and Feisal Ali, a Yemeni citizen. According to the information given by the two men, the terrorists had recommended an aerial attack that would involve crash-landing a plane on the embassy building, then still under construction, and simultaneously crash into the premises a truck laden with explosives. It later emerged that Fazul had sneaked into Mombasa in May, 2003, to finalise the attack plan which was to be executed the following month. Acting on a tip-off, counter-terrorism agents later trailed him to Mogadishu where they narrowly failed to capture him. However, an accomplice, one Sulayman Hemed, a Yemeni, was captured. He revealed details of the attack during interrogation. An earlier plan to attack on US interests in the region would have been in July 2001 where a hotel frequented by Americans at Diani was identified as a target. Also targeted was a US cruise ship scheduled to dock at Mombasa in August of the same year. The attacks would be part of a series targeting US interests across the continent ahead of the September 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington DC. And in March last year, the terrorists had planned to strike again when Kenya was hosting the World Cross Country Championships in Mombasa. Three weeks to the event whose opening was officiated by President Kibaki, a suspect, Abdulmalik Mohamed, was arrested at a forex bureau near Fort Jesus in Mombasa. He had gone to change some \$6,000 and receive another \$10,000 from a known al-Qaeda linkman in London. The sender of the money was also arrested the same day.

Abdulmalik was supposed to use the money to hire a vehicle which would have been used to transport a bomb to a location on the cross-country route. Intelligence agents later traced the planning of the attack to Fazul.

- **Uganda: Security on Alert Over Al-Qaeda: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 5 August 2008.**

SECURITY agencies are on high alert and closely monitoring the movements of suspected al-Qaeda terrorists, the internal affairs minister said yesterday. Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda noted that they had received reports that al-Qaeda operatives had entered the East African region. He added that they were studying the reports and would act according to the results of their investigations. Asked on the magnitude of the threat to Uganda, the minister said they were monitoring the security situation in the region and

not leaving anything to chance."It is good to be vigilant. We cannot take chances but there should be no cause for alarm."Rugunda appealed to the public to be security conscious and report suspicious people to the authorities.He noted that the ADF rebels, who had been linked to the terrorists, had been were contained.The development comes when the region tomorrow marks the 10th anniversary of the twin bombings in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania blamed on al-Qaeda.On August 7, 1998, suspected al-Qaeda terrorists bombed US embassies in the two cities, killing about 250 people.The US embassy in Kampala has also issued an alert to its citizens, warning of the risk of attack by terrorists.The alert said the terrorists may target US facilities and tourists as the anniversary of the bombings approaches.On Monday, a court in Mombasa, Kenya charged three people with helping a top al-Qaeda operative escape over the weekend.Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, who was accused of being one of the masterminds of the bombings, has evaded capture since his indictment by the US for the twin attacks.Police arrested the three after a raid on Saturday on a private villa in the resort town of Malindi.Uganda was not attacked in 1998. But Police chief Maj. Gen. Kale Kayihura said ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting last year that security agencies intercepted information that the biggest bomb had been reserved for Kampala but the plot was thwarted.

- **Somalia: German Hostages Freed, Ransom Paid – Sources: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 9 August 2008.**

A German man and his wife have been freed in Somalia after being held captive for longer than a month and a half, sources tell Garowe Online.The hostages, Mr. Jorgan K. and Ms. Sebina M., were kidnapped in the Gulf of Aden by suspected pirates on June 23 and have been held captive since in Sanaag region of northern Somalia.The sources said that a ransom payment in the amount of US\$1 million was paid, but it was not immediately clear who paid the ransom.Bari Govenor Muse Gelle Farole confirmed to reporters Saturday in the port city of Bossaso that the two hostages were freed.

CENTRAL AFRICA

59. NORTH AFRICA

- **Mauritania: Military Ousts President, Seizes Power: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 7 August 2008.**

International leaders, heads of states and human rights lobbyists have condemned the military ouster of Mauritania's President Sidi Mohamed ould Cheikh Abdallahi, and Prime Minister Yahya ould Ahmed Waghf on 6 August, while analysts question how the latest political shake-up will affect a country that is reeling from rising food and living costs, as it reintegrates thousands of refugees.The coup started just hours after a presidential decree early on Wednesday that declared the dismissal of Mauritania's top four military leaders. By the morning, soldiers had barricaded the presidential palace on Wednesday, according to the president's daughter, Amal Mint Cheikh Abdallahi.In a phone call with IRIN early Wednesday, Abdallahi confirmed her father's arrest, "We are

trapped in our home with soldiers in our kitchen and bathrooms. Our cell phones were confiscated. This is a coup d'etat - nothing more or less."During the day, coup leaders announced the creation of a state council to be led by head of the presidential guard, Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who has said in interviews with European media that the takeover was not a coup, but rather an attempt to restore security. When asked about the military's motivations for the coup, he responded, in his words, that the country is confronted with a series of security problems, including terrorism, that only the army is capable of eradicating. The coup follows a May government reshuffle that appointed Waghf prime minister; a July no-confidence vote against the government, which then resigned; an ensuing threat by the president to dissolve the National Assembly, and the resignation of almost 50 deputies earlier this week from the ruling party. President Abdallahi came to power 2007 in the first democratic change of government since independence in 1960. This was widely regarded as a fresh start after more than twenty years of authoritarian and military rule. Mauritania has had multiple coups and coup attempts since independence. Leaders of the United Nations and African Union, as well as several heads of states have condemned the most recent coup and are calling for a peaceful return to constitutional rule. The European Commission has threatened to suspend aid to Mauritania, otherwise. The Paris-based International Federation for Human Rights is requesting sanctions against coup leaders, while the Dakar-based African Forum for the Defense of Human Rights has called for the immediate release of President Abdallahi and his collaborators. Jason Mosley, senior analyst with the UK-based Oxford Analytica, says months of political instability have moved the country away from the socioeconomic platform that helped to elect Abdallahi. "It wasn't really on the [political] agenda, or it didn't have a chance to get anywhere before the politics overtook the social agenda. [Sidi Mohamed ould Cheikh] Abdallahi felt threatened by the food crisis and security issues."Mauritania has been rocked by alleged terrorist attacks, including the murder of four French tourists in December 2007, which has stoked criticism of Abdallahi's handling of security issues. Analyst Mosley says the relatively new ruling coalition, National Pact for Democracy and Development (PNDD), in place since last April, did not have time to coalesce before being hit with the social pressure of rising food costs. Reflecting a global trend, food prices in arid Mauritania have doubled within the past year. In August 2007, thousands were displaced in Mauritania from flooding that wiped out crops and cattle. Months later, food riots broke out in southeast Mauritania. Mauritanian graduate student Boubacar Datt, studying in neighbouring Dakar, Senegal, says some in Mauritania might feel relief in the wake of the coup, because they are eager for change. "What they don't see is that Sidi [Mohamed ould Cheikh Abdallahi] was only a mascot and never had power. People talk about Mauritania being a democracy, but Mauritania has always been led by military. This [coup] comes as no surprise. Democracy does not exist. It is only on papers. In daily life, Sidi [Mohamed ould Cheikh Abdallahi] could not realise his campaign promises."Datt says that no matter who is in power, he does not think food will suddenly become more plentiful, fuel cheaper, or life any easier. Abdallahi campaigned to end slavery, which persists despite being outlawed for more than 20 years, and to reintegrate refugees who fled brutal border and ethnic clashes in 1989. Hundreds died and tens of thousands escaped to neighbouring Mali and Senegal, many of whom still hesitate to return. Moustapha Toure, with the Association of Mauritanian Refugees in Senegal, says he is worried the coup will stop the

return of refugees from Senegal, which began earlier in 2008. "This will end the repatriation, and effectively put the brakes on the healing process," he said. Last October, Abdallahi's government organised a national day of dialogue with exiled refugees to discuss how to carry out the repatriation. Toure attended the event in Nouakchott. "The president had committed to organising a peace and reconciliation commission, which has long been one of our key demands. It is hard to see that commission coming apart even before it has had a chance to be created."

- **Mauritania: Military Topples Mauritanian Govt - Yar'Adua, AU, US Condemn Coup: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 7 August 2008.**

Africa yesterday woke up to the damning news of another unconstitutional change of government when the government of Prime Minister Yahia Ould Ahmed El-Ouakef was swept out of power via a coup d'etat led by senior military officers in Mauritania, the West African country that just struck oil in commercial quantity. The putsch was led by the former head of the Mauritanian presidential guard, General Mohamed Ould Abdelazeez. The coup took place after the president and prime minister fired the country's top four military officers in an announcement early yesterday. No official reason was given for firing the officials. According to the presidential spokesman, Abdoulaye Mamadouba, President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi was being held by renegade soldiers at the presidential village while the Prime Minister Yahya Ould Ahmed El-Ouakef, was also detained. The Arab-dominated Mauritania with a population of about 3.4 million which gained independence from France in 1960, has been racked by more than 10 attempted coups. In recent weeks, lawmakers had accused President Abdallahi of corruption and poor governance, in which case 69 of the country's 95 parliament members called for his resignation. One of the lawmakers, Mohammed Al-Moukhtar, disclosed that many people were in support of the attempt, adding that Abdallahi's government was an authoritarian regime and asserted that he had marginalized the majority of the parliament. Abdallahi's government was the first to be freely elected in the desert country in more than 20 years after a military junta seized power in a 2005 coup and stepped down after an election last year. The United States Embassy has urged Americans in Mauritania to exercise extreme caution to ensure their safety. Also, France's Foreign Ministry has contacted the French Embassy officials in Nouakchott and are already taking steps to protect the citizens living there, spokesman Romain Nadal said. Nigeria's President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua condemned in strong terms the military take-over of political power in Mauritania, saying both Nigeria and the African Union will not recognise the military coupists as leaders. Yar'Adua was reacting while receiving the Chiefs of Defence Staff of member countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at the State House in Abuja, yesterday. He said Nigeria would not recognise any change of government through unconstitutional means in Mauritania. Yar'Adua said the coup could jeopardise the democratic gains that have been achieved in the West African sub-region so far. "We cannot afford turning back the hand of the clock anywhere in the sub-region", he said. The President noted that no nation in the sub-region can achieve meaningful socio-economic development without peace and political stability. He said Nigeria would continue to lead the efforts to maintain peace and political stability in West Africa in particular and the whole of Africa in general. In

line with this cause, President Yar'Adua stated that Nigeria would facilitate the urgent establishment of the West African Standby Force. He charged the military chiefs to name the specific assistance they would like Nigeria to render, saying his administration would not hesitate to render such assistance. Earlier, the Chairman of the ECOWAS military chiefs, General Alli Traore of Burkina Faso, had told the president that a concrete agreement had been reached by the military chiefs for the immediate take-off of the standby force. He said the force would comprise soldiers, police and gendarmes. He said the security situation in the sub-region has improved tremendously although uneasy calm still pervades some countries in the sub-region. In his words, "Nigeria totally condemns the situation that took place in Mauritania this morning. Nigeria will not recognise and support any government that comes into being through unconstitutional means. The African Union (AU) pact has made it clear that AU will not recognise any government that didn't come into being through constitutional means." "Democracy and the sustenance of democracy are vital. We cannot afford turning back the hand of the clock anywhere in the sub-region." "Today our sub-region experiences political stability, the type that has never been experienced before since we attained political independence. It is extremely clear that for us in the African continent, the issue of peace and security is critical to our development, especially in meeting the needs and providing for our people. The region and indeed its armed forces have made tremendous sacrifices in bringing this peace." "I want to assure you that Nigeria will continue to contribute its quota to ensure that the peace we are enjoying in the sub-region is sustained. This we will continue to do in the context of the heads of government of ECOWAS." "We will give our total support to ensure that the ECOWAS standby force becomes a reality as soon as possible" and become the first to be established in the continent which is advocating for an Africa standby force." "Ensure that you establish this force. Its establishment will help provide our sub-region the wherewithal to sustain the peace we have been enjoying in the sub-region." Meanwhile, the U.S. likewise, condemned the coup, saying the country had ousted a democratically elected government. "This was a democratically elected, constitutional government and we condemn the act," State Department spokesman Gonzalo Gallegos told reporters.

- **Egypt: Govt Convicts Democracy Activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim:**
[America.gov](#) (Washington, DC): 5 August 2008.

The Bush administration, expressing disappointment over the August 2 conviction of Egyptian democracy activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim, said the action is "harming Egypt's reputation" and urged global protection for the rights to free speech and due process. In an August 4 statement, the State Department's acting deputy spokesman, Gonzalo Gallegos, said Ibrahim was sentenced in absentia to two years in prison because of his writings published in the foreign press. "Lawsuits should not be used to undermine the principles of freedom of expression," Gallegos said. "We strongly advocate -- in all countries -- the protection of civil and political rights, including freedom of speech and due process." Ibrahim, who is 69, has both Egyptian and American citizenship, according to press reports. He has been a professor of sociology at the American University in Cairo and founded both the Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies and the Arab Organization for Human Rights. Ibrahim's August 2 conviction reportedly concerns

articles and speeches he made urging the United States to link its bilateral aid to Egypt to democratic reforms in the country. In 2002, he was sentenced to seven years in prison for "tarnishing Egypt's image," embezzlement and receiving foreign funds without authorization after the Khaldoun Center used funds from the European Union to monitor Egyptian elections. After 10 months in prison, Ibrahim was released and cleared of charges. He currently is living in the United States and has remained active in promoting democracy in the Middle East. (See "Saad Eddin Ibrahim Urges Democracy for Muslim World.") Ibrahim has insisted that true Islam is fully compatible with democracy. At a 2003 conference sponsored by the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, he said the prophet Mohammed signed the Charter of Medina, containing "all the aspects of pluralism, which is the prerequisite of democracy," some 500 to 600 years before the Magna Carta was written. That charter, entered into with 14 non-Muslim groups living in Medina, established the principle of "equality in worldly matters," Ibrahim said.

- **Morocco: Journalist Mostapha Hurmatallah Released On Completing His Prison Sentence: [Reporters sans Frontières \(Paris\)](#): PRESS RELEASE: 28 July 2008.**

Reporters Without Borders notes that reporter Mostapha Hurmatallah of the weekly "Al Watan Al An" was freed on 25 July 2008 on completing his prison sentence. He had been in Casablanca's Oukacha prison since 19 February, when Morocco's highest court of appeal ordered him to go back to jail to serve the rest of a seven-month term. "We welcome Hurmatallah's release with joy, but we reiterate our firm condemnation of the original decision to imprison him just for doing his job," Reporters Without Borders said. "We now hope that this is the end of the era when people are jailed in Morocco because of what they write." Hurmatallah, whose request for a royal pardon was ignored, told Reporters Without Borders that conditions in prison were very harsh. He was put in a cell with convicted criminals and his visits were restricted. He added that he nonetheless hoped that he would be the last journalist to be jailed in his country in connection with their work. He was initially sentenced on 15 August 2007 to eight months in prison on a charge of "receiving documents obtained by criminal means" in connection with a special report about a state of alert in the 14 July 2007 issue of "Al Watan Al An". The following month his sentence was reduced to seven months and he was released provisionally. However, he was returned to prison in February after the country's highest court rejected his appeal. His release means that there are no journalists currently in prison in Morocco.

60. NEWS COMMENTARIES

NORTH AFRICA

- **Mauritania: Overview of Pressures Leading to Military Coup: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 8 August 2008.**

Straddling Arab and sub-Saharan Africa, the desert nation of Mauritania has had two changes of government in three months, ending in a military coup earlier this week. Ex-presidential guard leaders have formed a military council, which they say has assumed

power. President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi remains in detention as of Friday, and a military blackout of state media continues. Soldiers detained the president on Wednesday, only hours after he tried to dismiss his top four personal military guards. Members of the League of Arab States and the African Union are scheduled to meet with coup leader Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz on Friday. The United Nations, among others, have asked for Abdallahi's immediate release. The United States announced on Thursday it will cut off more than US \$15 million in non-humanitarian aid, while the European Union has said the coup threatens its recently-approved more than US \$200 million in assistance, pledged over the next five years. Mauritania's three million inhabitants are concentrated in the capital, Nouakchott, and in villages and nomadic tent communities scattered throughout the desert. Despite significant mineral deposits that form more than half of the country's exports, and recent small-scale oil operations, employed Mauritians, on average, earned about two dollars a day in 2006, according to the World Bank. Mauritania ranked 137 out of 177 in the United Nation's latest ranking of living conditions around the world, which measures life span, access to education and spending power.

Political Feuding

This week's military coup came after a May government reshuffle that appointed new government ministers, many of whom had served under the iron-fisted Maaouya Ould Taya during his 21-year rule; a July no-confidence vote against the two-month old government, which then resigned; an ensuing threat by the president to dissolve the National Assembly if the no-confidence vote was upheld, and the resignation of 48 ruling party deputies earlier this week. Coup leader Aziz had also led the 2005 coup that deposed Ould Taya, accused of ordering violent crackdowns against his opponents. Mauritania's 2007 election that brought Abdallahi to power was widely praised as a democratic page turner that ended more than two decades of brutal authoritarian rule, and two years of transitional military rule. Election observer Limam Mohamed Cheikh says the military was instrumental in electing Abdallahi and most of the lawmakers. Cheikh says the military has, until the president's attempt to dismiss its top leaders on Wednesday, exercised unchallenged control of Mauritanian politics.

Pressures and protest mount

Dissident ruling coalition party members from the National Party for the Defense of Democracy recently tried to organise a parliament session to create a commission to investigate the country's response to the rising cost of living. Like many of its arid desert neighbours, Mauritania faces rising food and fuel prices, and shrinking cultivable land due to drought and flooding, and harmful farming techniques. According to the U.S.-based famine monitoring group, FEWSNET, in recent good-harvest years, Mauritania still imported about 70% of its food. Flooding last year displaced thousands, wiped out crops and killed livestock. In addition, rising global food and fuel prices led the U.N. World Food Program to predict last March a year of record hunger across Mauritania. After only seven months in power, Abdallahi's government--the first to come to power in free and fair elections since independence in 1960--faced food riots last November. The prime minister's office issued a statement accusing the opposition of orchestrating riots in the

south. One month later in January, the first wave of refugees started returning to Mauritania. Tens of thousands of mostly black Mauritians fled border fighting, and a brutal army crackdown in 1989, most settling in tent communities in Senegalese border towns, and in Mali. Abdallahi's government has promised to strengthen health and education services to absorb the more than 30,000 expected to return. Approximately 4,000 have returned, thus far.

Security

Tourism has dropped off after a string of recent alleged terrorist attacks, which included last December's murder of four tourists and an attack earlier this year on a nightclub near the Israeli embassy. Mauritania is one of only three Arab states to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel. Critics have recently become more outspoken about how President Abdallahi has handled these attacks. Citing security concerns, authorities cancelled the annual Lisbon-Dakar race car rally last January, which the director of Mauritania's tourism industry, Cissé Mint Cheikh Ould Beide, estimates cost the country almost US \$5 million in lost revenue. One of Abdallahi's first security challenges was prosecuting the country's largest drug bust after only four months in power. Police found more than US \$100 million worth of cocaine abandoned at an airport in the port town of Nouadhibou. Sid'Ahmed Ould Taya, Mauritania's police representative of the Lyons-based international crime fighting organization, INTERPOL, was arrested as a part of the investigation. West Africa's U.N. Office of Drugs and Crime has said that drug money can easily infiltrate corridors of power in West Africa, with its poorly paid security forces, lack of equipment to patrol long borders, and weak justice systems.

- **Egypt: The Big Read - Gamal Abdul Nasser - a Precursor of Pan-Arabism: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): COLUMN: 8 August 2008.**

Gamal Abdul Nasser was a Egyptian revolutionist that successfully drove British out of his country after 72 years of rule, under his presidency Egypt came out of intense poverty to prosperity, he became famous all around the Arab Peninsula after standing firm against the western nations and his efforts of combining the Arab power to combat anti-Muslim forces mainly the Israel.

Childhood

January , 15th 1918. Gamal Abdul Nasser Hussein was born in Banny Mor Asyout, Egypt. One year before the 1919 revolution against the English Colonization. He lived 8 years there where he learnt the South Egyptian strict and generous traditions. He moved then to Asyout city, then to Alexandria, then Cairo. All of these moving were because of his father's job as an inspector in the ministry of Post. His mother passed away on 1926. Gamal spent 10 years in Cairo until he received his high school diploma from "Nahda" school in 1937. At these years Gamal was part of many demonstrations against the English colonization where he was injured in one of them and got a scar in his face that stayed until he died. 1937 was the year when Nasser joined the military school where he graduated on 1938 to join the third platoon in Asyout where he met Anwar El Sadat,

and Zakaria Mohyi El Deen who later joined him in the "Free Officers" organization. 1939 Nasser was transferred to Alexandria where he met with Abdul Hakeem Amer who became his best friend, and played a controversial role in his life.

Free Officers Revolutionary organization

Egypt was a kingdom ruled by English and the figure head of the country was the Puppet King Farouk , thousands of English army men were on Egyptian soil to protect United Kingdom interests in the region. Not to repeat the 1882 army revolution, or the 1919 revolution, the UK worked hard to prevent any development of the Egyptian army. Corruption was spreading with each government, the royal palace aided by the English interference in the internal affairs. Such environment gathered a group of young officers to fight corruption and work for the development of Egypt and Egyptians. 1942 Nasser was transferred to Sudan with Abdul Hakeem Amer where their friendship became stronger, and they exchanged their rebellion ideas about the future of Egypt. While serving in the Sudan during the late 1940s, he and other three other officers founded the secret Free Officers revolutionary organization. Their objective was the overthrow of the British occupying regime and the puppet Egyptian king. The 1948 war was the ignition for the "Free Officers Organizations". It gave the free officers the time to meet, and share their thoughts about the future of Egypt and quoted from Nasser diaries "...We were fighting in Palestine, and our dreams were in Egypt. Our bullets were targeting the enemy but our hearts were with our nation who was left for the wolves". Such war added a lot to Nasser's personality, it gave him confidence, and it added more to his rebellion nature for Freedom. Nasser gained his leadership reputation after the battle of "Falouga" where he managed to fight with no backup support, and under siege against the Israeli armed forces, he was also wounded. The confidential organization became active on 1949, started by a committee of young officers that included Gamal Abdel Nasser, Kamal El Deen Hussein, Hassan Ibrahim, Khaled Mohey El Deen, and Abdul Menim Raouf. New officers were also added to this. In 1950, Nasser was chosen president for the Free Officers organization. They faced Lots of obstacles like being monitored by the "political police" which was responsible to stop any action against the royal palace or the English personnel. This made the attempts of recruiting new officers a difficult task; lots of investigations were to take place before adding a new officer to the organization. In November 1949 The Organization distributed their first "flyer" which discussed the Defeat in Palestine War. The flyers continued to be sent by Mail and to be delivered by hand according to the sector that the free officer who is delivering it (Air Force, Infantry...etc). In 1951 the Organization started a newspaper called "the voice of the free officers" which was sent to 700 Egyptian officers by mail. The royal palace had information about such organization, and King Farouk tried to destroy it before it threatens his crown. Yet the Organization kept working for its goal, and more officers were drafted until July the 1952 date of revolution.

The Revolution

After becoming a mature organization, the free officers started publishing their demands by the mailed flyers. They requested a strong Egyptian army, where its duty to protect

Egypt not to be used for serving the royal palace, nor the English interests in the region. They demanded quick solutions for the starvation of the Egyptians. The need of a revolution against the royal system became a nation's dream after the poor standards that the citizens suffered, and increasing of corruption. 26th January 1952, named "black Saturday" when a huge fire burnt downtown Cairo destroying stores, factories, houses and killing tens of innocent Egyptians. Corruption was the main cause of such tragedy. The failure to pin point the responsible of such fire was a knock out for "The Wafd" party who were in charge of the Egyptian government for years before such incident. King Farouk tried to calm the Egyptians but failed. At that time, the Free officers were well known by the palace, and the political police exerted lots of effort to neutralize them, such environment pushed ahead the date to start the revolution. Days before the 23rd of July 1952, the officers started their plan to rebel against the current system and change it. The plan was to move at the night of 22nd of July to capture the main base of the army, followed by taking charge of the whole army and controlling them from there. Then the Free officers controlled the telephone systems, Airport, train stations and the Egyptian radio station. Controlling such major buildings allowed the officers to give false information to the palace in Alexandria where King Farouk was residing. The revolution managed to capture the Army central bases in Al-Areesh and Rafah, by doing so the officers controlled most of the army platoons which eased their mission in controlling Alexandria. The revolution succeeded in their plan, and Anwar El Sadat announced the evolution of a new Era that will work for the sake of development of Egypt cleaning all the corruption caused by the royal palace. King Farouk was exiled with none of his assets, and brigadier Mohammed Naguib was given the authority to be the leader of the Army and the political authority in Egypt. In 1953, the Egyptian constitution changed and the royal system was cancelled and replaced by the republican system. . Gen. Muhammad Naguib became the nominal head of the government, but Nasser held power through his control of the Revolutionary Command Committee. In 1954, following an attempt on Nasser's life, he arrested Naguib and became premier of Egypt

Presidency and rise to a Outstanding Arab Leader

Soon after Nasser took power, the British became aware of their fall and thus signed an agreement, ending their 72- year presence in Egypt.

Nasser introduced new political system, it was called Arab socialism, with a one-party system and with Islam as its official religion. With this program he confiscated 243,000 hectares (2,430 km²) farm land from a small group of rich landowners and distributed it evenly to the population. Later on in his presidency he nationalized banks and industries. In July, 1956, Nasser announced to a huge cheering crowd in Manshia, Alexandria and, via Cairo Radio, to the rest of the Arab World that he was nationalizing the Suez Canal Company and creating the an Egyptian Canal Authority to manage the Canal. The entire Third World was thrilled and delighted. There existed no potent symbol of Western colonial domination and a legend of the Western imperialism and hegemony more than the Suez Canal. But there was worry about the consequences; the West would surely not allow Nasser to succeed. USA and Britain withdrew a promised support for the

construction of a new Aswan. He also continued his purchases of military equipment from Soviet bloc countries. He had gone there after being turned down by the West, which suspected plans to use the weapons against Israel. The nationalization of the Suez Canal was met by an Israeli invasion of the Sinai Peninsula and an Anglo-French invasion of the Canal Zone. Although Egyptian forces suffered military defeat but with Nasser's diplomacy, the invading forces were put under pressure from the UN and United States, and had to withdraw. Egypt kept the full ownership of the Suez Canal. With US assistance the Canal was cleared and reopened in April 1957. All the British and French property in Egypt was sequestered. About 3,000 British and French nationals were expelled, and more thousands decided to leave. Britain and France attempted to retaliate by imposing an economic blockade of Egypt, but the gesture was ineffective, he also managed to get Soviet support for the construction of the dam, which was completed 14 years later. Due to his economic policies specially construction of Dam and the Canal to take water to un-irrigated land, Egypt emerged from poverty stricken country to a prospering nation. By this time Nasser had become a hero in the Arab world. In 1958 Syria and Egypt united under his presidency, forming the United Arab Republic, hoping that one day all the Arab nations would join, but the Egypt-Syria union, however, broke up in 1961 after a military coup in Syria. By 1967 the Arab-Israeli situation had deteriorated. After the UN peacekeeping force, at Nasser's request, had been withdrawn, and Egyptian guns blockaded the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli ships, Israel attacked Egypt and occupied the entire Sinai Peninsula up to the Suez Canal (Six-Day War) in just six days. After humiliating defeat of Egypt's forces, Nasser, taking responsibility for the debacle, resigned, but the thousands of people took to the streets, demanding his return to government. He stayed in power for 18 years even in the face of a large number of domestic competitors and opponents. On September 28, 1970, he died suddenly of a heart attack. Even after his death till now he is still remembered by Muslims as a man who stood up to Western Dominance and lead his country from a poor slaved British Colony to a Free Progressing Nation. Even his harshest critics which accuse him of turning Egypt into a police state with controlled rule, censorship, still beyond doubt see him as the foremost Arab leader, who restored Arab dignity after the long humiliation of Western domination. Nasser's ideas were laid down in his book of 1959, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*.

Arab leader

With his rhetoric and the Suez success, Nasser developed a following throughout the Arab world, inspiring "Nasserist" political parties dedicated to Arab unity. Many saw Nasser as the leader of the Arab world, representing a new, defiant era in Arabic politics. Nasser's policies became associated with Pan-Arabism, which promoted aggressive action by Arab states to confront the "imperialist" West, and urged that the resources of the Arab states should be used for the benefit of the Arab people and not the West. In a 1967 speech, Nasser declared, "We can achieve much by Arab action, which is a main part of our battle. We must develop and build our countries to face the challenge of our enemies."

Nasser speaking to the masses in Homs, Syria, 1961

In 1958, Syrian military and civilian leaders requested a merger of Syria and Egypt. Somewhat surprised by the sudden request and unsure as to whether the time was ripe, Nasser nevertheless agreed and the United Arab Republic came into being. Many saw it as the first step towards the establishment of a pan-Arab state. Attempts were also made to include Yemen. However, the UAR was not a success; In Syria, Egyptian bureaucrats and officers were seen as acting dictatorially, and the rapidly expanded secret police harshly repressed opposition groups including the Muslim Brotherhood and the Syrian Communist Party. Meanwhile, the Syrian bourgeoisie did not gain the access to Egyptian markets that it had hoped for. Discontent among the Syrian bourgeoisie and officer corps led to secessionists taking control in Damascus, and the UAR was dissolved in 1961, although Egypt continued to use the name until 1971. Egyptian intervention in Yemen involved the UAR in a bloody civil war in that country.

Yemen War and Six Day War

Nasser had wanted a regime change in Yemen since 1957. Seeing an opportunity, he finally put his desires into motion in January 1962 by giving the Free Yemen Movement office space, financial support, and radio air time. Nasser saw opportunities in Yemen to settle a score with the Saudi royal family, who Nasser felt had undermined his union with Syria. Ambassador Ahmed Abu-Zeid, who served as Egypt's ambassador to Royalist Yemen from 1957 to 1961, warned Egyptian officials in Cairo that the Yemeni tribes were difficult and had no sense of loyalty or nationalism. The Ambassador was against sending Egyptian combat forces, arguing that only money and equipment be sent to the Yemeni Free Officers. Abu Zeid warned that the Saudis would flood Yemen with money to combat Egyptian presence and turn the revolution in Saudi Arabia's favor. Nasser refused Abu-Zeid's ideas and was adamant about the need to protect the Arab nationalist movement in Yemen with Egyptian military force. Nasser was convinced that a regiment of Egyptian Special Forces and a wing of fighter-bombers would be able to secure the Yemeni Republican coup d'état. Within three months of sending troops to Yemen, Nasser realized that this would require a larger commitment than anticipated. By early 1963, he would begin a four-year quest to extricate Egyptian forces from Yemen, using an unsuccessful face-saving mechanism, only to find himself committing more troops. A little less than 5,000 troops were sent in October 1962. Two months later, Egypt had 15,000 regular troops deployed. By late 1963, the number was increased to 36,000; and in late 1964, the number rose to 50,000 Egyptian troops in Yemen. Late 1965 represented the high-water mark of Egyptian troop commitment in Yemen at 55,000 troops, which were divided into 13 infantry regiments of one artillery division, one tank division and several Special Forces as well as paratroop regiments. Egypt paid a very high price in the Yemen war and the Egyptian army sustained high losses during this war. After the USSR informed Nasser of Israeli plans to attack Syria, Nasser sought the re-militarization of the Sinai peninsula and demanded that United Nations Emergency Force evacuate the Sinai, a request with which UN Secretary-General U Thant complied. Nasser then began to re-militarize the Sinai. On May 23, he closed the Straits of Tiran, through which Israel had gained access after the 1956 war, to Israeli shipping, blockading the Israeli port of Eilat at the northern end of the Gulf of Aqaba, Israel's only access to the Indian Ocean. The closure was considered by Israel to be a *casus belli*.

During this period, Nasser continually stated his intention to attack Israel, and declared that other Arab nations should support him. Israel responded preemptively to the imminent attack in what became known as the Six Day War. The first wave of attacks by the Israeli air force destroyed most of the Egyptian (and other allied Arab) air forces on the ground. A withdrawal order was issued by the defense minister Abdel Hakim Amer which was a disaster to the Egyptian troops. Most of the Egyptian losses were during this withdrawal. The loss in the Six Day War was one of the most disastrous political blows in Egyptian history and a humiliation to the leaders and people of Egypt.

Resignation and aftermath

The humiliating defeat in the Six-Day War was so devastating that it compelled a domestic political reaction. On the evening of June 9, 1967 Nasser's resignation statement was broadcast live on Egyptian television and radio, in which Nasser declared that he was leaving the office of president to his then vice president Zakaria Mohieddin. No sooner was the statement broadcast, however, than millions were pouring into the streets in mass demonstrations not only in Egypt but in streets across the Arab World. Their rejection of Abdel-Nasser's speech was expressed in a battle cry: "We shall fight".[citation needed] As a consequence, Nasser led Egypt through the War of Attrition in 1969-1970. In 1969, after a group of reformers and critics of the regime's authoritarianism won an election for the board of the Egyptian Judges' Club, the direct challenge posed by the vocal judicial leadership proved intolerable to the Nasser regime. Nasser responded with a series of measures subsequently referred to as the "massacre of the judiciary," including the dismissal of over a hundred sitting judges [5].

Death and funeral

Nasser died of a heart attack on September 28, 1970 at the conclusion of a meeting in Cairo of leaders of Arab countries regarding Israel[41] and of the Black September in Jordan. He suffered from hemochromatosis, or Bronze diabetes, a hereditary disease related to excessive iron in the body. Because of his ability to motivate nationalistic passions, as a testament to what one would call the future of his influence, "men, women and children wept and wailed in the streets"[42] after hearing of his death. His funeral on October 1 was one of the largest in history, attended by an estimated five million people. The six-mile (10 km) procession to his burial site began at the Revolutionary Command Council with MIG-21 jet fighters flying overhead. Emotions, which included telecasters crying on the air, boiled over in the 40-degree heat as thousands swarmed the soldiers who were carrying the coffin and began what was described as "the people's procession." Sadat, who had been interim President following Nasser's death, was officially selected to succeed him on October 5.

Nasserism

Nasser's legacy is much debated even today in the Arab World. For many people, he was a leader who reformed his country and re-established Arab pride both inside and outside it. Thus, many argue that Nasser freed Egypt from European domination and reformed its

economy through his agrarian reform, projects such as the Aswan High Dam, and his moves towards greater government economic involvement. But others[who?] see his administration as one of forceful militarism that led Egypt to grave defeats and losses rather than peace and prosperity. In addition, Nasser's suppression of the political opposition and the massive expansion of the police and security apparatuses left a legacy of political repression exploited by his successors until the present.[citation needed] Nasser's role in the Six Day War, which led to tremendous losses for the Arab states, tarnished his legacy and reduced his power in the Middle East. In the last years of his rule, Nasser came to rely increasingly on aid from the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Nasser's role in modernizing Egypt's education system - making education freely available to the poorer masses, and his avid support of the arts, such as the theater, the film and music industries, as well as literature, is seen as having a positive impact on Egypt and the Arab world as a whole. Nasser inspired many Arab leaders and nationalists such as Muammar al-Gaddafi of Libya, Saddam Hussein of Iraq[citation needed] and Ahmad Ben Bella of Algeria and George Habash of the Arab Nationalist Movement.

Aswan Dam

One of the most controversial of Nasser's achievements is the creation of the Aswan Dam and the eponymous lake in southern Egypt. Built to provide electricity for heavy industry and reduce the risk of flooding along the Nile River, the dam submerged most of Nubia's archeological remains (except the ones saved by UNESCO). It also created major ecological problems. The lake's huge surface lets a significant part of the Nile's water evaporate in vain, while the dam prevents sediment from enriching the delta soil. According to some agronomists, the Nile valley's agricultural productivity subsequently decreased. Still, the dam helped provide electric power to Egypt's then growing economy, and was essential in modernizing rural Egypt through the introduction of electricity. The dam also spared Egypt from many floods that plagued the countries through which the Nile flowed.

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Surviving Without Oil [ii] : [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): COLUMN: 8 August 2008. Adamu Adamu.**

And this very issue of corruption which the Sardauna and the other leaders of the First Republic eschewed might be what would finally help to uncover the real face true of parasitism in Nigeria today. It is not any section of the country as such. The true parasites are those living off the sweat of the people, betraying the trust that they have given them, stealing the resources that they have put in their care and setting them against each other. Indeed, with all the corruption going on, it is amazing that some people would choose to go looking for parasitism elsewhere, and become so obsessed with the euphoria of sectionalist superiority complex, which they can't prove except by begging their own question or by reliance on the truthfulness of their own unsupported assertion. But is parasitism a new disease or has it been with us for a long time? If it is a disease, what is its cure? And if it had been with us for some time, and once upon a time one was a

parasite, how would one atone for it? When would parasitism effectively graduate to symbiosis and independence and interdependence; and could a former parasite become a proud, contributing equal? Let's do a little diagnosis and see what could possibly be a true prognosis of the disease. Officially, Nigeria came into being at the Amalgamation in 1914. On that date, the country became a single, united polity with recognized borders and a central government, though it was not yet the federation that we know today. So, specifically, what exactly did they amalgamate on that day? By uniting its Southern and Northern Protectorates, the British merely hastened up a process that was already taking place at its own speed. Though it suited their convenience, it was perhaps inevitable. They went on to tailor the new system to suit their own purposes and exploited and used indigenous resources to build the infrastructure that colonialism would use to further exploit the economy.

And it was a very robust, productive, diversified economy. At independence, oil accounted for only 2.6 per cent of Nigeria's total foreign exchange earnings. Non-oil exports, the bulk of which was agricultural produce, amounted to more than 97 per cent. So, at that time, since there was no oil, who were the parasites? On what did the economy then depend? The following is good testimony as given in the Sir Sydney Philipson Report on Revenue Allocation: "Economically, Nigeria was exceptionally dependent on the world prices of its exported commodities which in turn affected the purchasing capacity of the people. This fact is illustrated by the figures of Customs Revenue which dropped from £3,540,767 in 1927-28 to £2,109,925 in 1931-32. The Governor therefore found himself with no alternative but to look to the NAA [Native Authority Administrations], their revenues were less affected by economic conditions, for assistance in balancing the Nigerian budgets by: transfer to three of certain Government services and works, and by the reduction of their share of the proceeds of direct taxation. In the Northern Provinces, the NAA materially relieved the strain on the Government finances and to some extent, arrested the process of drastic retrenchment then being followed by taking over on secondment a considerable portion of PWD [Public Works Department] staff... and by undertaking a much larger share of responsibility for the execution of public works. By this method alone, the government obtained material relief during a period of acute stringency." The North was able to help out this way because the total surplus reserve held by it was more than twice the combined reserves held by the Eastern and Western provinces. The position of the surplus then was as follows: Northern Region NAA £2,197,606, Western Region NAA £488,880 and Eastern Region NAA £413,540. This was reflected even in their contributions to the national expenditure on education, though the North would soon be portrayed as opposed to education. In the 1944-45 financial year, the relative contributions to the total expenditure on education were as follows: the central government gave 79.28%, the Northern Region gave 13.37%, the Western Region 2.92%, Eastern Region 2.83%. And when, at the outbreak of the Second World War, the Nigerian Government found itself in financial difficulties, with a deficit of £7,056,320 in 1939, and £385,440 in 1940, it was to the Native Authorities that Sir Bernard Bourdillion turned. The Native Administrations very willingly delved into their reserves and bailed out the government. As stated by Sir Sydney Philipson, "For many years following the amalgamation of the North and South, the financial resources of the Native

Administrations were generally sufficient for their needs. Indeed, it is true to say that in the Northern Provinces, the resources of the Native Administrations were regarded as available for any useful purpose without special reference to the appropriateness of the charge; thus the main road from Sokoto to Zaria was constructed from Native Administration funds."And from the very beginning after amalgamation, the North was contributing more than the combined South, but drawing less than either the East or the West up to that time bound up in the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. The table below gives a comparison of the revenues and expenditures for the first 35 years after amalgamation.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ALLOCATION ESTIMATES

YEAR CENTRAL NORTHERN SOUTHERN TOTAL

1914 £ £ £ £

Revenue 2,661,770 770,979 207,778 3,640,527

Expenditure 1,988,788 737,439 888,651 3,614,878

1915

Revenue 158,096 34,622 14,843 207,561

Expenditure 67,388 27,720 33,824 124,739

1916

Revenue 2,234,859 483,041 358,737 3,076,637

Expenditure 1,520,734 371,446 1,048,998 2,941,173

1917

Revenue 1,942,435 570,754 387,275 2,840,464

Expenditure 1,500,972 257,705 727,691 2,486,368

1918

Revenue 2,005,315 450,897 290,979 2,747,191

Expenditure 1,118,144 184,621 631,515 1,934,280

1919

Revenue 2,972,095 555,040 575,890 4,103,025

Expenditure 2,039,346 350,276 1,154,307 3,543,929

1920

Revenue 3,818,370 579,210 588,955 4,986,535

Expenditure 4,030,151 509,515 1,900,973 6,440,639

1921

Revenue 4,578,646 586,155 288,600 5,453,401

Expenditure 5,549,663 351,581 865,939 6,767,183

1922

From the 1922 financial year to 1941, there were no expenditure allocations on provincial basis, and estimated expenditure was only classified as: Recurrent, Special and Extraordinary, and Railway Deficit. The following table gives revenue contributions from 1941 to 1948:

Estimated Revenue Contributions from Provinces 1941-48

PERIOD NORTHERN£ EASTERN£ WESTERN£

1941-42 624,164 70.5% 114,544 12.9% 146,635 16.6%

1942-43 620,000 70.9% 124,000 14.2% 130,050 14.9%

1943-44 619,500 73% 114,380 13.5% 114,640 13.5%

1944-45 594,740 71.6% 114,140 13.8% 121,210 14.6%

1945-46 590,738 72.2% 107,092 13.1% 120,777 14.8%

1946-47 364,620 69.6% 109,760 21% 49,220 9.4%

1947-48 138,120 48.3% 110,910 38.3% 36,910 12.9%

In addition, from 1914 to 1926, the North found that it was cheated out of much revenue due to it. An arbitrary formula had awarded 85 per cent of all customs revenue to the South and only 15 per cent to the North. This was despite the fact, and even the central government finally recognized, that the North was contributing more than any section, often more than all the other sections put together and taking less than either of them; and

it decided to compensate the North with a lump sum. By 1951 matters were still inimical to the North and for the first time it found that it had to complain formally. The central government set up an inquiry and in the end, the North was compensated with Â£2million.

Below is summary sectoral expenditure for the decade 1935-1945 and the contributions of the central government and the two regions of the country to the total:

Sector Central North South

Agriculture 82% 16% 2%

Education 81% 15% 4%

Forestry 76% 9% 15%

Works Extraordinary 44% 44% 12%

Works Recurrent 46% 31% 23%

Surveys 82% 15% 3%

Medical & Health 80% 11% 9%

Combined 69% 19% 12%

As could be seen above, roughly taking figures for the last decade shows that each year and for all the more important sectors, except forestry, the North was contributing more than the combined contributions of the whole of the South-and taking less. Indeed, ironically or perhaps unfortunately, even the government that resulted after the Sardauna was killed found that it had to depend for its very financial life on the reserves saved by the late Premier, which General JTU Ironsi promptly transferred to Lagos and spent. This makes the North a very interesting and unique parasite that supports everything and everyone, including its own enemies.

- **Nigeria: Bakassi - the Way Out: [This Day](#) (Lagos): OPINION: 4 August 2008.Sebastine Hon.**

As plausible, near-convincing and sympathetic as are submissions made by high ranking officials of this present government on whether or not Nigeria should handover the rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon, it is yet not in doubt, going by public international law, that Nigeria is bound by two great happenings to handover the Peninsula to Cameroon. These are: The judgment delivered in 2002 by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), under its compulsory jurisdiction, ceding in the main, Bakassi to Cameroon. The June 12, 2006, Green Tree Agreement in New York, United States of America, between Nigeria's then supremo, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, and Cameroon's 'smart one,' Paul Biya.It is

clear from the combined provisions of Articles 5, 6, 7 and 94 of the United Nations Charter that should Nigeria in any way attempt to disobey or disregard the terms of the judgment of the International Court of Justice, it will likely face official aggression from the comity of nations under the umbrella of the United Nations - ranging from imposition of sanctions to outright use of force to enforce that judgment. The consequences that would follow any of these punitive actions are too dire to be imagined. Even if Nigeria claims not to be bound by the terms of that judgment, (but this claim is baseless, with due respect) it cannot run away from the voluntary agreement reached between Chief Obasanjo (on behalf of Nigeria) and Paul Biya (on behalf of Cameroon) on June 12 2006, in New York. Arguments have been advanced that Chief Obasanjo did not consult the National Assembly or the Nigerian Army before he signed the Green Tree Agreement; hence to a reasonable extent, the agreement is not binding on Nigeria. Such a posturing, in the first place, offends the *jus cogens* principle of international public law, which simply means there exists a mandatory or peremptory norm of international law accepted and recognised by the international community, from which no derogation is permitted. In this case, the *jus cogens* is that all international agreements or treaties must be held sacrosanct and binding by the signatories thereto. Indeed, for the records, similar arguments had been canvassed by Nigeria in this very case - *Cameroon v Nigeria*, ICJ, Reports, 2002, where the Nigerian legal team had argued that the Maroua Declaration of 1975 between Nigeria and Cameroon was not valid, as the then Head of State of Nigeria, General, Yakubu Gowon, did not have constitutional backing or did not observe Nigeria's constitutional procedures before appending his signature to the agreement. The International Court of Justice held in para. 266 of its judgment, *inter alia*, thus: [T]here is no general legal obligation for states to keep themselves informed of legislative and constitutional developments in other states which are or may become important for the international relations of those States. What the ICJ meant here was that Cameroon was not under any obligation to know the internal workings of the Nigerian Constitution as to be wary of entering into the international agreement in question with Nigeria - personalised in General Gowon - who was then its Head of State. Articles 27 and 47 of the Vienna Convention on Treaties, 1969, clearly support the position taken by the ICJ in this case. Other decisions of the ICJ in support of this include: *The Application of the Genocide Convention (Bosnia) Case*, ICJ Reports, 1996 on pages 595 and 622, where it was held that under international law, 'there is no doubt that every head of state is presumed to be able to act on behalf of the state in its international relations.' See, also, *Applicability of the Obligation to Arbitrate under Section 21 of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement Case*, ICJ Reports, 1988, pages 12, 34-35 and 82. In Nigeria as in the United States, the Head of State is the Executive Head of Government, who is imbued with executive powers. This means he has powers, *inter alia*, to enter into executive international agreements that per force stand binding on his country. In Nigeria, this can be gleaned from sections 5(1)(a) and (b) and 130(2) of the 1999 constitution. The executive powers of the U.S. President to enter into such agreements were tested in the U.S. in the case of *United States v Pink* 315 US 203 (1942), concerning a dispute over title to the New York assets of a Russian Company. For, in 1933, the U.S. President and the Soviet Union Government had signed the Litvinov Agreement, whereby the Soviet Union had agreed to assign its interests in some Soviet Insurance Companies in New York to the U.S. Government. The U.S. Supreme Court held in this case that the refusal

by the State of New York to enforce the agreement was unconstitutional, as it ran counter to the executive powers of the U.S. President. The Court further held, per Justice Douglas, on page 229 that the President did not need the approval of the U.S. Senate to enter into such agreements. His lordship further reasoned on page 230 thus: A treaty is a "law of the land" under the Constitution. Such international compacts and agreements as the Litvinov Agreement have similar dignity. In its earlier decision in *United States v Belmont* 301 US 324 (1937), the U.S. Supreme Court had held that executive agreements were binding on the nation as ratified treaties. Similarly, it has been held in several English decisions that courts of law should desist from constructions that would lead to a breach of international laws or obligations, vide: *Macarthys Ltd v Smith* (1997) 3 All ER 325 at 329; *Corocraft Ltd v Pan-American Airways* (1969) 1 QB 616 and *Cheney v Conn Airways* (1968) 1 All ER 779. Even our West African neighbours, Ghana, toed this line in the case of *New Party v I.G.P. Accra* (2000) HRLRA 1 at 62-63 where the Supreme Court of that country held that even though a particular charter had not yet been passed into law by the National Assembly of that country, it was idle to suggest that "the charter cannot be relied upon." And back home in Nigeria, the Supreme Court, in *Abacha v Fawehinmi* (2000) 4 SCNJ 400 at 453, per Uwaifo, J.S.C., lead judgment, held that Nigerian courts will not interpret any statute (including in this case even our dear Constitution) as to bring it into conflict with international law. The above has roundly shown, both in the realm of public international law and within Nigeria's municipal jurisprudence that the Green Tree Agreement signed in New York between Nigeria and Cameroon remains binding on both countries and is incapable of being unilaterally breached, as President Umaru Musa Yar'adua is presently being goaded into doing. However, all hope is not lost; but this depends on the provisions of the Vienna Convention of 1969 and the mutual understanding Nigeria will be able to strike with Cameroon in the first place and with the rest of the international community in the second place. This is more important in view of the outcry by Nigeria's military authorities that certain aspects of the treaty (call it agreement or anything signifying mutual consent - in view of the provisions of article 2 of the 1969 Convention), if implemented as drafted, will compromise Nigeria's sovereignty - in that Nigerian naval fleet will have to take permission from Cameroon before plying certain waterways in the disputed area. In other words, a costly error was made by the parties as regards proper demarcations. In public international law, expressly and clearly captured by article 53 of the Vienna Convention, 1969, which established the *jus cogens*, a treaty can be voided thus: A] treaty is void if, at the time of its conclusion, it conflicts with a peremptory norm of general international law. The article then goes on to define what is a "peremptory norm of general international law." In respect to fleet on international waters or fleet by the naval forces of a sovereign State like Nigeria within its internal waterways, therefore, the "peremptory norm" relevant to the facts of this case is the existence of other international legislation and Conventions guaranteeing the right of way on international waterways. Nigeria should, in this wise, take solace under the Geneva Convention on the Continental Shelf, 1958; the Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone, 1958 and Geneva Convention on the High Seas, 1958. Relevant provisions of these Conventions were interpreted by the Supreme Court of Nigeria in *Attorney-General of the Federation v Attorney-General of Abia State & 35 Ors.* (2002) 4 SCNJ 1. Most articles of these Conventions were re-acted into the Law of the Sea Convention, 1982. The possibility of

unilateral termination by Nigeria of the Green Tree Agreement or treaty because of its apparent invalidity because certain of its clauses have infringed on Nigeria's sovereign powers are rather dim under the 1969 Vienna Convention, save if there is a termination provision therein, in which case Articles 54 and 57 of the Convention will apply. See on this: *Nicaragua v US*, ICJ Reports 1984, pages 392 and 420. In the absence of that, unilateral termination by Nigeria will be an absolute illegality. See the UN Human Rights Committee Resolution No. 26 of 1997. Another way out, as stated in the early part of this piece, is for Nigeria to wield its diplomatic muscle, by pulling Cameroon to a compromise. This is achievable under articles 41 and 58 of the 1969 Convention, which allow parties to either modify the provisions of a treaty or to suspend it entirely for sometime. It must be emphasised, too, that the ICJ has in several decisions endorsed mutually agreed claims and counter claims on maritime delimitation or equitable doctrines, for which see: the *Gulf of Maine case*, ICJ Reports 1984, page 246 (which dealt with the continental shelf and fisheries zone of Canada and the U.S.); the *Anglo-French Continental Shelf Case* 54 I.L.R. 66; the *North Sea Continental Shelf Case* ICJ Reports, 1969, page 3; the *Tunisia-Libya Continental Case* ICJ Reports, 1982, etc. The relevant Nigerian authorities could also plug the loopholes in the Green Tree Treaty of June 12, 2006 and approach either the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (established by Part XV of the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention); or the ICJ - which in revisiting its decision in the *Request for an Examination of the Situation in Accordance with Paragraph 63 of the Court's Judgment of 20th December 1974 in the Nuclear Tests (New Zealand v France) Case*, ICJ Reports, 1995, page 288 at 320, justified this revisiting on the ground that it has "undoubted powers of regulating its own procedure to device a procedure sui generis" - by examining a peculiar situation after it had already entered judgment in the case in 1974. Nigeria could also invoke the provisions of the 1982 Convention by referring the sore areas to an Arbitration Tribunal (established under Annex VII of the 1982 Convention) or a Special Arbitration Tribunal (under Annex VIII thereof). But it is not possible, as shown above, for Nigeria to completely extricate itself from the Bakassi Peninsula Treaty, a fortiori, as there is a pending, ready-to-be-enforced judgment entered in favour of Cameroon by the ICJ in 2002. No court in Nigeria, including the Supreme Court, has power to stop, momentarily or permanently, Nigeria from meeting its international obligations, id est, the judgment of the ICJ and the terms of the Green Tree Agreement. For it is settled public international law that 'international law prevails over domestic law.' See on this: *The Applicability of the Obligation to Arbitrate Case* ICJ Reports, 1988, pages 12 and 34 and *The Polish Nationals in Danzig Case*, PCIJ, Series A/B, No. 44, pages 21 and 24. Article 27 of the Vienna Convention, 1969, is also very clear on this. President Yar'adua and indeed all relevant authorities concerned with the implementation of the ICJ ruling and the terms of the Green Tree Agreement can, therefore, subject to my suggestion above that Nigeria could approach other internationally recognised Tribunals, including the ICJ itself for the purpose of trimming the sharp edges of the ICJ judgment, go ahead and implement the terms of these two international documents without incurring any municipal judicial liability. Nigeria simply has no other choice, in fact as well as in law.

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SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Olympic-Sized Symbolism as Economic Power Shifts: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): OPINION: 8 August 2008. Michael Power.**

LET the Olympic Games begin! But as they do, we should remember that the contest starting in Beijing today is not the only one of Olympian proportions playing out in the world today. There is also an economic marathon taking place between runners in the west and those in the east, a national relay race that will eventually see the baton of economic supremacy being passed from the US to China. The Beijing Olympics may yet come to symbolise the start of this handover process. Many in the west probably still think - and the lazy love of the familiar more than brute logic is often the father of their thoughts - that the west's current economic malaise is nothing more than a very bad case of cyclical flu. In such a context, aspiring western politicians will continue to peddle promises to build a better tomorrow: witness Barack Obama and his "Yes, we can!" pledge. By contrast, few will dare articulate just how structurally passé the west might soon be and therefore just how difficult delivering on those electoral promises could become. Overriding the foreboding of that small clique of westerners not in denial, the "yes we can" apologists for the west still dominate the airwaves of CNBC and Bloomberg. Those daring to suggest that something more seminal might be happening are usually dismissed as the economic equivalent of doomsday merchants wearing "End is Nigh" sandwich boards. I believe profoundly that the essence of what makes mankind such an optimistic species is our dogged faith in the idea of "hope springs eternal" - indeed Obama's book captures this determination in its title, *The Audacity of Hope*. For it is humanity's predisposition to dream of a better tomorrow that is the source of that river of human endeavour that irrigates the seeds of a brighter future. And so powerful can be this flow of optimism, it can cut valleys through the granite mountains of counter-logic in forcing its way towards the greener pastures of progress. But hope alone cannot guarantee progress and the wellspring of industriousness that feeds the west's river is not nearly as plentiful as it used to be. Instead, today's optimism rises most abundantly where the sun also rises: in the east. In this game-changing world, a few commentators -- George Soros, Marc Faber and Jim Rogers -- have suggested that the west is in its worst financial crisis in 30 years precisely because the economic baton is being passed from west to east. As the great economist, Joseph Schumpeter, might have noted, perhaps we are at a crossroads in history where western destruction is now being offset by eastern creation. In our far-from-decoupled world, the west's economic yin cannot change without impacting the east's economic yang, and vice versa.

On the one side, the west (and especially its Anglo Saxon heart), by living way beyond its means on the chimera of easily available credit, ever-rising household indebtedness and ever-increasing fiscal and current account deficits, has enjoyed many decades of prosperity. And, even in the wake of the credit crunch, most westerners (and, sadly, far too many South African economists) still believe that this model of prosperity is both soundly based and sustainable. The past year has proved to us that it is not.

On the other side, the east (and especially its Chinese heart), by living well within its means with a high domestic savings ratio (45% in China compared with a negative rate in the US), regularly running current account surpluses and maintaining high levels of foreign exchange reserves (the Greater China Club -- China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore -- now have more than \$2,5-trillion) has deferred consumption today and, by funding investments from these savings, set about building a better tomorrow. At the same time, a not insignificant portion of the east's savings have also been diverted to plug that savings gap in the west, and especially in the US. By postponing consumption for well over a decade, the east's hoped-for tomorrow has started to materialise in a better today. And despite the desire by some of the east's old guard to extend its era of abstinence, many Asian governments are now encouraging their constituents to enjoy a bigger share of the fruits of yesterday's labours. This suggests that the Asian model -- one based not upon western self-indulgence but rather eastern self-denial -- was ultimately not sustainable either. The near mirror-image of these two faces of post-1989 global economic development -- one built on using debt to consume tomorrow's income today, the other built on using today's savings to build an income-rich tomorrow -- was a convenient liaison while it lasted, but its contradictions eventually outweighed the ways in which the sides complemented each other. Destabilised by the detritus of the past year's credit crunch, the unstable equilibrium created by this bizarre arrangement has started to collapse. Whether the west overindulged or the east eased up on its self-denial is a moot point. Either way, both ways, the one side no longer got all it wanted from the other: the east saw the west's thirst for its exported manufactures being slaked; the west saw the east's demand for its debt instruments decline. Once one side pulled back, by definition, so did the other: the credit that the east extended to the west had been recycled by the west to buy products from the east, thereby creating arguably the largest vendor financing scheme in history. Reduce the flow of one and you necessarily reduced the flow of the other. And the result of this reduction? The west in particular is enduring the cold turkey shivers that follow the quick withdrawal of the amphetamines of easy credit. For its part, the east is being forced to move beyond an era where "we make TVs and Americans watch them" to one where they too are starting to become tele-addicts, which is to say "consume". Invariably, a Newer World is emerging, one where the western consumer will no longer be able to live off the back of the eastern saver. And this world will be one where the western consumer, sans that eastern credit, will no longer be able to afford an ever-increasing standard of living, at least until that consumer has broken his addiction to debt and rediscovered the magic of saving. Not so in the east. By spending more and saving less, the make-up of eastern economic growth will change and even slow from its current plus 10% levels. But, given the scale of reserves the east has squirrelled away relative to the emptiness of the western larder, the east has the wherewithal to keep its gross domestic product growing, its currencies strengthening and its wealth accumulating, and to do so far more rapidly than will henceforth be possible in the west. Thus will play out the particulars of how the baton of economic leadership will pass not between hands but hemispheres, from west to east. History, with its tidy desire to pinpoint such watershed events, may yet decide that the time and the place when this baton began to be passed was 8pm on 08.08.08, as the Olympic Games opened in Beijing, China. So where will you be when this historic moment - 2pm today our time - happens?

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- **Continent a Cold War Battleground: [The Herald \(Harare\)](#): OPINION: 5 August 2008. Sam Akaki.**

THANKS to the dwindling primary natural resources, oil and gas, the West is hounding Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and Sudan's al-Bashir, and heaping blame on Russia and China for protecting them; thus setting the stage for a new Cold War to be fought in Africa. The last Cold War saw the savage murder or violent overthrow by the British, Americans, Belgians, French and Portuguese of nationalist African leaders including Patrice Lumumba, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, Luis Cabral, Eduardo Mondlane, Samora Machel, Milton Obote, Hamed Sekou Toure, Gamel Abdel Nasser and Ahmed Ben Bella who were dubbed terrorists or Russian and Chinese sympathisers. The lucky ones -- Jomo Kenyatta, Robert Mugabe and Nelson Mandela were given long prison sentences from which they were never expected to come out, alive. Today, Mandela's statue stands as a monument of British cynicism, in Parliament square, London. The statue stood there for three years until recently when the US finally removed Mandela's name from the list of international terrorists! The human, social and economic wounds inflicted on Africa by the last Cold War are still very raw. Mozambique, Angola and Namibia are littered with millions of land mines and other unexploded military ordinances, which will kill people for centuries to come. Algeria, Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Sudan and Uganda are fighting self-destructive wars, while Somalia ceased to be a state in 1992, thanks to Western weapons. Overall, the last Cold War left Africa on the life-support machine of Western food aid administered by the United Nations' World Food Programme, while their leaders pay lip service to cure the patient. Recently, the Africa Progress Panel, headed by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, issued a report titled Africa Progress Panel responds to the G8 Summit in Hokkaido, which said: "G8 countries have done little to show how they will fund the shortfall of US\$40 billion in programmable aid and debt relief identified by the Africa Progress Panel last month. . . The G8 has yet to present clear timetables outlining future aid provision or to provide increased transparency required to improve the quality of aid". On the global food crisis, the report said, "The Panel welcomes the commitment of US\$10 billion to support food aid and measures to increase agricultural input as a necessary first step. . . More needs to be done, however, to increase the supply of food to the world's most vulnerable citizens, and immediate measures must be taken to relax export restrictions on commodities such as rice." On trade, it said, "The Panel welcomes the G8 leaders' commitment to the conclusion of an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive Doha agreement . . . As WTO negotiations enter this crucial period, all parties need to understand that the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals rest in large part on the ability of the continent to trade its way out of poverty." And in conclusion, Annan declared, "The success in supporting African development will not only result in tangible benefits for her people but ensure a more secure and prosperous future for the world. For G8 leaders, helping Africa to help itself is not a question of altruism; it is a matter of self-interest." The July 11 (US-draft resolution calling for sanctions on Zimbabwe) accused President Mugabe of "killing 100 opposition supporters and displacing 2 000", and called for punitive sanctions including imposing an

arms embargo, a clear signal for attacks on Zimbabwe. Thankfully, China and Russia, which were not at the Berlin Conference, rejected the resolution, saying it would "open the way for interference by the Security Council in internal affairs of Member States, which is a gross violation of the UN Charter." "To disorganise the AU, the International Criminal Court is planning to arrest Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir, for "leading a campaign of murder, rape and mass deportation in Darfur". The plan is advancing despite the AU statement, which "reiterated the AU's concern with the misuse of indictments against African leaders

- **Safeguards for Small Farmers Straw That Broke Doha: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): ANALYSIS: 5 August 2008.**

Safeguards to protect small farmers' livelihoods in African and other developing states, as opposed to subsidies for commercial agricultural interests in rich countries, remained an insurmountable obstacle in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks, leading the Doha Round to collapse last week. The Doha Round crumpled unceremoniously on Tuesday July 29, the ninth day of the mini-ministerial meeting. The straw that broke the camel's back - the special safeguard mechanism (SSM) - has to do with small farmers' livelihoods in the developing world. However, it should be noted that there were gaping differences on a whole host of other issues that were yet to be discussed in detail, such as the U.S.'s subsidies for its cotton farmers, as well as several issues in the industrial tariffs negotiations. The difference in views on the SSM was not only between the U.S., on the one hand, and India and China, on the other. In fact, a hundred developing countries did not accept the figures which WTO Director General Pascal Lamy had produced on Friday July 25 (the fifth day of the negotiations). These countries - the Group of 33 (which includes 46 countries); the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) group; the Africa Group; and small and vulnerable economies (SVEs) - produced an alternative set of numbers on Sunday July 27. The wrangle between the U.S. and India and China was highlighted simply because the negotiations were taking place mainly among seven players: the U.S., the European Union (EU), Japan, Australia, India, Brazil and China (also known as the Group of Seven or G7). The other selected ministers who had been invited to Geneva were excluded from those negotiations and were waiting in the corridors. Hence, it appeared that India and China were alone in disagreeing with the U.S.. The SSM is meant to address import surges in farm products. In order to protect its domestic agricultural sector from injury, the SSM would allow a country to implement an additional tariff to stem the import surge.

Among several problematic constraints in the Lamy figures that the hundred developing countries identified was the suggested trigger of 140 percent. This means a country should have a 40 percent increase in imports compared to a preceding three-year period before the SSM can be invoked. Developing countries, in contrast, were asking for a five or, at most, 10 percent import increase. A 40 percent import increase before action can be taken is likely to be too late as the import surge could already have wiped out the country's producers. However, the U.S. and a few other countries with agricultural exporting interests were immovable on this issue. On the last two days of the talks, other possible options were proposed in the G7 which India accepted but the U.S. not. The U.S.

wanted a weak SSM to ensure that the Doha Round would provide them access to developing countries' agricultural markets. The battle was thus between commercial interests in agricultural exporting countries, and the livelihoods of subsistence farmers in Africa, Asia and elsewhere. What happened in the area of the SSM, however, was echoed in several other areas. Commercial interests were seen as more pressing than the measures developing countries wanted in order to minimise the threats of unemployment and de-industrialisation. If talks had not collapsed over the SSM, there was a real chance they would have done so in the area of the non-agricultural market access (NAMA) negotiations, or the area of cotton, where consensus was not even on the horizon. There was also the issue of preference erosion, which was not yet resolved. If markets all around were to be liberalised further, many African countries stood to lose, rather than gain, because of the carving away of existing trade preferences. In sum, when African countries asked for their development concerns to be taken on board, their requests were frustrated at every turn. Conversely, the package on the table would have given the U.S. and EU special treatment. The U.S. and EU would have been able to retain all of their agricultural subsidies, only shifting them to different subsidy categories. They would also have cut industrial tariffs by a smaller percentage - about 30 percent - while developing countries were expected to cut tariffs by about 58 percent.

Analyst Aileen Kwa is the coordinator of the trade for development programme at the inter-governmental South Centre.

- **Cuba - Key to Continent's Aids Pandemic: [The Herald](#) (Harare): EDITORIAL: 4 August 2008.**

THE bravery and fervour Cuban revolutionaries have displayed since time immemorial, from Jose Marti (whom Fidel Castro affectionately refers to as the Apostle of the Revolution) and General Antonio Maceo to Che Guevara and Vilma Espin, have always been an inspiration to those that truly love freedom and justice. This passion for world peace stems from the revolutionary values which are at the core of Cuban society. Often times, the world has seen how willing Cubans are to give their lives and resources in the pursuit of freedom and justice - such as they did at the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. It is quite interesting that despite this rich history of sacrifice, Commandante Fidel Castro has humbly indicated on numerous occasions that the greatest army ever assembled in Cuba, is that of the medical brigades. These professional and well-trained brigades have many times represented their country patriotically not only at home but throughout the world. Whether speaking in our indigenous or colonial languages, no one can ever find the right words with which to express our gratitude for the countless lives Cuban medical personnel have saved across the Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. The commitment that the Cuban medical brigades have demonstrated is truly inspiring whether or not one supports Cuba's political

and social ideology. The poorest people in the world have benefited from free treatment that has been extended by the government of the largest island in the Caribbean. This level of commitment and exemplary service has put Cuba at the forefront of intervention in containing the spread and impact of HIV and Aids on both the African continent and in the Diaspora. While medical advocacy groups when revealing tragic statistics in relation to this deadly disease might have created a climate of panic that many of those with HIV or Aids never psychologically overcome, several top medical experts estimate there will be 18 million Aids orphans on the African continent by 2010. Already close to a decade into the second millennium, it is time for Africa to fully appreciate a standing offer that Cuba has made to the continent to assist in dealing with the pandemic. While the United Nations and various organisations such as the Global Fund were still busy setting up the Millennium Fund, Cde Castro communicated to the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan that Cuba would like to lend its assistance to the cause. He told Annan that because Cuba was under a decades-old blockade, the country could not give monetary aid but there was still a way in which he could give help. Cde Castro said Cuba was willing to send 4 000 -- that's right, 4 000, of Cuba's best HIV and Aids doctors and specialists directly to Africa and that they would remain on the continent until the pandemic was defeated. That offer, unfortunately was not taken up because the UN apparently feared the reaction from the United States -- Cuba's age-old enemy -- if it emerged that the Communist country was doing far more than anyone else in combating HIV and Aids. So, sadly, nothing came out of the most generous offer. It is fortunate that the region on the continent worst affected by HIV and Aids is also the same region that has the closest ties with Cuba on the continent: Southern Africa. There are numerous Cuba Friendship Associations across the SADC region and it is time these bodies jointly approached the African Union and made it clear that the continent should accept Cuba's offer. People are always saying that Africa should be left to come up with solutions to its own problems and in Cuba's magnanimous offer, the continent has an opportunity to cast aside the conditional aid that comes from the West and effectively do something about HIV and Aids. The time is more than ripe to submit a joint proposal to the AU, through the proper channels and established protocol, using the various Cuba Friendship Associations and through the offices of SADC health ministers. The proposal should call for the AU to create a joint fund from each member of the continent body to finance the 4 000-strong brigade that Cuba would like to send. This money would be used for their upkeep. The AU should agree to let Cuba develop a training programme that helps African countries deal with droughts, floods and other natural calamities and disasters as these have a huge impact on HIV and Aids. We know that the immediate reaction from some in Africa will be that making such a decision will place the continent on a collision course with the United States, which does not want the rest of the world to develop strong ties with Cuba. The case of Zimbabwe and its courageous leader President Mugabe has shown the world exactly the kind of onslaught that the US can unleash when a Third World country resists big power hegemony and makes decisions that empower its own peoples. But can the US really afford to antagonise the whole of Africa? Can it try and do to the entire continent what it has been doing to Zimbabwe? After all, the US needs Africa's resources and so there should not be any fear of the American reaction to accepting Cuba's generous offer. What will make this statement even more powerful is if Africans in the Diaspora do something equally as bold and visionary. The African community inside America's

borders are only three years removed from Hurricane Katrina -- one of the most devastating disasters in US history. In the midst of all the political grandstanding that characterised the Bush administration's response to the catastrophe, the most significant and genuine offer of help was almost totally ignored. Twenty-four hours after the hurricane struck, Cde Castro contacted the US State Department in Washington and offered to send 500 environmental disaster specialists to the Gulf region within the next day. That was not all. A further 1 500 would be dispatched over the next 48 hours. The personnel would remain in place, assisting victims of the disaster until health infrastructure was resurrected and the people were adequately catered for. In the next 48 hours, the US Health and Human Services Department declared a public health emergency in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The emergency was then extended to nine other states where survivors were evacuated to but still the US would not accept Cde Castro's offer. Later on, it is estimated that apart from innumerable deaths and damage to property, over 500 000 people were said to have needed psychological counselling following the disaster and the government's inadequate response to it. An interesting point to note: Louisiana supplies 30 percent of the oil and gas produced in the US but has a poverty rate of 23 percent. The poverty rates in Mississippi and Alabama are 23 and 20 percent respectively and these are the worst three states in the entire country. For some reason, the non-white community, who were the worst affected by Hurricane Katrina, failed to unite to confront the Bush administration for their poor response to the tragedy and for refusing to take up Cde Castro's offer. The US Department of Health was well aware of what Cuba did during the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 in Russia where they offered similar assistance. A similar offer was made after the September 11 attacks. Despite this sterling humanitarian record, the US still lists Cuba as a terrorist country and little girls like Condoleezza Rice have the temerity to paint the country as an outpost of tyranny. While conventional wisdom says the reaction of US imperialism to these offers was predictable and it would be idealistic to expect otherwise, the former Ambassador to the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, Dagoberto Rodriguez, said the offer was not just rejected, but was simply ignored. But at the same time, the response of the 40 million Africans living inside US borders was at best mediocre. We chose to waste time on television panels discussing the sound bite of hip-hop star Kanye West when he said, "George Bush doesn't like black people," rather than to tackle the real issues affecting us. Spike Lee's film, *When the Levees Broke*, dramatised the disaster that had struck but few people took the opportunity to use this documentary to pressure the administration into accepting the offers that had come from not only Cuba, but now Venezuela as well. While the cultural workers failed to shed light on Cuba's offer the medical and political sectors of our community fared no better. Neither the National Medical Association nor Black Nurses Association - our two largest medical advocacy groups - promoted this offer. Civil rights organisations like the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, the National Urban League, the Children's Defence Fund and the Congressional Black Caucus took advantage of the platform to fight to have the Cubans come and help us in the Gulf. The churches - many of which are connected to the Martin Luther King Centre in Cuba - also did very little to pressure the administration over its insensitivity. While they were efforts to raise the issue, such as those by Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, these were far and between. And now, three years later while Africa should be pushing for the Cuban

medical brigade to be deployed forthwith, we Africans in America should realise we lost a similar opportunity and should be campaigning at home so that the US government does not block this offer. We should demand that Bush not interfere should the brigade be deployed, demand presidential hopeful Barack Hussein Obama raise this issue on every campaign stop he has from here until November and that fellow aspirant John McCain not sabotage this in traditional US military fashion.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Political Dynasties in African Politics: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala):**
OPINION: 2 August 2008. Prof. Ali A. Mazrui.

Political dynasties are families that have exerted disproportionate influence on the politics of their societies. If they are successful, they may produce more than one Head of State or Head of Government. But at the very minimum, political dynasties have produced political leaders in varied ranks of the political process. The Bush family in the US has become a political dynasty. It has so far produced two presidents: George Herbert Bush and George William Bush. It is possible that there will be a third President Bush: President Jeb Bush, currently the Governor of Florida. The Kennedy family has also been a US political dynasty. One brother (John) became president; another (Robert) became Senator and then Attorney General, and the third (Edward) has been a Senator and would probably have become president but for the Chappaquiddick tragedy. The Odinga family of Kenya is becoming dynastic. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga rose as high as Kenya's Vice-Presidency. But his dream of becoming President of Kenya remained elusive, partly because of contrived impediments put in his way by rival political forces. Politicisation of Raila Odinga is turning the Odinga family into a political dynasty. The Kenyattas have also been evolving into a political dynasty. In 2002, Uhuru Kenyatta attempted to become President of Kenya like his father, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. Uhuru is young enough to ascend to the pinnacle of power in the future. Asia has experienced female succession to male martyrdom. A male leader is assassinated and a female relative emerges as a political force to take his place. In Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed as Prime Minister. Ultimately, his daughter, Benazir Bhutto, became Prime Minister of Pakistan twice before her own assassination. In Bangladeshi history, Sheikh Mujib Rahman and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq were killed. Rahman's daughter and Zia's widow rose to exercise ultimate political leadership. In Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri eventually succeeded her father, the late Sukarno, as Indonesia's Head of State. Africa is revealing a pattern of male succession to male heroism rather than female succession to male martyrdom. In the DRC, assassinated President Laurent Kabila was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila. In the Republic of Togo, the long presidency of Gnassingbe Eyadema was succeeded by the presidency of Abass Bonfoh. Both the DRC and Togo have been cases of interfamilial succession by military means. The rise of Odinga and Uhuru to national prominence in Kenya have been through democratisation rather than through military intervention. Two assassinations in Kenya in the 1960s had significant consequences for Jaramogi Oginga Odinga. One was the assassination of Pio Gama Pinto, a Kenyan born Asian whose prime passions were serving socialism and helping Odinga. When Pinto was killed in 1965, Odinga lost a gifted political organiser. But Pinto did not produce a heroic

successor after his martyrdom. The second assassination which shook Oginga's career, was the murder of Tom Mboya in 1969. Mboya was Oginga's ethnic compatriot and political rival. His death unleashed political turmoil among the Luo and resulted in Oginga's detention and banning of his political party. But the Mboya assassination did not lead to a Mboya political successor either, whereas Oginga's natural death did result in one high profile political Odinga. Oginga's obstacle towards the presidency was persistently ethnic. There was a concerted drive to prevent a Luo from becoming president. Kennedy's obstacle towards the presidency was religious. The US never had a Roman Catholic president. Kennedy needed to convince the American voters that he was more American than Catholic. Both Oginga Odinga and Raila Odinga have tried their utmost to convince the Kenyan electorate that when the chips were down, the Odingas were Kenyans first and Luo second. But, have Kenyans regarded the Odingas in the reverse order- as Luo first and Kenyans second? When Oginga Odinga said uhuru had not yet been achieved, and offered to lead Kenyans to social justice, it was fellow Luo who followed him regardless of income or social class. As far as the Kenya electorate was concerned, the messenger was more politically relevant than the message. The message was a call for greater social justice, but the messenger was judged by his ethnicity.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Climate Change - Green Investors Bypass Continent: [The New Times \(Kigali\)](#): OPINION: 7 August 2008.**

In 1997 the negotiators of the Kyoto Protocol, which regulates emissions of the industrial gases that contribute to climate change; adopted an interesting way to pay for clean development projects. It is called the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). The CDM is intended to reduce the cost of cutting emissions in the North while helping developing countries finance their own clean development projects. It allows businesses in developed countries to meet part of their domestic emissions reduction targets by financing emissions-cutting projects in developing countries, where costs are often lower. Projects are awarded one Carbon Emissions Reduction credit for each tonne of greenhouse gas they prevent from being released. These credits can be bought and sold like corporate stocks and used to lower the cost of green development projects. After the first CDM project was approved in 2005, the world trade in emissions credits has grown rapidly, topping \$64 billion in 2007. Industry analysts predict that the trade will exceed \$100 billion by the time the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

Great potential, few projects

For Africa and other poor regions struggling to adapt to climate change, access to carbon trade financing could be vital. Scientists argue that global warming is damaging Earth's climate faster than expected, and a severe shortfall in funds is hampering African efforts to cope. Although Africa generates only a tiny percentage of global greenhouse gases, it is expected to be among the regions hit hardest. "The accelerating growth of carbon markets resulting from the UN-brokered (Kyoto) climate change agreement," the head of the UN Environment Programme, Achim Steiner, told a meeting of African bankers in May 2007, "represents a significant economic and development opportunity for

Africa."However, according to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat, the UN agency that oversees the CDM, Africa accounts for only about 3 per cent of the more than 1,000 CDM-approved projects globally - and half those are in South Africa, whose sophisticated industrial and financial infrastructure lends itself to the complex CDM approval process. Africa's difficulties in attracting CDM projects are similar to those that have hampered the continent's efforts to land purely commercial investments. Those include a lack of infrastructure, higher poverty rates, limited financial resources, a shortage of the management and technical skills, weak government institutions, corruption and political instability. African governments and environmentalists also note that the CDM's rules favour pollution-reducing projects rather than those that could help Africa cope with climate change, such as irrigation schemes and flood-control programmes. Such projects are instead to be financed by the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund, financed in part by a 2 percent levy on CDM credits.

Marshall Plan needed

In view of some of Africa's leading climate scientists and environmental officials, far more is needed to match the continent's needs with resources. Richard Muyungi, deputy director for the environment in the office of the Tanzanian vice-president, told Africa Renewal that the cost of climate change in that East African country, among the world's poorest, is already running into the billions of dollars and slowing economic growth. "Our energy sector has been most affected," Mr. Muyungi said, noting that drought has sharply reduced reservoir levels for hydroelectric power. "Many of our islands are threatened by rising sea levels" because of melting polar icecaps, he continued, while higher temperatures are making costly new demands on health systems. "We now have malaria around Mt. Kilimanjaro. We never had that before." The severity of the drought, and mounting concerns about the impact of climate change on food production, Mr. Muyungi said; have already forced the government to shift spending from long-term sustainable development programmes to emergency relief. It has also downgraded its earlier target of 6-7 per cent economic growth for 2008. "We cannot estimate the total cost, as we don't know how severe the impact will be. It is already not possible to grow cotton and maize in some areas. How much the losses will be is harder to say." Tanzania is collaborating with the UN to attract CDM funding, Mr. Muyungi explained. "But the procedures are complicated. Africa is already behind in attracting foreign direct investment. The same problems stand in the way of CDM projects." The CDM needs a comprehensive approach to Africa if it is going to help the region cope, he concluded. "We really need a Marshall Plan."

Reforming the system

Ogunlade Davidson, a leading African environmental scientist and dean of postgraduate studies at the University of Sierra Leone, is even blunter. The CDM, he told Africa Renewal, has been "hijacked" by the private sector and transformed into a profit-generating centre instead of a vehicle for greenhouse gas reductions. Under the current system, Mr. Davidson says, investors are able to "piggyback" carbon emissions credits onto commercial projects in countries like China and India that are already attracting high

levels of foreign investment. That is one reason so many CDM projects are located in Asia, he declares, and so few in sub-Saharan Africa. Even more alarming, Mr. Davidson observes, is the failure of the CDM to require industrialized countries to actually cut their carbon emissions at home. "It's a major flaw. Developed countries need to reduce their emissions by 90 per cent. We need more drastic action. Market forces alone cannot deliver the reductions needed. Markets caused the problem in the first place." The CDM can be improved through reform of its criteria and procedures and tighter requirements for domestic emissions reductions Mr. Davidson says. The Mechanism also needs to be supplemented by programmes to make green technologies available to developing countries, tougher action against Northern greenhouse gas emissions and more funding for adaptation. "The needs are huge," he emphasizes. "Most adaptation finance will have to come via development aid. It must become mainstreamed into the development process." For Africa, however, fixing the market's flaws may be less urgent than finding a way into it. "When Africa only has 30 CDM projects out of 1,000," Mr. Muyungi noted dryly, "there is a problem."

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BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Presentation: August 22, 2008

Sub-Saharan Africa

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From August 10 to August 16 2008

THE HEADLINES

61. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: China Claims First Team Gold Medal: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 14 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Investments - Country to Realise \$6 Billion From China: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 13 August 2008.
- Nigeria: 3,000 Nigerians Rot in Chinese Prisons: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): 11 August 2008.
- Sierra Leone: Chinese Doctor in Police Net: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 11 August 2008.
- Liberia: China Vows to Build 100 Primary Schools, 13 Hospitals: [The Inquirer](#) (Monrovia): 14 August 2008.
- Nigeria: SON to Press for Ban of Textiles: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 15 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Chinese Firm May Replace Julius Berger in Rivers: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 14 August 2008.

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- Southern Africa: China's Thirst for Oil Exposes Gap in Regional Naval Policy: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 15 August 2008.
- Zimbabwe: Chinese Telecoms Firm to Expand Market Share: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 11 August 2008.
- Mozambique: Guebuza Praises Chinese Solidarity: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 10 August 2008.
- Botswana: Unskilled Chinese Labourers Flood the Country – MPs: [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 12 August 2008.

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- Uganda: Chinese to Build New Presidential Office: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 14 August 2008.

- Ethiopia: Chinese Company Involves in Leather Industry Here: [The Daily Monitor](#) (Addis Ababa): 13 August 2008.
- Kenya: Sh3.3 Billion Loan for Telecoms: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 14 August 2008.
- Tanzania: Key Road Set for Upgrade: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 14 August 2008.

62. PAN AFRICA

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- Emergency Grants to Help People Most Affected by Global Food Crisis: [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) (Seattle): PRESS RELEASE: 15 August 2008.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Continent Starts Solving Own Problems: [The Times of Zambia](#) (Ndola): 11 August 2008.

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- Famine Warning in Horn of Continent: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 12 August 2008.
- Beijing 2008 Olympics And Continent: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): OPINION: 13 August 2008.

63. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

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- Nigeria: U.S. Apology for Slavery: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): EDITORIAL: 3 August 2008.
- Ghana: Joint UN-African Team to Probe Deaths: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 15 August 2008.
- Mauritania: Journalist Arrested Covering Anti-Coup Demonstration: [International Freedom of Expression Exchange Clearing House](#) (Toronto): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Embrace Western Education - Muslims Urged: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 11 August 2008.

- Nigeria: Islamic Scholars Urged to Discourage Almajiranci: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 12 August 2008.
- Nigeria: US Envoy Seeks Preservation of Islamic Manuscripts: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 12 August 2008.
- Sierra Leone: Security Personnel Assault, Injure Eight Journalists Covering Political Party Meeting: [Media Foundation for West Africa](#) (Accra): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.
- Liberia: Fighters Exposed to Sexual Violence Have More Mental Health Disorders After War: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 14 August 2008.
- Guinea: New Leader Should Address Rights Abuses: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.

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- Southern Africa: SADC - Adopt Gender And Development Protocol: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.
- Zimbabwe: Government Seizes Tsvangirai's Passport: [allAfrica.com](#): 14 August 2008.
- Zimbabwe: Exiles Launch Urgent Appeal to Bar Mugabe From Summit: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 15 August 2008.
- South Africa: Bill to Allow for Prosecution of All Forms of Human Trafficking: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 14 August 2008.

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- Tanzania: Debate On Islamic Courts is Healthy: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): EDITORIAL: 15 August 2008.
- Tanzania: MPs Split Along Religious Lines: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 15 August 2008.
- Somalia: Ethiopian, Somali Soldiers Kill, Injure More Than 40 Civilians – Witnesses: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 15 August 2008.
- Somalia: Street Children Increase as Food Insecurity Grips Region: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 14 August 2008.

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- Rwanda: Repatriated Locals Battle With Life Back Home: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 15 August 2008.

64. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

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- Nigeria: Council Boss Assures Bakassi Returnees of Adequate Care: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 11 August 2008.

- Mauritania: More Would-Be Migrants Fleeing Post Coup: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 14 August 2008.

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- South Africa: Closure of Camps On Hold Pending Court Ruling, Says UN Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 15 August 2008.
- South Africa: Xenophobic Victims' Future Uncertain: [Cape Argus](#) (Cape Town): 9 August 2008.

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- East Africa: Dozens Beaten As They Are Deported From UK, Says Report: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 12 August 2008.
- Somalia: Six Missing After Attempted Sea Crossing From Somalia to Yemen - UN Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 13 August 2008.

65. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB)

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Europe, America Plunder Africa for Doctors - Prof Idris: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 15 August 2008.
- West Africa: Ghana, Togo, Benin Parley Over Bird Flu: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 14 August 2008.

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- Namibia: Health Experts, Security Personnel Meet Over Bird Flu: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 14 August 2008.

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- Uganda: Makerere Medical School Laboratory Wins Award: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 12 August 2008.
- Uganda: Man Kills Wife Over HIV Infection: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 15 August 2008.
- Uganda: Locally-Made ARVs Go on Sale: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 12 August 2008.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- Rwanda: New Aids Drug on Trial: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 12 August 2008.

66. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

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SUMMARY

Nigeria has formally handed over the Bakassi Peninsular to the Republic of Cameroon at a solemn ceremony held on August 14, in Calabar, Cross River state of Nigeria. This is in conformity with the Judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague's ruling of October 10, 2002 and the provisions of the Green Tree Agreement of June 12, 2006 signed between Former Nigeria's President Ousegun Obasanjo and President Paul Biya of Cameroon at Green Tree, New York. The United Nations, United Kingdom, United States of America, France and Germany witnessed the signing of the agreement. The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Mr. Michael Aondoankaa signed the instruments that formally handed over the territory on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria and his Cameroonian counterpart signed on behalf of his country

If projections are anything to go by, Nigeria's volume of foreign investments from Asian Tigers, China, by the end of 2008, should be around \$6 billion. This was the projection of the Director of Investment Promotion of the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Mr. Adesoji Adesugba, who also disclosed that the nation's volume of investments from the Asian country as at last June had increased to \$2.8 billion. **The Chinese police have launched a renewed clampdown on Nigerians resident in China, Daily Champion has learnt. Presently, over 3000 Nigerians are languishing in various jails while many have died from the maltreatment meted out to them.**

The government of the Peoples' Republic of China says it has resolved to build 100 primary schools across Africa, with Liberia considered as one of the favorites to benefit from the gesture.

THE Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) yesterday vowed to pressurize the federal government to ban the importation of textile materials and some consumables from China. Speaking during an awareness campaign rally entitled "Walk for standards" to showcase Quality products that have the Nigerian Mark of Quality in Enugu, **SON's director of Quality Assurance, Margaret Essiet, said that the ban had become necessary following the influx of substandard products from China into the Nigerian market.** EXPERTS are calling on SA to lead the African Union in formulating a China policy to determine strategies that will protect the security of Chinese oil supplies from west Africa that are transported via the Cape. **Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaborone Central, Dumelang Saleshando, has expressed concern at the rising number of Chinese people flooding the country and doing jobs that Botswana are qualified to do.**

IT might be too early, with the Zimbabwe crisis yet to be fully resolved, but it is still safe to say Africa is now firmly on course in solving its own problems. **After being viewed as a continent unable to solve its own problems, always looking to the west, whether for economic or political solutions, it seems like Africa is finally now demonstrating its ability to rise to the occasion.** Take the case of Kenya for instance. Agreed, there might have been outside help, but by and large, the final push came from Africans themselves. Famine threatens many areas of northern Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea unless international action is stepped up to address the chronic food needs. UK aid agency Action Aid disclosed this in a report based on a detailed assessment of the situation by its staff across the Horn of Africa region.

Black Americans are still at the receiving end of race-based atrocities .However, much as these iniquities still go on less ubiquitous scales, there have been moves by well-meaning Americans - white and black-to get the U.S. government to officially apologise and compensate the descendants of American slaves. One of the white men involved in this crusade is Democratic Representative from Tennessee, Steven Cohen, who pushed for a congressional resolution apologising for the shameful acts of slavery. Many States of America have done this, including Florida, Alabama, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey and Virginia. Others like Nebraska and Missouri were already considering this resolution when **news came out that the U.S House of Representatives had, by some decent margin, passed Steven Cohen's motion and issued a resolution that profoundly apologised for the historic wrongs of slavery and the 'Jim Crow' laws that limited the opportunities available to blacks even after the abolition of slave trade.**

A joint fact-finding team from the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been set up to look into the deaths of a number of Ghanaian nationals who were found buried in Gambia in 2005, the world body has announced . Reporter Ahmed Ould Neda of the Nouakchott-based independent news agency "Akbar Info" was arrested on 7 August 2008 while covering a demonstration against Mauritania's new military regime. Police confiscated Neda's camera with pictures of a police assault, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) reported.

Nigerian Muslims have been enjoined to embrace Western education as a matter of priority to empower themselves to become effective players in the ongoing global changes. This was part of decision of Islamic leaders from different parts of the country who converged in Ibadan yesterday for the formal launch of the Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN). The United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Ms Robin Renee Sanders, has stressed the need for the preservation of Islamic manuscripts. She pointed out that it will not only serve as an important window on the rich religious and intellectual heritage of Nigeria but also attest to the achievements of human ingenuity. Sanders made the assertion yesterday at a 5-day workshop for Islamic Manuscript Conservators held at Usman Danfodio University Sokoto.

Zimbabwean officials have blocked Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangirai and other top party officials from leaving the country to attend this weekend's summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The past two days have seen heated debate in Parliament on whether or not Islamic courts should be introduced in Tanzania. Admittedly, the contributions have been vigorous, but this should not be necessarily construed as a deep division between the Muslim and Christian MPs. For more than 40 years since independence, Tanzania has remained a united, cohesive and peaceful country largely because differences over religion have never been allowed to cause disunity or animosity, as the national Constitution is very clear on the freedom of worship. Therefore, the suggestion in some quarters that Islamic courts could lead to division among Tanzanians is, simply stated, a futile attempt to politicise the matter.

Victims of the recent xenophobic attacks will have to sit tight until Thursday. Only then will they find out whether they will be forced out of makeshift camps around the country - because the judge hearing an urgent application by the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in SA and the Wits Law Clinic says "I am not a machine"

Six people are missing after a smuggler's boat transporting 175 people from Somalia to Yemen ran into difficulties in heavy seas this weekend, the United Nations refugee agency reported.

This year's National Merit Award recipient, Professor Muhammad Idris, has accused advanced countries of Europe and America of still under-developing Africa in the area of health care by poaching her physicians. Solution to brain drain of medical doctors from the continent would, according to him, remain a mirage for a long time as the advanced world continues to lure them with money and other benefits.

Ghana's Veterinary Services Directorate, alarmed at the resurgence of avian influenza (bird flu) in Nigeria, is seeking a meeting with its eastern neighbours, Togo and Benin Republic to discuss common measures to prevent it from spreading to their countries.

Officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Services, marine experts, and representatives of the Police and the Namibian Defence Force are in Walvis Bay for a two-day workshop on avian influenza, commonly referred to as bird flu. The workshop is aimed at formulating a Rapid Response Team at local level to complement the country's efforts as part of SADC countries' efforts to control the spread of the disease.

THE Medical Laboratory Observer Magazine (MLO), a USA-based monthly magazine, **has ranked the Makerere University(Uganda) Johns Hopkins University Core laboratory at Mulago Medical School as the best in medical laboratory in 2008.**It is one of the three laboratories in Africa to be accredited by the College of American Pathologists. Representing the Makerere University Chancellor, Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, Stephen Maloba, the chairman of the Makerere University Appointments Committee, said this at an Academic Fair at Makerere University recently.

Nuclear power emits proportionately the same quantity of greenhouse gases as renewable energy forms like wind and solar power, and only about 100th of the average emissions of power generated by coal, oil and natural gas. The inclusion of this statement is one of the changes made in the final scoping report for a new conventional nuclear power station of up to 4000 megawatts (MW) that Eskom (South Africa) wants to build.

The oil-rich seed of a poisonous shrub that thrives in arid climates with poor soil lies at the heart of plans by Kenya to reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels without threatening food security. "We are definitely focusing on the jatropha plant for oil production," Faith Odongo of the Ministry of Energy told IRIN.In May 2008, the ministry unveiled a five-year strategy to develop the bio-diesel industry to "enable more Kenyans to enjoy and derive comfort from the supply of bio-diesel for agricultural production, employment creation, rural-urban balance and blending in the motor vehicle industry".

A free trade agreement is one of the main points on the agenda at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit presently under way in Johannesburg, South Africa. The summit will also discuss political problems in

Zimbabwe, Malawi and Lesotho and consider protocols on gender and poverty eradication. FOREIGN Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma yesterday admitted to tensions among members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) over individual countries' separate trade negotiations with the European Union (EU).

A paper released recently by a Commission on Growth and Development under the World Bank has praised the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) on its development ideology.

The United Nations mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) today launched a \$5 million project to speed the reintegration of ex-combatants from the country's civil war, as well as young people at risk.

SULTAN of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, has observed that crises and terrorist acts could be minimized if parties to conflicts engaged in dialogue. Speaking while receiving a British member of parliament, Nazir Ahmad who paid him a courtesy visit recently, Sultan Sa'ad expressed his readiness and willingness to extend a hand of friendship to achieve a peaceful world.

In any society, there exist criminal elements who pose a grave danger to the same society that gave birth to and nurtured them. And in every society, since the beginning of time, there has always been a mechanism to isolate and punish the criminals as individuals out of the wisdom that there is not such a thing a collective guilt and that no man should be ever punished for the crimes of his brother. However, things often go terribly wrong when criminal elements commit crimes in the name of their religion because to the undiscerning members of the larger society, this subterfuge might not be that obvious. The outcome is often suspicion among compatriots, misguided harassment and arbitrary arrests by government law enforcement agencies. This is where the Muslim community in Kenya finds itself. **It is our submission here that Islam is not synonymous with terrorism. Islam is a religion like any other. Islam clearly explicitly outlaws terrorism and destruction of lives and property.**

In recent years women in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia have secured more rights, greater access to education and a modest increase in their political representation. But entrenching those achievements will require joint advocacy by women's organizations, governments and religious groups, argues Leila Rhiwi of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). "To guarantee and consolidate the gains of the last few years we must follow through with the application of the reforms," she told Africa Renewal.

NEWS COMMENTARIES

- Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has repeated his rejection of the 'Union for the Mediterranean', launched last month in Paris on the initiative of French President Nicolas Sarkozy. Speaking on a visit to Tunis, Gaddafi, - the only leader to stay away of the 44 invited - claimed the project would separate North Saharan countries from the rest of Africa. "I do not agree to cutting up Africa for hypothetical prospects with Europe" he added, and went on to characterise the Union as a violation of AU resolutions, a threat to Arab unity, and a return to colonialism...
- About 500,000 illegal migrants enter the EU each year. Most cross land or sea borders illegally. This implies that the inflow is gargantuan. A greater percentage of the migrants are from sub-Saharan Africa whose aim is to better their lives in Europe. Net immigration continues as long as there is a wide gap in income per head between sending and receiving countries. Because the receiving countries of Europe have a higher income per head, immigrants from sub-Saharan countries are irresistibly lured to Europe. The EU countries of Spain, Italy and France all have coasts temptingly nearer poorer countries on the African continent...
- Biofuel production is certainly one of the culprits in the current global food crisis. But while the diversion of corn from food to biofuel feedstock has been a factor in food prices shooting up, the more primordial problem has been the conversion of economies that are largely food-self-sufficient into chronic food importers. Here the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) figure as much more important villains. Whether in Latin America, Asia, or Africa, the story has been the same: the destabilization of peasant producers by a one-two punch of IMF-World Bank structural adjustment programs that gutted government investment in the countryside followed by the massive influx of subsidized U.S. and European Union agricultural imports after the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture pried open markets. African agriculture is a case study of how doctrinaire economics serving corporate interests can destroy a whole continent's productive base...
- As Africa marks 10 years since the bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es Salaam on August 7, 1998, security concerns relating to counter-terrorism define the context of foreign aid, nearly eclipsing previous priorities of good governance and human rights. This is damaging for both global poverty reduction and worldwide security as aid to poor countries becomes inextricably tied to the military imperatives of the war on terrorism. Donor countries need to rethink the trend of tying aid to the counter-terrorism and instead focus on poverty alleviation programs as an integral process of draining the swamps of terrorism. Historically, humanitarian assistance has been impartial and should remain so. Western powers should opt for the easier and cost-friendly route of assisting African countries to beef up existing legal and surveillance capacity to detect, deter and destroy terrorist networks before they launch attacks. This incorporation of security concerns in development thinking is not new and dates back at least to the Cold War era...
- Barack Obama might become the next United States president. Because of his African roots, this possibility has been met with euphoria and enthusiasm in the continent. In some instances, African expectations are the expression of racial

pride. In others, they are simply irrational, unrealistic and misguided. Centuries of slave trade and systematic degradation of people of African descent notwithstanding, there might be an American legacy of compassion towards the continent. Africa's importance to US national interests might even be growing. The continent now supplies the US with 15 percent of its oil imports. Since the end of the Cold War, the US has diversified its initiatives in Africa. Several valuable assistance programmes with strong bipartisan support in the US congress now range from major trade agreements to the fight against HIV/Aids, malaria, tuberculosis and terrorism...

THE REPORT IN DETAIL

74. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: China Claims First Team Gold Medal: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 14 August 2008.**

China, yesterday put no one in doubt about their intention to win the 29th edition of the Olympic championship which they are hosting by winning the team gold medal of the tournament. China scored a total points of 188.900 to win the women's gymnastic gold against United State. The United States won the silver medal with a total of 186.525 points and Romania won the bronze with a total of 181.525 points. China entered the Team final as favorites, but it was pushed all the way by a determined United States. The two sides' first rotation was the Vault, with the United States taking a slender lead. The second rotation for China and the United States was the Uneven Bars, which is regarded as China's specialty. China did not disappoint, gaining the lead with a dominant display on the apparatus. He Kexin and Yang Yilin were outstanding in the Uneven Bars, scoring 16.850 and 16.800 respectively. Despite the best efforts of the United States' Nastia Liukin, who scored 16.900, the United States could not overcome China's dominance of the apparatus. The United States gained slightly more points than China in the Balance Beam, a rotation that was marked by the mistakes of the United States' Alicia Sacramone and China's Cheng Fei. Sacramone was clearly affected by her mistake and also performed poorly in the next rotation, the Floor Exercise.

- **Nigeria: Investments - Country to Realise \$6 Billion From China: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 13 August 2008.**

If projections are anything to go by, Nigeria's volume of foreign investments from Asian Tigers, China, by the end of 2008, should be around \$6 billion. This was the projection of the Director of Investment Promotion of the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Mr. Adesoji Adesugba, who also disclosed that the nation's volume of investments from the Asian country as at last June had increased to \$2.8 billion. Adesugba, who spoke at a dinner party on Monday in honour of the outgoing Economic and Commercial Attaché to the Office of the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China, Mr. Huang Jie, particularly observed that Nigeria's economic and investment interest in Asia, is based on the fact that "the Chinese understands Nigeria better than the

West".According to the NIPC Director, "we've found out that they (Chinese) are more susceptible to coming. They are more adventurous. They understand our politics better than the West, and you'd see the effect. Apart from the oil sector (where we've witnessed an increase), there is a sharp increase in the other sectors in the volume of investments from the East. Investments have gone up ten folds. Last year, we had a total of \$4 billion between Nigeria and China. For this year alone; as at last June, we made about \$2.8 billion".While noting that the Chinese strategy of coming into Africa is to engage the continent, Adesugba further hinted that "the total volume of trade in Africa has also increased ten folds. As at last year, we were talking of about \$45 billion, and it is expected that by 2010, it might actually reach about \$100 billion. For Nigeria, we are expecting that the volume would increase to almost \$6 billion. For just one investment alone, using the Ogun State's Gwandung Export Promotion Zone (GEPZ) as an instance, we had an inflow of about \$500 million. This is just part of the \$2 billion-project, and we are expecting about 30 Chinese companies to come and set up their businesses in that part of the country".

- **Nigeria: 3,000 Nigerians Rot in Chinese Prisons: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): 11 August 2008.**

The Chinese police have launched a renewed clampdown on Nigerians resident in China, Daily Champion has learnt. Presently, over 3000 Nigerians are languishing in various jails while many have died from the maltreatment meted out to them.Daily Champion gathered that many of those in jail are tagged illegal immigrants and would be repatriated immediately the 2008 Beijing Olympic ends.This is even as many are making frantic efforts to bring their families back to Nigeria. Chinese authorities reportedly ordered that any black seen should be clamped in jail until such a person gets money for his air-fare back to Nigeria.According to a Nigerian who identified himself as Emmanuel, said the arrest and detention of Nigerians affects both legal and illegal immigrants in China.Emmanuel, who said he had been staying in the country for years, explained that the arrest of Nigerians who did not legally enter the country,, had been on- going until January this year when it took a new dimension.He told Daily Champion that the Chinese Police now arrest any black person seen anywhere in the country and lock them up in cells for months . Such person are released if valuables that can pay their flight home are recovered from them.He said that many of the deaths recorded are from those who jump from as high as 10-storey buildings to escape the dehumanizing treatment meted to them by the Chinese Police.According to him, when arrested, they are usually beaten like common criminals, handcuffed and a certain torch-light is flashed on them to render them weak and near senile.Emmanuel lamented that the Nigerian Ambassador to China is not helping matter as he is yet to do anything to ameliorate the sufferings of Nigerians."A lot of people are dying in the cells here but we don't get to see them because once they die the Chinese authorities will cover it up. The over 100 deaths that have been reported are those who jumped from houses to evade arrest."We are ready to leave their country but the problem is that they will arrest you, destroy your passport and put you in their cells. After some time they will ask if you have money for your flight back home as that is the only condition on which they will deport you or else you will remain in cells"."In fact many Nigerians are looking for ways to tell their people back home to send money to

them before they can venture out of their homes here in China so that if they arrest you, you can tell them that you have your flight money back home. The situation it was revealed, has led to many Nigerians going into hiding. Lamenting further, Emmanuel said: "You can imagine where people are given only white rice with what looks like water from a boiled pig meat once in a day and this continues as long as you remain in the cell." "We want to go since they don't want us here so if the Nigerian government can officially send any airline down here to convey us home, you will see thousands of Nigerians that will rush back home." "Some people who are deported are as white as a ghost, you can check at the Nigeria airport back home and see if you won't see more than four to five Nigerians deported from China almost on a daily basis." "Let Yar'Adua send airline to take us home, we are not saying that they should beg for us to stay, no we want to come back home. If not for the problem back home where there is nothing working properly what are we doing here, Nigeria is better than China," he added. Emmanuel urged Daily Champion to continue to call them in China as well as help get the message across to the Nigerian government, pointing out that he could be contacted through the number used by Daily Champion. Corroborating the story, another female Nigerian, Janet who said she went to China to meet her Fiance stated that it was horrible as her lover cannot even fend for her anymore not to talk about paying her air fare back to Nigeria. It was Janet's condition that led to Daily Champion calling China to ascertain the true situation following her complaint to a friend here in Nigeria on why she is yet to return to the country. According to the friend (names withheld) who gave Daily Champion the telephone number of Janet, he had to call her when she did not call anybody as the period she was supposed to stay in China had lapsed. Janet told our correspondent that the only hope left is for the Federal government to intervene and help fly Nigerians back home. It would be recalled that On 28 Dec 2005, Nigerians in China witnessed the sudden death of Chinedu Akidi who jumped to his death when China Police was raiding his residential area. Earlier, two other Nigerians including Charles Mbigbo a School teacher fell off high rise buildings, in a similar circumstance and broke all limbs. Also recently, when the Chinese police raided worship places, many Nigerian worshippers were beaten with iron batons, resulting in the death of three. Daily Champion gathered that many Nigerians that are being detained by the communist police are kept in an underground cell especially in the commercial city of Gunagzhou. Nigerians are meant to pay between N175, 000 to N227, 500 naira bribe just to get them released as soon they are arrested to avoid being thrown into the underground cell. Efforts to get officials of the Chinese embassy in Nigeria to react to the allegations did not yield any result. An email sent to the embassy was not returned and the entire phone numbers listed on its website could not be reached.

- **Sierra Leone: Chinese Doctor in Police Net: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 11 August 2008.**

Police in Kenema have arrested a Chinese surgical doctor Feng Shen of 25 Combema Road after his alleged illegal scrap metal deal with the proprietor and manager of Gava Forest Industry Corporation. Police constable 9592 Kadie Turay said the doctor, who does surgery at a private hospital on Combema Road, was arrested because he reported entered into a questionable business transaction with Edward Owie now based in Freetown. She said on August 5, police of the criminal investigations division received information from

the of the resident minister indicating that Gava Forest corporation was destroying durable machines left behind by the former forest industry corporation."Upon receipt of that intelligence we visited the site where one Nabie Santigie Dumbuya was caught cutting the scrap. He was arrested," she explained. He later told the police that Doctor Shen contracted him to cut down the machines so that it could be transported easily."When we interrogated Doctor Shen he admitted contracting Santigie to cut the metals into pieces after he completed arrangement with the proprietor of Gava for the purchase of the old machine. He further stated that Owie told him that he was selling the machines so that the industry could buy new ones," she said. However, workers of Gava have expressed dissatisfaction with the unfortunate incident and the non payment of their salaries. Mustapha Keifala said he understood that the management of Gava has decided to sell the machines so that the money could be used to pay their salaries."We have said it time and again that Gava has no fund to operate the industry. Now they are destroying the asset of the forest industry corporation," he said.

- **Liberia: China Vows to Build 100 Primary Schools, 13 Hospitals: [The Inquirer](#) (Monrovia): 14 August 2008.**

The government of the Peoples' Republic of China says it has resolved to build 100 primary schools across Africa, with Liberia considered as one of the favorites to benefit from the gesture. The special envoy on African Affairs at the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Mr. Liu Guijin, said in addition to the construction of these schools, his government has planned to build 13 hospitals across the continent to assist with the medical needs of the countries that would benefit. Addressing journalists from Africa who visited the Chinese Foreign Ministry recently when he briefed them on his country's relationship with African nations, Mr. Guijin said that in addition to these gestures, his country has already signed series of relevant bilateral agreements with some countries on the continent for possible bilateral assistance. Mr. Guijin, the former Chinese Ambassador to Zimbabwe, said all African nations would benefit from this gesture stressing that under the agreement, some of the countries would get more schools while others will get less. He added that his country is prepared to get these projects started but pointed out that some of the countries are faced with the problem of acquiring land where these buildings will be erected. Envoy Guijin, who was also his country's Ambassador to the Dulfur Region of Sudan recalled that during the recent G-8 summit held in Japan, his country made a commitment to countries across the continent that it would focus on the development of Africa, stressing that under the China, Africa Forum, his country remains a partner of Africa. Ambassador Guijin made it clear that under the China, Africa Forum, which according to him will see his country following the principle of equality with its African partners, China would not allow its trade relationship to interfere with the political affairs or decisions of African countries. He assured African nations that China would honor all commitment it has made to countries across the continent because as he put it China attaches great importance to its relationship with African nations. In a related development, the Government of the Peoples' Republic of China has given its position on the political situation in Sudan and the indictment of the President of that country, Omar Al-Bashir. In its position released by Ambassador Guijin, when he addressed visiting journalists at the Chinese Foreign Ministry recently in Beijing, the Chinese government

said it supports dialogue out of the conflict and wants all the parties to come together and engage in dialogue. Ambassador Guijin said China supports the position of the African Union and the Arab League to bring the parties to the conference table stressing that the decision of the ICC to indict the Sudanese President comes at an inappropriate time when efforts are being exhorted to pursue dialogue in the matter. He said the decision of the ICC to unseal the indictment against President Bashir, would jeopardize and complicate the on-going process of dialogue being pursued by the AU and the Arab League.

- **Nigeria: SON to Press for Ban of Textiles: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 15 August 2008.**

THE Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) yesterday vowed to pressurize the federal government to ban the importation of textile materials and some consumables from China. Speaking during an awareness campaign rally entitled "Walk for standards" to showcase Quality products that have the Nigerian Mark of Quality in Enugu, SON's director of Quality Assurance, Margaret Essiet, said that the ban had become necessary following the influx of substandard products from China into the Nigerian market. According to her, investigations have shown that most of these substandard goods including clothing and food beverages from China are smuggled into the country from neighbouring countries like Cotonou and Niger Republic. Essiet, who was addressing a crowd of manufacturers and consumers who participated in the walk that commenced from Okpara Square through streets of Enugu to the Trade fair site, disclosed that investigations conducted proved that goods manufactured in the country have met with international standards, adding however, most of the products are being faked outside the country. "They will smuggle it into the country through the borders and fake the SON quality marks which they print on them, knowing that most goods certified here are of international standards", she said. The "walk for standards" campaign, she added was part of the efforts of the organization to "continue to patronize products with the NIS quality mark and to ask them to discontinue the use of international products which experiences have shown are fake and of low standard quality". "What we are doing is part of the agenda we have to create awareness because Nigerians believe so much in imported goods which we have seen is of substandard. We are engaging them in a workshop to educate them more on the need to patronize the home made goods and to report to us any product they bought that have no marks of NIS", Essiet added. She told the participants that SON would soon roll out quality assurance marks for products like sachet water and other consumables in the Nigerian market and advised the people to feel free to ask questions about the source of products without such marks.

- **Nigeria: Chinese Firm May Replace Julius Berger in Rivers: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 14 August 2008.**

The Rivers State government has, following the withdrawal of German construction giant, Julius Berger Nigeria PLC, from the State on account of insecurity, entered into negotiations with a Chinese firm, China Harbour and Engineering Company to take up projects in the state. It will also henceforth, prosecute any company which executes poor quality jobs for the State, pointing out that there was a law to that effect and that it would

be strictly applied especially on companies which build poor quality roads for it. Governor Chibuike Amaechi stated this yesterday in an interactive session with newsmen in the State where he lamented that all the developmental projects he hoped would change the lives of the people positively were stalled. He described the Chinese construction company as the fifth largest and best construction firms in the world whom he discussed with when he traveled to that country, adding however that he was not replacing Julius Berger but would be bringing the Chinese to create healthy competition. Amaechi regretted that after spending about N11 billion on the power sector project of the state, the expatriates, who were handling it moved out of the State after the kidnap of Julius Berger workers. The situation, he lamented, had put on hold the projected completion of the project before December for regular power supply from the gas turbines built by the State at nearly N60 billion according to former Governor Peter Odili. He therefore stressed the need for all hands to be on deck for the flushing out of criminals from the State so that the development planned by his administration would be realized.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa: China's Thirst for Oil Exposes Gap in Regional Naval Policy: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 15 August 2008.**

EXPERTS are calling on SA to lead the African Union in formulating a China policy to determine strategies that will protect the security of Chinese oil supplies from west Africa that are transported via the Cape. Addressing a conference on maritime security in southern Africa in Stellenbosch recently, Prof Renfrew Christie, dean of research at the University of Western Cape, said China's ever-growing demand for energy was a global threat - and particularly to the southern Africa region, which had to prepare itself for any eventuality - ranging from terrorism to the depletion of marine resources through overfishing by foreign companies. Christie estimates that China's energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product is eight times that of the UK, five times that of Japan and three times that of the US. As a result, China is competing with the US and Europe for African oil and, already, Angola is believed to be supplying China with more oil than any other external source. "Africa cannot afford not to have a China policy because, even now, unnecessary wars are being fought in Africa about oil for China," said Christie. China is headed towards being the world's richest economy, he said. For example, the number of Chinese living in extreme poverty has considerably dropped. This means China has raised millions of people to the level of urban middle class, with implications for energy demands and food consumption that will soon outstrip world supply. Helmoad Romer Heitman, of military magazine Jane's Defence, said African states had been neglecting their obligations to invest in the necessary personnel and equipment to ensure their maritime security. The neglect meant there was effectively the ceding of control over large swathes of national territory; leaving economically important activities and resources unprotected. He said this was an abdication of the countries' responsibilities to "monitor the primary approach route of any serious enemy". Not taking into account the offshore continental shelf, Sub-Saharan Africa has a coastline of about 21000km and an exclusive economic zone of 7,8-million square kilometres. African leaders were therefore

reminded that two-thirds of their populations lived inside a 60km strip along the coast. Only 15 of Africa's 53 states are landlocked and, since 1960, half of the United Nations peace operations have taken place in coastal states. Experts say that none of the five regions of the continent have an excuse for not considering new doctrines, organisational structures, weapons, training, a maritime security centre and new rules of engagement in order to protect regional economies effectively. Prof Reiner Pommerin of Dresden University of Technology said a new approach to military thinking and planning was crucial for regions in Africa. Even for Germany and its neighbours, the need to improve maritime forces hit home only when German ground forces had to be evacuated from Somalia in 1994 using frigates and support ships. It also took the tragic situation in former Yugoslavia, which required the lengthy participation of German Navy ships to control the Adriatic Sea, to note the importance of equipping naval forces in Europe. Pommerin said an efficient maritime security concept could be achieved by a multinational approach in Africa, as had successfully been achieved by the European Union. "Only African nations can really guarantee maritime security in African waters," he said. Christie said China would have substantial implications for the maritime affairs of Africa, since vast quantities of oil bound for China had to be shipped safely around the Cape. "Whoever wants to protect Chinese oil supply must secure Cape waters; whoever wants to stop oil flows to China must master Cape depths," he said. The round trip by tanker between Luanda and Maoming is 18000km. In the medium term, the Chinese are expected marginally to reduce the load on sea transport, via a Burmese pipeline. There is also speculation that they could build a blue water fleet, centred on aircraft carriers, to protect the supply. Christie argues that for the sake of world peace and prosperity, a maritime security dimension is crucial and inescapable for southern Africa. He says African states should decide now to be part of those protecting the Chinese oil supply or risk seeing their economies crumble when rogue elements -- or even rogue states -- begin to attack tankers. "This is not just a 'Malacca dilemma' as some would think. I suggest the threat exists also at the Cape of Storms," he says. "Whether successive governments are more or less sympathetic to Chinese oil dilemmas, the South African navy needs more ships and more time exercising at sea so it can achieve its goals, whatever they turn out to be." Christie says the Cape is a choke point for oil to China, just as it could be for oil to Europe, if the Suez Canal were to be closed or damaged. Chief of the South African Navy, Vice-Admiral Johannes Mudimu, said improved mechanisms for the governance of oceans by national governments, regional organisations and international agencies were an urgent necessity. There was a growing concern for the health of the world's oceans due to the rise in maritime crime and maritime warfare. Mudimu said SA still had no comprehensively encompassing maritime policy and this often led to duplication of effort, a waste of resources and, in certain instances, critical maritime tasks not being carried out due to functional delimitations that had not been agreed to.

- **Zimbabwe: Chinese Telecoms Firm to Expand Market Share: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 11 August 2008.**

Huawei Technologies, one of the biggest telecommunication companies in China which is operating in Zimbabwe, is working on expanding its market share in the country through engaging in partnerships with other players in the sector, an official said last

Friday. Huawei Technologies Zimbabwe general manager Wang Peiyu told New Ziana that the company was looking forward for local companies in the communications industry to enter into business deals. The company, which specialises in supplying telecommunications equipment, was already working on a large scale with fixed telecommunications network operator TelOne. "We are looking forward to increasing our market share here and we are making efforts to develop relations with some other players in the industry." The company had a great start since we moved into the country and the future is bright," said Engineer Peiyu. Eng Peiyu said Zimbabwe's telecommunications sector was still in its infancy. Zimbabwe has only three mobile and one fixed telephone provider, all of which are struggling to meet the high demand for service. The four companies have a total subscriber base of less than 3,5 million. "The network coverage in the country still falls far short of world standards," said Eng Peiyu. "That in itself is where our opportunities will come from," he said, adding the company would play a big role in the development of the telecommunications in the country. Although the harsh economic environment was impacting negatively on operations, Eng Peiyu said the company was managing to survive.

- **Mozambique: Guebuza Praises Chinese Solidarity: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 10 August 2008.**

Mozambican President Armando Guebuza on Sunday said he is confident that Chinese involvement in socio-economic projects in Africa is part of the same friendship and solidarity that was shown by China in the struggle against colonial rule. Guebuza, who was in Beijing for the opening of the Olympic Games, was speaking in an interview with the Chinese television station CCTV. He denied that China had any colonialist pretensions of its own in Africa. Instead China had proved to be a sincere friend, helping countries such as Mozambique to free themselves from foreign rule and achieve independence. When Africans fought selflessly for independence, he said, it was not so that that could immediately be recolonised or have a new boss with a Chinese rather than a European face. Those who talked of China "colonizing" Africa had no idea what real colonialism was, said Guebuza, or suffered from a superiority complex leading them to believe that "we Africans are incapable of choosing our friends". He said he had been in personal contact with the Chinese since the 1960s, and Mozambique's war for independence. He was sure that the motive for Chinese interest in Africa was a genuine solidarity and desire to help African peoples to speed up their development. He recalled that during the anti-colonial struggle voices in the west claimed that China wished to export its own political system to Africa "but we knew that was a groundless accusation". "What we wanted was to free ourselves from colonialism and all those who could help us were welcome, and we saw them as true friends", Guebuza added. "Today also we are not going to be carried away by similar accusations, because what we want is to free ourselves from poverty, and once again we are ready to accept all the aid that anyone wishes to give us". Guebuza said he had been visiting China since 1966 (nine years before Mozambican independence in 1975) and he had never seen any evidence that Beijing wished to colonise Africa. Asked about the crisis in Zimbabwe, Guebuza expressed support for the vetoes by China and Russia on the United Nations Security Council in July which had prevented the imposition of wider sanctions against President

Robert Mugabe and other named members of his regime. He thought that these vetoes were correct steps that prevented radical measures to a problem which could be resolved peacefully. As for the Olympics themselves, Guebuza thought that, if the Olympic spirit were to prevail in the United Nations, "the world would be a much better place than it is today - though we must recognise that the world has already changed much for the better in recent years". He lamented the lack of political will to transfer technology from the rich to the poor countries. Guebuza believed that, had the political will existed, it would have been possible to defeat diseases such as AIDS by now.

- **Botswana: Unskilled Chinese Labourers Flood the Country – MPs: Mmegi/The Reporter (Gaborone): 12 August 2008.**

Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaborone Central, Dumelang Saleshando, has expressed concern at the rising number of Chinese people flooding the country and doing jobs that Batswana are qualified to do. Commenting on the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport (SSKI) Upgrading and Expansion Project (Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) Loan Ratification Bill, he said that "even deep in rural areas there are many Chinese people working as labourers". He stated that he was also disturbed to find more Chinese people digging trenches at the construction site at SSKI when Batswana could do the job. He urged the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs to stop issuing work permits to unskilled foreigners. The MP took a swipe at the secretive manner in which government withholds information from parliamentarians and at the same time expecting them to approve loans it gets from foreign financiers. He said that it was a pity MPs only learnt about the design of the airport from newspapers when the minister found it unnecessary to share the information with the legislators. At this point, Assistant minister of Finance and Development Planning, Guma Moyo, intervened, saying that the MPs had not asked for the information. Saleshando did not take kindly to the remarks and dismissed Moyo as somebody who has transformed overnight since he got the cabinet position. He said Moyo used to complain that government was withholding information from MPs, but he has now changed his tune. Saleshando accused government of failing to commit itself to citizen economic empowerment by giving big projects to foreign companies. He said that the argument that citizen-owned companies have a tendency of abandoning projects before completion was not valid. Even foreign companies abandon projects, he said. He further said that some companies sideline locally produced goods in favour of South African imports and called for an immediate stop to the practice. MP for Ngwaketse West, Mephato Reatile, accused ministers of failure to use their brains for getting loans from foreigners when Botswana has over P40 billion in foreign reserves. He said this would only serve to enrich foreign countries. MP for Tonota South, Pono Moatlhodi, expressed disappointment at the small size of the national airport. He said it should be enlarged to avoid another expansion in a short time. MP for Palapye Moiserale Goya appealed to government to avail information to MPs in future. He called for a bigger car park at the airport where people can leave their vehicles when travelling abroad.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Chinese to Build New Presidential Office: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 14 August 2008.**

THE Chinese government is to construct an office block for the President and the prime minister, works state minister John Byabagambi told Parliament yesterday. The construction of the twin tower begins on November 1, on Plot 9-11, Sir Apollo Kaggwa Road in Kampala and will be completed in two years, he added. The minister was answering questions from MPs about the works sector during the debate of the budget. The office complex will be located near Parliament on the Government-owned land which was once housed the Criminal Investigations Department headquarters. The old structure has already been demolished and the land fenced off. At present, the President's office is located at Parliament. However, due to the lack of space, MPs have suggested that the President, like the Police Force did, should leave Parliament Buildings. The MPs also want the Government to build offices for its departments in order to cut down the cost of rent. Speaking after his address, Byabagambi said the twin towers will have nine floors each and will cost about \$20m (sh32b). China is expected to donate the money, he said, for the complex whose outer walls will be covered with granite. He noted that the architectural drawings had been submitted to Kampala City Council for approval. Tests on the soil to establish the depth of the foundation are being carried out. He said the donation was secured following a visit by the Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, to Uganda in 2006. He explained that President Yoweri Museveni "specifically requested for an office block," said Byabagambi. Some ministries such as foreign affairs, finance, health and defence, already have office buildings. The works ministry is also planning to put up its head offices, Byabagambi said. An office for the Auditor General is also under construction, according to Keith Muhakanizi, the deputy secretary to the treasury. The Uganda Revenue Authority this week secured a loan from the National Social Security Fund to put up its own office block. The minister told Parliament that a new bridge, with a dual-carriage, would be built on River Nile at Jinja, with a Japanese loan. "We expect the contractor to be on site by 2010," he said. Japanese experts have already carried out a study on the bridge, which he said will not be destroyed but repaired. Asked when Uganda would have its own airline, Byabagambi replied that Air Uganda was the national carrier although it does not belong to the Government.

- **Ethiopia: Chinese Company Involves in Leather Industry Here: [The Daily Monitor](#) (Addis Ababa): 13 August 2008.**

Sino-oversee Leather Products PLC, a Chinese company yesterday signed an agreement with the Oromia regional state Investment Commission enabling it take 50,000m² of land from the region and plant four leather product factories. The factories are set be planted around Sululta town with the total capital of 312 million Birr. One of the factories to be built by the company would be a tannery with the capacity of producing 3 million pieces or 12 million sq. feet finished leather annually whereas the second one will be a glove factory with a capacity of producing one million pairs of leather gloves annually. The third one will be a Shoe factory with the capacity of producing 2 million pairs of leather shoes per year and the last one is a leather garment factory. It has the capacity of

producing 200,000 pieces of leather jackets per year, according to the agreement. Xu Jian Liang, the representative of the company who signed the agreement with the Oromia region's investment commission commissioner, said the construction of the tannery will begin in the coming eight months and the other factories construction will be over and done within three months. The establishments of the factories are expected to create job opportunities for 1300 employees, the officials at the signing ceremony at the Oromia region's investment commission office said. The total payment for the lease period granted from the commission for 80 years would be Birr 14,000,000 the first payment of which would be Birr 2,100,000, the representative said adding that the remaining payment would be carried out within 40 years. The representative said the factories would all be environment friendly for latest technology of the company would be applied in its commitment to protect the area from pollution. The Oromia Investment Commission Commissioner Alemu Simi on his part said his office will give a due attention to wastage disposal. "It is also included on the agreement and there is responsible body who checks the company whether it is working with the agreement or not", he said. The Sino-oversee Leather Products PLC is the sister company of Xinxiang Kuroda Mingliang leather Co Ltd.

- **Kenya: Sh3.3 Billion Loan for Telecoms: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 14 August 2008.**

The telecommunication industry is set to be the biggest beneficiary of a Sh3.3 billion (\$50 million) facility signed between two development finance institutions on Thursday. The deal, between China Development Bank (CDB) and PTA, which is the largest line of credit the latter has ever received from a single institution, will support the bank's strategy in financing the growing industry. "The developmental impact of improving telecommunication networks cannot be underestimated and we intend to continue being active in this sector," said PTA bank president, Dr Micheal Gondwe. "The partnership with PTA bank dates back to 2006, when we met in Sino-Africa Beijing Summit and signed the Framework Cooperation Agreement since our two organisations have the same goal of accelerating development," said CDB, Kenya Project Development Team, general director, Mr Zhu Qingdong.

Use gadget

The African telecommunication sector has witnessed unprecedented growth in the past three years, according to the United Nations International Telecommunications Union. It says 65 million new clients were added to the total subscriber base in Africa last year alone.

- **Tanzania: Key Road Set for Upgrade: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 14 August 2008.**

A Chinese firm has won the tender to reconstruct the 110km Arusha-Namanga road. The company, China Geo Engineering of Beijing, is currently assembling construction equipment at a campsite near Arusha. Construction work would start anytime after all the

equipment had been assembled, probably early next month. Mr Deudedith Kakonko, the Arusha regional manager of the National Roads Agency (Tanroads), told The Citizen yesterday that the construction would take three years. "The road will be completed in three years," he said, adding that the project would cost \$60 million (Sh82 billion), being a loan from the Africa Development Bank (AfDB). He said implementation of the long-awaited road project had been delayed by the lengthy contracting and procurement procedures. The Arusha-Namanga road construction is part of the massive rehabilitation of the road linking Arusha and the Kenyan town of Athi River, one of the major infrastructural projects to be undertaken by the East African Community. Similar work is already underway on the 133km Athi-River-Namanga section since last January, according to the regional Tanroads boss. The entire project (Arusha-Athi River road) will cost about \$140 million through a loan from AfDB, through its funding agency, the African Development Fund. The Tanzania and Kenya governments will provide counterpart funds to the tune of about \$8 million to augment the loans. It will be one of the major infrastructure development projects to be undertaken by EAC under the East African Road Network Project which has been in the pipeline for a long time. Out of the total of \$140 million to be spent on the project, some \$80 million (Ksh5.6 billion) will be for the 135km Athi River-Namanga portion on the Kenyan side and about \$60 million (Sh82 billion) for the Namanga-Arusha section. The Arusha-Athi River road, the main overland link between Tanzania and Kenya, was first tarmacked more than 40 years ago. The road project would also include upgrading of the Namanga border town into a one-stop centre for trade facilitation within the EA region. The latter component, dubbed East African Trade and Transport Facilitation Project, will be funded jointly by AfDB and the World Bank. The road would be upgraded to cater with increased traffic, said Mr Phillip Wambugu, EAC director for Infrastructure Development. Namanga is the busiest of post along the Kenya-Tanzania border. It is the main entry point for tourists crossing overland from Kenya heading for tourist attractions in the northern Tanzania. The road, which is also crucial for Tanzania's tourism industry and trade with neighbouring countries, is part of Corridor Five road network that runs from Tunduma to Moyale on the Kenyan/Ethiopian border.

75. PAN AFRICA

WEST AFRICA

- **Emergency Grants to Help People Most Affected by Global Food Crisis: [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) (Seattle): PRESS RELEASE: 15 August 2008.**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation today announced a \$17.6 million package of grants to help people most affected by the global food crisis and support small-scale farmers in developing countries. The largest grant—\$10 million to the World Food Programme (WFP)—will continue the organization's efforts to feed young children and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in Niger, Cote D'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso, where malnutrition

rates are staggering. Catholic Relief Services, Mercy Corps, and Oxfam America will also receive funds from the foundation's emergency relief initiative to respond to the food crisis. Rising food and fuel prices have put 950 million people worldwide at risk of hunger and malnutrition, according to the United Nations. Young children, whose early nutritional needs are critical to ensure long-term health, and women are at the greatest risk. Increases in farming costs, such as transportation and fertilizer, are adding to small farmers' burdens. "The Gates donation will help us feed the hungry—especially young children, pregnant and lactating women—in this critical moment," said Thomas Yanga, WFP's regional director for West Africa. Grants to Catholic Relief Services, Mercy Corps, and Oxfam America total \$7.6 million. These grants will support efforts that include providing food for those most in need; helping families earn money for food through employment opportunities or cash-for-work programs; and helping farmers continue and improve their production in times of crisis. While these grants address some of the most urgent consequences of the global food crisis, the foundation is also deeply committed to funding nutritional programs that promote lasting health and supporting long-term, sustainable efforts to help hundreds of millions of small farmers boost their productivity so they can feed their families and overcome poverty. "The current global food crisis requires immediate action to feed people most at risk," said Sylvia Mathews Burwell, president of the foundation's Global Development Program. "In the longer term, since agriculture and the needs of small-scale farmers in the developing world have been increasingly neglected in recent decades, we need a significant reinvestment in agricultural development—from donors and developing countries—that focuses on helping small farmers boost their yields and increase their incomes." Agricultural development is the largest initiative in the foundation's Global Development Program, which was launched in 2006. To date, the foundation has made more than \$800 million in commitments in the sector with a focus on helping small-scale farmers in Africa and South Asia. The grants span the agricultural value chain—from seeds and soil to farm management and market access—so that millions of small farmers have the tools and opportunities to live healthy, productive lives. According to the World Bank, three-quarters of the 1.1 billion people who live on less than \$1 a day live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for a living, yet the percentage of development assistance that went to agriculture fell from more than 16 percent in 1980, to less than 4 percent in 2004. In addition, agriculture accounts for only 4 percent of public spending in agriculture-based developing countries. The foundation believes with strong partnerships and a renewed commitment to agricultural development from all sectors, hundreds of millions of small farmers will be able to increase their productivity and incomes and lead healthy, productive lives.

Today's announcement includes the following grants:

Catholic Relief Services: \$2.9 million

- In Afghanistan, provide employment opportunities on community infrastructure and other projects; provide direct emergency assistance to households unable to participate in cash-for-work programs; and help small-scale farmers buy seeds, tools, and other farm necessities.

- In Burkina Faso, provide food vouchers for urban families and help poor farm families increase production and sale of rice.

- In Haiti, help small-scale farmers buy seeds, tools, and other farm necessities.

Mercy Corps: \$2.7 million

- In the Central African Republic, provide employment opportunities on community infrastructure and other projects; help small-scale farmers buy seeds, tools, and other farm necessities; train farmers to improve their production techniques and marketing of agricultural products; and provide access to microfinance loans to fund food-production related enterprises.

- In Nepal, provide employment opportunities on community infrastructure and other projects; provide access to microfinance loans to fund food-production related enterprises; and strengthen agriculture market chains for food and non-food crops.

- In Niger, provide vouchers and training for farmers to improve production techniques and marketing of agricultural products; and support the health and supply of small livestock and poultry.

- In Somalia, distribute seeds and farm tools; provide employment opportunities on community infrastructure and other projects; provide access to microfinance loans to fund food-production related enterprises; and support the health and supply of small livestock and poultry.

- In Sri Lanka, help small-scale farmers buy seeds, tools, and other farm necessities; train farmers to improve their production techniques and marketing of agricultural products; and facilitate access to microfinance loans to fund food-production related enterprises.

Oxfam America: \$2 million

- In Ethiopia, provide local jobs on community infrastructure projects including building irrigation systems; support programs that provide food to schoolchildren; take steps to improve agricultural production, including distributing seeds and supporting irrigation projects; develop a grain bank system; implement a drought early warning system that helps prepare farmers for potential drought or other disaster; and provide livestock to women and help all farmers care for their livestock.

World Food Programme: \$10 million

- Help continue the maternal-child health program in Niger, Cote D'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.

About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, the foundation is led by CEO Patty Stonesifer and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett. For more information, visit

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Continent Starts Solving Own Problems: [The Times of Zambia \(Ndola\): 11 August 2008.](#)**

IT might be too early, with the Zimbabwe crisis yet to be fully resolved, but it is still safe to say Africa is now firmly on course in solving its own problems. After being viewed as a continent unable to solve its own problems, always looking to the west, whether for economic or political solutions, it seems like Africa is finally now demonstrating its ability to rise to the occasion. Take the case of Kenya for instance. Agreed, there might have been outside help, but by and large, the final push came from Africans themselves. One of Africa's most stable democracies was ripping itself apart in the month following disputed presidential elections with more than 700 people dying in the ethnic-political conflict. The media were starting to compare the spreading violence to the genocide that occurred in Rwanda in 1994. But just days before the peace talks began, Graca Machel, wife of Nelson Mandela, had personally visited camps for refugees of the violence in the Rift Valley, where a church had been deliberately torched with some 30 women and children inside. In the next five weeks, led by former UN Secretary-General Koffi Annan, a Ghanaian native, and a team of African statesmen and women, known as The Panel of Eminent African Personalities, they achieved what few thought was possible - a cessation of fighting and a power-sharing deal to put Kenya back together again. Graca Machel's presence, along with Koffi Annan, and former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa, would provide important ballast. Graca Machel and Koffi Annan are part of The Elders, a dozen experienced leaders from around the world, set up in 2007 by Nelson Mandela and others to address global problems. As the Christian Science Monitor put it, at a time when Kenya's angry "young turks" were whipping up the emotions that fed violence, these African elders had the calming influence of a stern grandparent, in front of whom one does not misbehave. "I came in at a time when there was so much mistrust," recalls Koffi Annan in an interview later with the publication. "The two blocks had dug in. One felt they had won the elections fair and square, the other maintained 'you stole it.' ""With that sort of attitude, getting them to come together, and getting them to begin to think of coming together, and thinking in terms that we are all Kenyans and we are one Kenya, and we need to work together to put it back together, was not an easy task," he says with a large dose of understatement. Today, the uneasy alliance is holding. Even Koffi Annan predicted it would take at least a year to get a fully operational government of national unity, especially given the ugly underlying issues of class, ethnicity, and wealth, which had set off the crisis. But the fact that Kenya has a

government at all shows that international pressure and African-led mediation can work, experts say. And African-led mediation is what South African President Thabo Mbeki believes in. He believes it is part of the African renaissance. That is why, even against all criticisms, he has insisted on quiet diplomacy, an initiative that finally seems to be working in resolving the Zimbabwean crisis. With the way things are progressing in Zimbabwe, one can say Thabo Mbeki has been vindicated, at least against the west which preferred force in resolving the crisis there. But Mbeki, together with the African Union, SADC, Russia and China always thought sanctions, and indeed force, was not the way to resolve the crisis. Indeed, like the Guardian observed, after President Robert Mugabe, the person receiving the most criticism for the crisis in Zimbabwe is not even one of its citizens. Thabo Mbeki, president of South Africa, the most powerful country in sub-Saharan Africa, has been under fire at home and abroad for his refusal to condemn Mugabe and admit that his policy of quiet diplomacy was a serious error. "For several years western nations have been urging Mbeki to use his influence - and South Africa's economic muscle - to pressure Mugabe. But even as millions of Zimbabweans flooded over the border into South Africa in search of refuge and work - a mass movement that contributed to the xenophobic attacks on black foreigners in South Africa last month - Mbeki insisted that dialogue, rather than arm-twisting, was the best way forward." For a while he had sympathy at home, with analysts pointing out that while Britain and the US were calling for action on Zimbabwe, there were few realistic options other than engagement. Calls for criticism of Mugabe's often brutal land redistribution policies were also seen as unrealistic, given South Africa's own need to address glaring property inequalities," the Guardian recently wrote. It has long been clear that the western pressure has irritated Mbeki, an intellectual who espouses the idea of an African Renaissance. In assuming the role of mediator between Mugabe's Zanu-PF party and the opposition MDC party of Morgan Tsvangirai, Mbeki believed that he could solve the problem his own way, using diplomacy rather than force. Some critics now agree that Mbeki's critics failed to realise that it was his intervention that led to a largely successful poll in March - one that saw the MDC sweep the parliamentary vote. But Mbeki, who even at the time Nelson Mandela was President, was seen as being more in charge with the Nobel Peace Prize winner having more of a ceremonial role, sees the role of South Africa in Africa much wider. Indeed, the transformation in South Africa's relationship with the rest of the world since 1990 has been nothing short of remarkable. Since the release of Nelson Mandela from prison signaled the beginning of the end of apartheid, South Africa has gone from being an international pariah to being "one of the most engaged, open and connected countries in the world," The Economist observes in a survey of South Africa contained in its 8 April issue. While much of this re-engagement was inevitable given the country's position as Africa's leading economy, South African President Thabo Mbeki "has added his own distinctive twist to this natural resurgence with a foreign policy based on African solutions to African problems. This, The Economist argues in April 2006, is likely to be Thabo Mbeki's most important legacy. Driven by a desire to emancipate South Africa and Africa as a whole from racial oppression and colonialism, Mbeki's principal aim, according to The Economist, has been "to establish the new South Africa as, first and foremost, a black African country." His other ambition has been "to persuade Africa to set up its own institutions and mechanisms for solving its problems, thus ending the constant, humiliating requests for aid to the West's former colonial powers." The Economist report,

which was released some three years ago, points to South African interventions led by Mbeki to tackle some of the continent's most difficult political problems. The most notably include helping to get the warring parties to the negotiating table to end the civil war in Burundi, helping to facilitate the complex negotiations that produced a successful referendum on a new constitution in the Democratic Republic of Congo, "one of the continent's most war-ravaged states" and playing a part in ending conflicts in Sudan and Liberia. Indeed, not only has South Africa played a part in bringing the fighting to an end in these countries; it also has thousands of peacekeeping troops stationed in these countries to maintain peace, oversee the integration of armed forces, and help create the conditions for democracy. However, The Economist argues that Mbeki has been at his most creative "in trying to set up permanent institutions to serve Africa" - most notably the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad) and the African Union (AU). Launched in 2001 and headquartered in South Africa, Nepad - "very much (Mbeki's) idea" - is a socio-economic development blueprint for the continent which, crucially, "is designed to make African countries themselves responsible for upholding standards of democracy and good governance through the African Peer Review Mechanism." While Afro-pessimists are quick to belittle these institutions, The Economist argues that they have had successes as well as failures. "The AU acted quickly in Togo to reverse a coup; and South Africa led successful diplomatic efforts to stop Sudan getting the chairmanship of the AU, in protest against the Sudanese government's policies in Darfur." These are indeed signs that Africa is on its way to tackling some of its pressing issues. The challenge though remains in seeing how Africa will act in areas such as Darfur and other remaining trouble spots. For now, there is the success story of Kenya, and Zimbabwe, all fingers crossed, may just follow suit.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Famine Warning in Horn of Continent: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 12 August 2008.**

Famine threatens many areas of northern Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea unless international action is stepped up to address the chronic food needs. UK aid agency ActionAid disclosed this in a report based on a detailed assessment of the situation by its staff across the Horn of Africa region. It warns that "time is running out for the Horn of Africa," which it says has been "hit by the combined impact of failed harvests and global increases in the price of food." "With millions facing hunger and destitution, the region is now reaching a tipping point with increasing numbers of people unable to cope," ActionAid says. "Altogether five countries -- Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti -- are affected. The situation could easily become catastrophic." In Ethiopia, about 4.6 million people need food aid. Less documented is the food crisis in Kenya, with 1.2 million people affected and the number rising daily. Areas which normally get two rainy seasons a year have had inadequate rain for more than 12 months and crops have failed and livestock are dying. The drought came at a time when prices of food, fuel and fertiliser are increasing globally. In Kenya, the price of foods such as maize has increased by half in less than a year. In northern Rift Valley, ActionAid found that most men were away searching for water and pasture, while women and children struggled to survive on

poisonous wild fruit called loma. It takes a day to pick enough berries for one meal, plus a day's drying and another day's cooking before they are edible. ActionAid's head of emergencies, Roger Yates said that while rain has fallen in recent weeks, it has been too little or too late. There has also been an explosion in armyworm populations. "People will need emergency food aid well into 2009," Mr Yates said. "Women and children are suffering most from malnutrition and many are now only surviving because of supplementary food rations." Small holders and pastoralists must be helped to get back on their feet. Many agencies, including ActionAid, are already delivering aid, but to save lives and livelihoods much more needs to be done during the coming months," Mr Yates said.

- **Beijing 2008 Olympics And Continent: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam):**
OPINION: 13 August 2008.

An estimated 10,500 athletes, 20,000 journalists, thousands of sports officials and observers are in China for the 29th edition of the Olympic Games. China's long term dream to restore its pride and prestige globally seems to be finally taking off. What parallels and lessons can African leadership draw from the China Olympic Games? China has been criticised for its human rights record and had to fend off calls for boycott of Olympic Games in China over its involvement in Darfur. It has also been accused of limiting its citizens' freedoms by placing a security firewall on internet sites deemed critical of China. Over and above the fear of potential terrorist attacks, China is also faced with serious pollution problems. Already; Australian athletes have raised concerns over their health due to the smog measuring up to 1320 micrograms (said to be 26 times Australia standard for quality air) that has descended on Beijing city. The deliberate push to reinvent China's place in the world no-matter-what, is quite evident. Some commentators trace it back to the disastrous defeat China suffered in the hands of British troops in the 1840 - 1842 Opium War. China's ambition has over the years focused on the quest for recognition and reversal of the fortunes hence the drive towards the peaceful rise of the 'dragon.' Africa may not have homogenous parallels as far as an African empire is concerned; but the leadership does have a background of failure that makes them be indebted to the upcoming generations. For instance, African leaders in the 16th Century played a role in Slave Trade that saw an estimated 11 million Africans uprooted from their homes and shipped to foreign lands. In the 19th century, leaders in post colonial Africa outrightly ran down African economies and failed to offer leadership when geopolitical interests ran against the interests of African people. As in China, a majority of African leaders have no good human rights record; they have prevented Africans from accessing information about their own government activities. It is easier for Africans to narrate governance issues in say, the US and Europe than it is to describe their own government activities. African leaders always hide in some sort of 'official secrets law' to deny their citizens information; hence what is going on in Africa-one has to get data from donor agencies. Through poor policies, Africans have been denied access to internet, electricity and open media. Talk of pollution...walk in major cities in Africa and your nose can help tell the amount of diesel and petrol in the air. Air quality standard is no priority (everyone is struggling to get food!) because of the many cars that emit exhaust containing incomplete fuel combustion. The living standard of the poor citizenry

especially in the cities is appalling: no sewer, no access roads, and no water -this is life at its most brutal level. Unfortunately for Africa, were Olympics to be hosted in our capitals, all these will be turned into major poverty tourism sites. African leaders can draw lessons from China's quest to right the historical wrongs they have committed to their people by seeking to propel their country to global relevance. That very quest has led to China involuntarily opening itself up to the World. The major powers of the World are descending on Africa for its command of 13 percent of known oil reserves - what are our leaders doing to ensure that that this quest for oil makes Africa a better place for all? South Africa will be hosting the 2010 World Cup; what is our leadership doing to ensure that African entrepreneurs take advantage to position their businesses in the global economy? Clearly, the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games offer a strong lesson for Africans to learn to be competitive and use past mistakes to energize positive strategies for the future. The Chinese are not hosting Olympics to merely earn revenue from the sports; they are positioning themselves globally. South Africa and by extension Africa ought not to host the 2010 World Cup to simply generate revenue; Africans must use it to reposition the continent as the next frontier for big business and stability.

76. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: U.S. Apology for Slavery: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): EDITORIAL: 3 August 2008.**

IT seems to be a season of apologies these days. First, there was the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologising to the aborigines who were grossly maltreated and dehumanised by the British Settlers exiled by Her Majesty to that Island continent. After initially subjugating and quarantining the Aborigines inside harsh tribal enclave settlements, the Australian authorities further devised a system of forcibly separating and fostering aboriginal children to white Australian families with the unnatural aim of weaning those fostered children from their original cultural habits. Following years of agitation by the aborigines and pressures from human rights organisations, the current government led by Mr. Rudd did the unprecedented by officially and publicly apologising for the centuries of oppression against the original owners of the Australian continent. Shortly after, in July 2008 also in Australia, the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Benedict XVI, had occasion to publicly apologise to the world for decades of sexual abuse of children by Catholic priests worldwide, but especially in America, where the Church has had to settle out-of-court law-suits brought against priests by parishioners. Before all these more recent public apologies however, there had been other equally famous ones like that which the post World - War II German government made to world Jewry for Nazi atrocities that saw an estimated six million Jews die in concentration camps and gas chambers. The Germans backed the apology up with reparations for the economic and other losses suffered by the Jews in Nazi - occupied Europe. Apart from that, the United States of America also had cause to apologise to

Japanese and Chinese Americans for their mass incarceration in concentration camps following the Pearl Harbour attack, a U.S. Naval base, that led America into the World War II on the side of Allied forces that included Britain. But of all the historic wrongs and atrocities committed by man against fellow men, all of those events that attracted apologies and reparations from governments and institutions of the world, pale in the face of the monumental cruelty and inhumanity of the trans-Atlantic slave trade that lasted for close to 300 years and occasioned the sale and purchase of healthy Black Africans as common chattel who were then transported across the Atlantic ocean to build the new world that was to become the United States of America. Between the 15th and the 18th centuries, an estimated 20-30 million healthy Africans were captured like wild animals, shackled with leg, neck and mouth chains by European slave traders, their Arab and African collaborators, and then packed into slave ships like frozen fish for the notorious middle-crossing. During the journey, millions died and were simply thrown overboard as food for the fishes. On reaching the American shores, children were separated from their mothers, fathers from sons, after which they were auctioned like cattle to the American colonists. In human history, no race of peoples had suffered the pure mass decimation of their kith and kin as the Africans did as a result of slavery. What made matters worse was its clearly racist under-pinning that saw the black man as sub human. Still, though slavery was officially abolished in the 19th century, the freed American slaves found their fates in the United States hobbled by white supremacist State governors who enacted the so-called 'Jim Crow' laws that put a legal ceiling on what an American of black colour could aspire to. Political offices were fore-closed by these laws. Blacks could not vote or be voted for in 'democratic' elections. They could not attend schools where even the most stupid of whites were enrolled. They could not live in certain parts of the city nor could they sit in public buses when a white man was standing. And even at that, Blacks were required to sit at the back of those buses. The greatest crime those post-emancipation blackmen could commit was to be seen consorting with white women. This is even as it was fair game to gang-rape black or coloured women by any white who fancied them! That was the situation until 1964 when the Civil Rights Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Act brought changes including prohibition of racial discrimination in public places and against employees based on race. This did not, however, stop the Jim Crow laws which some states used to hold the Blackman down. In fact, from news reports of the goings-on in the United States, Black Americans are still at the receiving end of race-based atrocities. However, much as these iniquities still go on on less ubiquitous scales, there have been moves by well-meaning Americans - white and black - to get the U.S. government to officially apologise and compensate the descendants of American slaves. One of the white men involved in this crusade is Democratic Representative from Tennessee, Steven Cohen, who pushed for a congressional resolution apologising for the shameful acts of slavery. Many States of America have done this, including Florida, Alabama, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey and Virginia. Others like Nebraska and Missouri were already considering this resolution when news came out that the U.S House of Representatives had, by some decent margin, passed Steven Cohen's motion and issued a resolution that profoundly apologised for the historic wrongs of slavery and the 'Jim Crow' laws that limited the opportunities available to blacks even after the abolition of slave trade. Though the resolution is 'non-binding' and therefore not an instrument that would compel compensation for descendants of

American slaves, the move is welcome, even if only for its psychological import. This, more so, when an American of African descent in the person of Barak Obama may become the next democratically elected President of America on the Democratic Party ticket. Now that America's lawmakers have officially recognised this wrong against African American slaves and their descendants, the next stage should be for the U.S. Congress to follow suit and make the apology binding and therefore compelling the U.S. government to pay reparation to descendants of those millions of African men, women and children who suffered as slaves. An apology implies some culpability or guilt. There is no need for any apology where no wrong has been done. If an apology was deemed necessary at all to descendants of slaves, then surely some guilt is involved which should compel some compensation. America, her citizens and government have a duty and responsibility to work out ways of permanently making amends for the historic wrongs done to the fore-fathers of over 30 million black Americans.

- **Ghana: Joint UN-African Team to Probe Deaths: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 15 August 2008.**

A joint fact-finding team from the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been set up to look into the deaths of a number of Ghanaian nationals who were found buried in Gambia in 2005, the world body announced today. "The team was established at the request of both Governments to help bring about a peaceful closure to this matter, consistent with the principles of justice and respect for human rights and dignity," UN spokesperson Farhan Haq told reporters in New York. Based in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, the team will be led by Curtis Ward, a UN-ECOWAS appointee. The team will also include representatives appointed by the Governments of The Gambia and Ghana.

- **Mauritania: Journalist Arrested Covering Anti-Coup Demonstration: [International Freedom of Expression Clearing House](#) (Toronto): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.**

Reporter Ahmed Ould Neda of the Nouakchott-based independent news agency "Akbar Info" was arrested on 7 August 2008 while covering a demonstration against Mauritania's new military regime. Police confiscated Neda's camera with pictures of a police assault, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) reported. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said Neda was detained for three hours after refusing to hand over his pictures. Police fired tear gas at the small demonstration, but let another demonstration proceed the same day in support of the bloodless takeover. One day earlier, General Mohammed Ould Abdul-Aziz, then head of the presidential guard, ousted democratically elected Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi after the president dismissed him and three other senior military officers. The General and his forces also seized Mauritania's state radio and television, and according to the regional web agency Menassat.com, sacked and arrested the manager, Kabir Ould Hammoudi. Several newspapers failed to publish on 6 August after General Aziz's troops blocked the road to the country's only printing press, which is owned by the state. Menassat.com said newspapers blocked from publishing quickly resorted to the Internet. Neda's arrest brought to three the number of journalists

detained in Mauritania, MFWA added. Mohamed Nema Omar and Mohammed Ould Abdelatif of the Arabic-language newspaper "Al Houriya" had been in prison since 21 July over an article accusing three judges of corruption. On 30 July about 30 journalists demonstrated against the detention of their colleagues outside the main court building in Nouakchott, the capital. With hands and ankles manacled, Oumar and Abdelatif were brought before an investigating judge half an hour later, said Reporters Without Borders (RSF). Abdelatif had been transferred to hospital, RSF said, with a lung problem aggravated by alleged police mistreatment intended to make him name the story's sources. Mauritania, Africa's newest oil producer, spans Arab and black Africa and has been a U.S. ally, Reuters noted. The United States condemned Abdallahi's ouster and suspended non-humanitarian aid; the European Union, United Nations, Arab League and African Union also condemned the coup. Abdallahi won elections last year after a 2005 coup - also instigated by Abdel Aziz - ended the 21-year dictatorship of Maaouya Ould Taya, who faces trial for alleged ethnic cleansing crimes. Ruling party in-fighting became rancorous, the UN agency IRIN reported, after a May reshuffle brought to power a dozen ministers from Ould Taya's regime. While other senior officials including the prime minister were released, Abdallahi was held at a secret location and his family briefly kept under house arrest. The junta declared that an 11-person state council would rule until elections are held. Other state institutions could operate normally, it said, including parliament - where most pro-Abdallahi legislators had quit his party on 4 August. Many of those legislators joined hundreds of people on the pro-coup march.

- **Nigeria: Embrace Western Education - Muslims Urged: [Daily Trust](#) (Abuja): 11 August 2008.**

Nigerian Muslims have been enjoined to embrace Western education as a matter of priority to empower themselves to become effective players in the ongoing global changes. This was part of decision of Islamic leaders from different parts of the country who converged in Ibadan yesterday for the formal launch of the Muslim Ummah of South West Nigeria (MUSWEN). Former Judge of the International Court of Justice at The Hague, Prince Bola Ajibola, who was the chairman of the occasion led other Islamic leaders in propagating the importance of education in all its ramifications as the only way to make them cope with the challenges of the present age. The Sultan of Sokoto and President General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar III, also spoke in the same vein with particular focus on women education, specifically in the area of medicine. Prince Ajibola, in his address, said the zonal inauguration of MUSWEN was historic and historical, and that it would go a long way in unifying the Islamic adherents in the South West with their fellow Muslim community in other parts of the country. Addressing the gathering, the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Sa'ad Abubakar, stressed the need for improvement in education, health and empowerment among the Islamic adherents all over the country while urging the females in particular to see the medicine field as a challenge in view of the shortage of female doctors in most hospitals in the northern part of the country.

- **Nigeria: Islamic Scholars Urged to Discourage Almajiranci: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 12 August 2008.**

Islamic Scholars in the Northern part of the country have been called upon to embark on campaign awareness that would bring an end to the practice of Almajiranci in the area. The call was made by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health Bauchi State, Dr. Aliyu Hussaini, while receiving members of the Development Research and Project Center (DRPC) on an advocacy visit to some important places in the state. Hussaini disclosed that it was only in the Northern part of the country, especially among the Hausa/Fulani people, that Almajiranci was being practised, adding that it was on the increase daily. He urged Islamic scholars to enlighten the general public on its dangers. He said some of the problems related to maternal health in most part of the North were due to ignorance that needed their attention. He applauded the initiatives of the agency and requested them to supply the ministry with data to help them forward same to the state government for implementation and necessary adjustment where necessary in the budgetary allocation. Hussaini explained that the administration of Malam Isa Yuguda, had special consideration for women, especially the pregnant ones. He said that apart from the introduction of free healthcare to women and children below the age of five, the state government had given directives for the supply of delivery kits to women free of charge, while about 30 ambulances have been purchased for distribution to hospitals in the state. Earlier, in his speech, the leader of the delegation, Alhaji Ahmad Hamza, said they were in the ministries and parastatals because of maternal healthcare in the state. He said Bauchi State had positively responded to the yearnings and aspirations of the less privileged people in the state.

- **Nigeria: US Envoy Seeks Preservation of Islamic Manuscripts: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 12 August 2008.**

The United States Ambassador to Nigeria, Ms Robin Renee Sanders, has stressed the need for the preservation of Islamic manuscripts. She pointed out that it will not only serve as an important window on the rich religious and intellectual heritage of Nigeria but also attest to the achievements of human ingenuity. Sanders made the assertion yesterday at a 5-day workshop for Islamic Manuscript Conservators held at Usman Danfodio University Sokoto. She noted that Nigeria has a rich Islamic manuscripts heritage that is in danger of being lost due to lack of preservation and conservation efforts. According to her, saving Nigeria's Islamic manuscripts heritage, is part of the United States Mission's partnership with Nigeria to promote education by preserving this vastly significant historical treasure. Sanders, who was represented by the U.S Embassy Counselor for Public Affairs, Miss Atim Eneida George, said the ultimate goal of this hands-on workshop is to improve collection, classification and preservation of these invaluable and irreplaceable materials. "Through these efforts and perhaps future digitalisation, these manuscripts may one day become accessible to the wider scholarly community around the world", she averred. She acknowledged the roles of distinguished Nigerian scholars, researchers and traditional rulers in providing invaluable advice and guidance to the project, saying it will go a long way in preserving such manuscripts for posterity. Earlier, the Vice Chancellor Usman Danfodio University Sokoto, Professor Tijjani Bande, commended the US embassy for this great work they embarked upon, saying it would go a long way in preserving Islamic heritage for future use. Also speaking, a Conservation expert and Head of Preservation Services, Wesleyan University Library Connecticut,

Miss Michaelle Biddle said it is unfortunate that 80 percent of these manuscripts are still in the private hands, noting that the preservation of such materials makes it difficult.

- **Sierra Leone: Security Personnel Assault, Injure Eight Journalists Covering Political Party Meeting: [Media Foundation for West Africa \(Accra\)](#): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.**

On 13 August 2008, security personnel deployed at the State House in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, violently assaulted eight journalists covering a meeting between the ruling All Peoples Congress Party (APC) and the main opposition Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP). The MFWA correspondent reported that security personnel, including policemen, assailed the journalists and confiscated their working tools, including their cameras, cell phones and audio recorders. All the journalists are from independent media houses. Six work with newspapers and the other two with radio stations. The newspaper journalists are: Boima J. Bomia of the "Pool", Alima Fofana of the "Exclusive", Haruna Turay and Sitta Turay, of "Awareness Time", Edie Tayo G. Temple of "For Di People" and Sheikh Bawoh of the "New Vision". Ola Tungie Yaskey and Micheal Kargbo work with the radio stations SKYY and Galaxy, respectively. "I was only rescued by some civilians after (the security personnel) rained serious blows and punches all over my body", Bomia told the correspondent. The journalists are receiving medical treatment for the injuries they sustained. The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and the Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU) have expressed concern about the increasing number of attacks against journalists under the administration of President Ernest Bai Korama.

- **Liberia: Fighters Exposed to Sexual Violence Have More Mental Health Disorders After War: [The Analyst](#) (Monrovia): 14 August 2008.**

Men and women who experienced sexual violence while fighting in Liberian civil wars report higher rates of symptoms of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and thoughts of suicide than non-combatants or other former combatants who were not exposed to sexual violence, according to a study in the August 13 issue of JAMA, a theme issue on violence and human rights. "Liberia's wars since 1989 have cost tens of thousands of lives and left many people mentally and physically traumatized," the authors write. "This conflict has been characterized by ethnic killings and massive abuses against the civilian population between 1989 and 1997, and again in 2003 and 2004." Kirsten Johnson, M.D., M.P.H., of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., and colleagues conducted a study to assess the prevalence and impact of war-related psychosocial trauma, including information on participation in the Liberian civil wars, exposure to sexual violence, social functioning, and mental health. The researchers surveyed 1,666 adults aged 18 or older using structured interviews and questionnaires. The survey was conducted in Liberia during a three-week period in May 2008. In the Liberian adult household-based population, 40 percent met symptom criteria for major depressive disorder, 44 percent met symptom criteria for PTSD and 8 percent met criteria for social dysfunction. Thirty-three percent of the respondents reported

serving time with fighting forces, and 33.2 percent of the former combatant respondents were women. "Both female and male former combatants who experienced sexual violence had worse mental health outcomes than non-combatants and other former combatants who did not experience exposure to sexual violence," the authors report. Among women, 42.3 percent of former combatants experienced exposure to sexual violence, compared with 9.2 percent of non-combatants. Among men, 32.6 percent of former combatants experienced exposure to sexual violence, compared with 7.4 percent of non-combatants. Symptoms of depression, PTSD and thoughts of suicide were higher among former combatants than non-combatants, and higher among those who experienced sexual violence than those who did not. Seventy-four percent of female former combatants who experienced sexual violence had symptoms of PTSD, compared with 44 percent who did not experience sexual violence. Among male former combatants, 81 percent who experienced sexual violence had symptoms of PTSD, compared with 46 percent who did not experience sexual violence. Male former combatants who experienced sexual violence also reported higher rates of depression symptoms and thoughts of suicide. "Like their female counterparts, male former combatants who experienced sexual violence have worse mental health outcomes than both the general population and also other former combatants," the authors write. "Rehabilitation programs that do not address this specific population risk failing a critically vulnerable group." "This unexpected finding suggests that standard post-conflict rehabilitation programs and gender-based programs will need to adjust current programming to take into account males who have experienced sexual violence, especially former combatants," they conclude.

- **Guinea: New Leader Should Address Rights Abuses: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.**

Guinea's new leader should put the country's chronic human rights problems at the top of his agenda, Human Rights Watch said in a letter to Prime Minister Ahmed Tidiane Souaré made public today. Human Rights Watch identified impunity for unlawful killings, torture, prison conditions, child labor, and child trafficking as among the key issues requiring the Guinean government's immediate attention. "The government's continuing inaction in the face of gross human rights abuses really hurts ordinary Guineans," said Dustin Sharp, researcher for Francophone West Africa at Human Rights Watch. "If Prime Minister Souaré is to break with the past, he needs to insist that security forces responsible for murder, rape, and torture are brought to justice." In recent years, Guinea has been rocked by civil unrest that has typically been met with brutal and excessive use of force by government security forces. In January and February 2007, security forces violently repressed a nationwide strike called to protest corruption, bad governance and deteriorating economic conditions, resulting in the deaths of more than 130 protesters. Eighteen months later, an Independent Commission of Inquiry established to investigate the deaths is not yet operational. Chronic forms of state-sponsored violence continue unabated. Human Rights Watch has documented the regular police torture of detainees in order to extract confessions, and grossly inadequate conditions within Guinea's dilapidated and abuse-ridden prison system. Many detainees, including children, are left to languish for years in cramped cells where they face hunger, disease, and sometimes

death before being granted a trial or freed."For too long, successive leaders in Guinea have stood back and done nothing in the face of ongoing and well-known human rights abuses," said Sharp. "The message being sent to security forces is that violence and indiscipline are acceptable, and that's a very dangerous thing."Human Rights Watch also criticized the government for its continuing failure to create adequate safeguards against child labor, child trafficking, and child abuse. Tens of thousands of child domestic workers in Guinea work up to 18 hours a day without pay, and endure frequent beatings, sexual harassment, and abuse at the hands of their employers. Living in conditions akin to slavery, some are trafficked from neighboring countries or within Guinea. There is no child protection system in place to ensure regular monitoring of the well-being of children, and if necessary, to facilitate their removal from abusive homes.Souaré was appointed prime minister in May 2008 after Lansana Kouyaté was sacked by Guinea's ailing and authoritarian president, Lansana Conté. Souaré has made a gesture toward improving the country's disastrous human rights record by supporting the creation of an independent National Observatory for Human Rights charged with promoting human rights. But there have been no concrete measures yet to bring to justice members of Guinea's security services who have committed serious human rights violations.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa: SADC - Adopt Gender And Development Protocol: [Human Rights Watch](#) (Washington, DC): PRESS RELEASE: 14 August 2008.**

Southern African leaders should adopt the proposed Gender and Development Protocol at their upcoming summit after amending it to include crucial provisions deleted in 2007, Human Rights Watch said today. One of the most important provisions that should be put back in to the protocol would commit states to criminalize marital rape. Heads of state and government from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are to meet in Johannesburg on August 16-17, 2008 to launch the SADC Free Trade Area and discuss regional issues including political developments in the region, particularly the crisis in Zimbabwe, and will consider adopting the draft Gender and Development Protocol."Developments in the region, including the crisis in Zimbabwe and food insecurity, can have devastating effects on the lives of women," said Nada Ali, Africa researcher in the women's rights division at Human Rights Watch. "Governments serious about development, democracy and the fight against HIV in southern Africa should adopt and implement the gender protocol with the necessary amendments."The draft Gender and Development Protocol is the result of a process that started in 2005, with the audit of SADC's Declaration on Gender and Development and its addendum on Preventing and Eradicating Gender-Based Violence. If adopted, it would oblige member states to amend their laws to ensure equal rights for women across a wide range of issues, including constitutional and legal reform, governance, education, productive resources, gender-based violence, health, HIV/AIDS, peace-building and conflict resolution. But the current draft does not refer explicitly to sexual violence in the home, and that is likely to harm efforts to combat the devastating effects of AIDS in a region with the highest HIV prevalence worldwide."Domestic violence, including marital rape, puts women at

increased risk of HIV infection and seriously undermines their ability to get effective treatment," said Ali. "Southern African heads of state should commit to preventing and punishing domestic violence and to gender equality if they are serious about curbing the spread of HIV." Since 2005, women's rights organizations in Southern Africa have urged the SADC to turn its Declaration on Gender and Development into a legally binding protocol. The draft protocol should have been adopted in Zambia at the 2007 SADC heads of state and government summit, but was deferred for "further consultation at national level." The draft protocol has been reviewed by the region's gender and justice ministers, and will be considered by the SADC Council of Ministers before presentation for adoption at the summit. The draft protocol contains concrete, time-bound commitments aimed at protecting women's rights and ensuring equality between women and men. It requires member states to: enshrine gender equality and equity in their constitutions; review, amend and repeal laws that discriminate on the ground of sex or gender; reduce maternal mortality by 75 percent; develop gender-sensitive strategies to prevent new HIV infections and ensure universal access to HIV and AIDS treatment; ensure gender parity in political representation; adopt policies and enact laws that would ensure equal access to economic resources by women and men; enact and enforce legislation prohibiting all forms of gender-based violence; and review and reform criminal laws applicable to cases of sexual offenses and gender-based violence by 2015. The protocol requires state parties to report on the progress achieved in implementing its measures every two years.

- **Zimbabwe: Government Seizes Tsvangirai's Passport: [allAfrica.com](#): 14 August 2008.**

Zimbabwean officials have blocked Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangirai and other top party officials from leaving the country to attend this weekend's summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). In a statement issued on Thursday, the MDC said that government intelligence agents had seized the passports of Tsvangirai, MDC secretary-general Tendai Biti and the party's secretary for international relations, Professor Eliphaz Mukonoweshuro. The three leaders were detained briefly at Harare International Airport before their passports were taken and they were prevented from boarding their aircraft. The MDC said the government's action showed "that the regime is not sincere on the dialogue process." Powersharing talks between the MDC, the ruling Zanu-PF and the MDC splinter group led by Arthur Mutambara stalled earlier this week, reportedly over Tsvangirai's insistence on a [written guarantee](#). The issue of who will represent Zimbabwe at the SADC summit, which is being held in Johannesburg, is contentious. Already [Botswana has said](#) that President Ian Khama will boycott the meeting if President Robert Mugabe is invited as Zimbabwe's head of state.

- **Zimbabwe: Exiles Launch Urgent Appeal to Bar Mugabe From Summit: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 15 August 2008.**

A human rights lawyer who was severely tortured by Mugabe's regime in 2003 is leading an urgent application to the SADC tribunal seeking to block Mugabe from attending the

weekend summit as head of state. The Zimbabwe Exiles Forum led by Gabriel Shumba faxed papers to the tribunal based in Windhoek, Namibia on Friday. In the morning a similar application was handed directly to the SADC Secretary General in Sandton, Johannesburg, while the Secretariat Offices in Botswana received another set of papers. In an interview with Newsreel Shumba said, 'Mugabe was not constitutionally elected; he is not a lawful head of state and should not be allowed to take his seat at the summit.' He challenged Mugabe's invitation as unlawful arguing that SADC's own principles, as outlined in its treaties, set out that the group may not recognise governments that come to power by unconstitutional means. He said SADC's own election observer team passed a verdict declaring the June 27 one-man presidential run off as neither free nor fair. The election itself was held outside the constitutionally mandated 21 days and the violence before and after removed any semblance of democracy. Now the exiles forum wants the SADC tribunal to force a withdrawal of Mugabe's invitation. They say they will back up their application by joining a demonstration against Mugabe's presence, called for by the powerful labour union COSATU. Shumba says their members will go all out to effect a citizen's arrest, even though chances are South African security around Mugabe will be tight. He dismissed the invitation to Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara for talks at the summit as a smokescreen, meant to divert attention from Mugabe's invitation. 'They want to make it look like they are inviting negotiators to sort out the transition and yet the formal invite to Mugabe makes it clear they are inviting him as head of state,' Shumba said. Adding more pressure on the summit is Botswana's threat to boycott if Mugabe attends without a legitimate deal secured from the talks. Shumba suggested the invitation of Tsvangirai and Mutambara to the summit was an attempt to pacify Botswana's President Ian Khama. This however has failed to change anything, with Botswana's Foreign Minister confirming that President Khama was still not attending. The SADC tribunal was recently set up to deal with cases coming from its 14 member states. The first case it had to deal with involved Zimbabwe, after several white farmers challenged the seizure of their farms. The tribunal ordered the government to stop the seizures, but this ruling was ignored by Mugabe's government.

- **South Africa: Bill to Allow for Prosecution of All Forms of Human Trafficking: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 14 August 2008.**

Legislation is being formulated that will allow for the prosecution of all forms of human trafficking. "The draft Bill (the Trafficking in Persons Bill) allows for all forms of human trafficking to be prosecuted including labour exploitation and not only sexual exploitation," said National Prosecuting Authority's (NPA's) Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit, National Co-ordinator, Malebo Kotu-Rammopo. She said that in the absence of specific legislation criminalising the offence, the NPA has encountered unique problems in ensuring an adequate response to the occurrences of this phenomenon. "Prosecutions have proceeded on an ad hoc basis overtly demonstrable to the facts such as kidnapping, indecent assault and rape, which do not individually attract as heavy sentences as a specific trafficking in persons would impose," Ms Malebo Kotu-Rammopo said. The absence of legislation also limits prosecutors to deal with only the perpetrator directly linked to the offences, while excluding the perpetrators behind the scenes, which is often an organised crime activity. Giving an update on the country's

strategy to counter human trafficking, Ms Kotu-Rammopo said last year the country had signed and ratified the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and the Palermo Protocol. The protocol aims to prevent, suppress and punish human trafficking, especially among women and children. It also obliges member states to criminalise trafficking in persons, investigate and prosecute traffickers as well as undertake border control measures. The SOCA, together with Government and civil society, has also established an Inter-sectoral Task Team to develop a programme to co-ordinate a comprehensive strategy to counter human trafficking. The strategy, which started after the government received the protocol in 2007, would lead to the adoption of a National Action Plan as required by the Palermo Protocol. The task team developed a six-pillar strategy comprised of information, capacity-building and development, victim assistance and integration, policy and legislation development, liaison and consultation as well as monitoring and evaluation to fight trafficking in persons. She said in December 2005, the European Commission set aside an amount of 6.3 million Euros grant over a two-year period commencing in December 2008 to assist in implementing the strategy.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Tanzania: Debate On Islamic Courts is Healthy: [The Citizen \(Dar es Salaam\)](#): EDITORIAL: 15 August 2008.**

The past two days have seen heated debate in Parliament on whether or not Islamic courts should be introduced in Tanzania. Admittedly, the contributions have been vigorous, but this should not be necessarily construed as a deep division between the Muslim and Christian MPs. For more than 40 years since independence, Tanzania has remained a united, cohesive and peaceful country largely because differences over religion have never been allowed to cause disunity or animosity, as the national Constitution is very clear on the freedom of worship. Therefore, the suggestion in some quarters that Islamic courts could lead to division among Tanzanians, is simply stated, a futile attempt to politicise the matter. As argued by the opposition spokesperson in Parliament, Ms Fatma Maghimbi, unlike Islamic courts set up under Sharia laws, whose jurisdiction is supposed to cover all citizens, a kadhi's court only caters for the special interests of Muslims who choose to be bound by them. It operates much like other special courts, including the land tribunal or the commercial courts, which are meant to handle special needs and interests. The kadhi's court would thus deal with matters such as inheritance, marriage and divorce as perceived by Muslims and would not bring under their jurisdiction Tanzanians of other faiths. The courts' operations would, therefore, not override the supreme law of the land, which is the Constitution. As Ms Maghimbi rightly pointed out, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda maintained kadhi's courts for decades after independence, without causing any social disorder or religious violence. In the case of Kenya, this is despite the fact that 70 per cent of the population is made up of Christians. But recently, there has been some clamour, bringing into focus the religious divide as politicians debate the country's anticipated constitutional changes. As the Government studies the report and recommendations of the Law Reform Commission before making its final decision on the Islamic courts, debate on the matter by the MPs and the general public should continue.

Such a healthy exchange of ideas on a matter that has generated so much attention is useful so that all can understand what is at stake to allay any fears and let reason prevail.

- **Tanzania: MPs Split Along Religious Lines: [The Citizen \(Dar es Salaam\): 15 August 2008.](#)**

A sharp division emerged in Parliament between Christian and Muslim MPs over the establishment of Islamic courts in the country as legislators debated the budget estimates for the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs. While Christians MPs described any attempt to set up the special courts as unconstitutional and threat to peace, Muslim MPs insisted that the courts must be established since they were part and parcel of the Islamic faith. They said since the matter was also stipulated in the 2005 CCM election manifesto the pledge can't be blocked now. The fierce and emotional debate over the courts proposal comes a day after Justice and Constitutional Affairs Minister Mathias Chikawe tabled budget estimates for 2008/09 for his ministry. He told the House that the Law Reform Commission (LRC) which was tasked to collect views on the establishment of the court has already submitted its report. Appealing for patience, Minister Chikawe said the Government was studying the report before making a decision and Parliament will be notified on the decision. However, the minister's statement served only to ignite further emotional debate. Dr Harrison Mwakyembe (Kyela-CCM) who was the first to contribute called on MPs not to jump on the issue and let the Government do its job. He said a prudent government has to deal with the issue cautiously. "I plead that we let the Government do its work on the report," he urged. Dr Mwakyembe, who tried to be careful on the matter, said caution and patience must be applied in discussing the issue as it touches both Muslim and Christians as taxpayers' money will be used to fund the establishment and operations of the courts. Presenting opposition views on the issue on Wednesday, opposition spokesperson for the ministry, Fatma Maghimbi called for the establishment of the courts, saying they have been in existence in neighboring Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda but has not been the source of disorder. "The Uganda constitution recognizes Kadhi courts but they have never been established," Dr Mwakyembe had observed. He said there was no need to force the Government to bless the establishment of the courts as Muslims are free to set an elaborate system of resolving matters handled by Kadhi courts without forcing the Government to legislate on the issue. An emotional Mohamed Missanga, (Singida South-CCM) rejected calls for patience and called on the Government to set a time frame to decide on the matter in the interest of Muslims whom he said, were running out of patience. They have been waiting for the courts since the 1960s, he asserted. The MP said one among cardinal duties of government is to implement promises in its election manifesto, which means the current Government must work for the establishment of the courts in its first five year period. The MP said some people had taken to mudslinging the president over the issue, noting that they were not doing justice to the president because as CCM chairman he has to work on what was in the manifesto. "The manifesto was prepared at a time when the president, the speaker, the CCM secretary general and the prime minister were all Christians. What a coincidence," he stated, expressing his amazement. Establishment of the courts, he said, did not mean Tanzania had become an Islamic state. Kadhi courts are not the same thing as having an Islamic government, he said. An equally emotional Manju Msambya (Kigoma South-

CCM) attacked Dr Mwakyembe's assertion that the courts fit in countries like Zanzibar because the vast majority of its citizens are Muslim."Why doesn't he cite the example of Kenya whose population is predominantly Christian but they have the courts?" he demanded. He went on: "There is no need of fear. Establishment of Kadhi court is a CCM election pledge," he said, asking the minister to give a detailed explanation as to why Kadhi courts which existed in Tanzania were outlawed in 1963. The debate became tense after the MP claimed that even the Muslim Council of Tanzania (Bakwata) was superimposed in the place of the East African Muslim Welfare Society which stood in defence of Muslim's affairs and was unceremoniously banned in 1963. He spoke on the issue of Zanzibar to be barred to join the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC). "All have equal rights. Why should joining OIC wait for its go-ahead from the church," a furious Msambya demanded. Teddy Kasella-Bantu (Bukene-CCM) said any attempt to establish the courts would be unconstitutional, cautioning that issues of religious faith should not be mixed with constitutional arrangements. She said issues which are to be dealt with the courts like marriage disputes; inheritance and divorce can easily be solved by making arrangements so that they are solved by the same Islamic religious bodies instead of establishing courts using taxpayers money. Godfrey Nzambi (Mbozi East-CCM) attacked MPs who relied on the CCM election manifesto to press for the establishment of the courts, noting that election pledges can be implemented or put on hold depending on circumstances. "That was a pledge and not a law," the MP said, warning that to allow the courts was to breach the constitution. He cited section 19 (1) of the constitution. "This interpretation does not need a law graduate" to affirm it, he insisted. Establishment of the court, he said would set up precedence for other religious sects to demand that taxpayers money be used to fund operations of their courts, which he said would be unconstitutional. He said a claim that CCM had won votes because of the Kadhi courts idea was a clear distortion. "The majority of the population in Mbozi are Christians. Let us leave the government do its job," he urged. Zitto Kabwe (Kigoma North-Chadema) expressed concerns that the Kadhi courts debate may split Parliament on a religious basis. The discussion needs a high degree of tolerance. "It reaches a point that people who are listening to us are getting divided. We would not want to see the nation divided," he told fellow legislators. He asked fellow MPs to wait until the government's report on the issue is released for MPs to debate. "The arguments which are going on now are not healthy for our country. I think we need to be patient," Zitto said. Esther Nyawaza (Special Seats-CCM) said the issue should not be left to divide the nation, noting that the constitution was the best reference to decide on the issue. Wilson Masilingi (Muleba South-CCM), chairman of the parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, defence and security, said the ongoing debate shows that there is every need to pray for the nation so that the prevailing peace that was earned by sweat and blood is maintained.

- **Somalia: Ethiopian, Somali Soldiers Kill, Injure More Than 40 Civilians – Witnesses: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 15 August 2008.**

Joint government and Ethiopian soldiers shot dead more than 40 civilians after they dismounted them from civilian vehicles in southwestern Mogadishu witnesses and elders said. It was the latest in a series in which The Ethiopian and Somali troops have killed

civilians who have come too close to troops wary of attacks by rebels. The troops have pulled up civilian vehicles at Arbiska area near Afgoi district ordering the passengers to drop down from the vehicles where some of the handcuffed travelers were shot dead while others were shot dead in the vehicles they were traveling. "When the vehicle was stopped the soldiers, fearing an attack, arbitrarily fired on it," it said. The man died later of his wounds. Dozens others were wounded in that attack those were rushed to Mogadishu hospitals. No comments could be reached from the government/Ethiopian officials on this incident.

- **Somalia: Street Children Increase as Food Insecurity Grips Region: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 14 August 2008.**

Food insecurity compounded by inflation and recent fighting between insurgents and government forces around the town of Beletweyne in central Somalia's Hiran region has led to a sharp increase in the number of street children. "More and more children are taking to the streets; some to engage in petty trade while others are just there in search of food," a journalist based in Beletweyne, who declined to be named, told IRIN. The journalist said children, numbering at least 100, had resorted to Beletweyne streets in recent months as access to food dwindled for many families. Layla Maowlid, 12, is one such child: "I am on the streets daily to sell sweet potatoes due to the poor condition and hunger of my family, I have no other choice. My mother prepares this food in the house and I sell it in the market." The journalist said since many local and international NGOs had left the town due to insecurity, only the Zamzam Foundation, which runs the Ughas Kalif orphanage in the town, was providing aid for children. According to Robert Kihara, a spokesman for the UN Children's Fund in Somalia (UNICEF-Somalia), the agency is currently conducting a rapid assessment of the child protection situation in Beletweyne through its Child Protection Network for Hiran. "Similar assessments are also currently underway in Bay, Benadir, Middle Shabelle, Galgaduud, and Lower Shabelle," Kihara said. "The increase in children living or working on the street has also been reported by the Benadir Child Protection Network. No figures are stated." He added: "Among other essential protection issues for children, the assessments will provide insight into the scale of the problem. As such UNICEF is not in a position to comment on figures at this stage. The assessments will be completed by this coming Sunday in the field and will then be analysed. Kihara said UNICEF was not supporting any programmes focusing specifically on children living or working on the street at this stage, "but we do support programmes that monitor the violations against children, that provide psycho-social care and support to children (for example in Afgoye) through schools, as well as community mobilisation programmes to highlight child protection issues at community level." He said UNICEF also supports child protection networks to develop community-based responses to critical areas in need of intervention, adding: "This may very well include children living or working on the street."

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Repatriated Locals Battle With Life Back Home: The New Times (Kigali): 15 August 2008.**

It is almost three years since the repatriation of close to 16000 Rwandans from Tanzania. The Rwandans who were forced out of Tanzania in January 2006; most of them being pastoralists, who had gone there in search of greener pastures for their cattle. Rwanda is a small country in which they could not get big farms to rear large herds of cattle the alternative being to occupy the vacant areas of Tanzania. Rwanda and Tanzania share the border in the eastern part of the country. The Rwandan pastoralists who had lived in Tanzania for many years were asked to leave the country, leaving behind their hard earned wealth and source of survival, their cows which were declared as the property of the government of Tanzania. Imprisonment and beatings became the order of the day as they (Rwandans) struggled to defend their cows from being taken from them. Despite their resilient struggle to save their properties they failed as everyone who was repatriated came back empty handed save for their beloved families. Life was difficult in a foreign land. Though the transition back to their home country has not been so pleasant for the pastoralists, most of them who are yet to be resettled are now living in camps in different districts of the eastern province. In Rugese camp, there are 103 families while in Ndego and Kageyo camps in the Kageyo sector Kayonza district there are 653 families in both camps with a total of 1882 people while many others are still in the main camp in Nasho Kirehe district. There is no more milk for the once cattle keepers like they used to have back in Tanzania compounded by deteriorated living conditions as they sleep in tents. However, to many repatriated Rwandans in the Rugese refugee camp in the Rurenge sector of Ngoma district; they consider this way of life as being better off than the one back in Tanzania. "We might live in camps and tents, but to me this way of living is better than the one in Tanzania," says a 34 year-old Alphonse Niwemugabo who was born in Tanzania and has lived there all his life. Niwemugabo is a married with three children, he adds that they risked their lives in Tanzania. He says; "Though we live in the forest we are happy because we know we sleep in peace. Even though we sleep in tents or outside we are sure of no disturbances. It is not as it was in Tanzania where we used to spend sleepless nights wandering up and down protecting our properties and lives." Niwemugabo had 58 cows but came back empty handed as they were all taken from him after spending about nine months imprisoned. "I did not know where my family was," he explains that when they released him they deported him; only to reunite with his family three months later in the Nasho camp. "I have come to know that there is no place like home. Whatever you do and wherever you go, home remains the best place, says Judith Mukasine. "We went to Tanzania 12 years ago with the hope of achieving our dreams but only to lose even the little we had," she laments. A 53 year old mother of six Mukasine says her husband and two sons almost lost their lives in Tanzania as they were beaten up and imprisoned for over two years. "Unknown people found them looking after the cattle and took them with all the cows. We did not know where they were only to see them two years later after their imprisonment." The desperate looking mother narrates. She adds that she thought her family members were dead. That was the end of their search for wealth in herds of cattle, she says adding; "Uzi umuntu kugusanga aho nacyo wakoze akagukubita gusa udafite naho urikumurege !" Loosely translated to; 'But do you know some one to find you there and starts beating you up with no reason and having done nothing and you don't have where to report for a rescue ! I will live and die here where I am at least sure of my safety.' Another pastoralist, Elias Bakunda says their life has at least improved since the Rwandan government and the Red Cross came to their

rescue. A 42 year-old Bakunda, says he had over 70 cows and came back with only three says they can now cultivate since the Red Cross gave them seeds and the agricultural tools. "We thought we would live a wealthy life in Tanzania but instead to the contrary. I have now realized that to achieve anything there has to be peace and security first and this is what we now have. Yes, we sleep badly but we can at least work for something little with a peace of mind and no one to disturb you," Bakunda says. There is a total of 150 families in the Rugese camp to be resettled before the end of this year. This includes 103 repatriated Rwandans while the others are vulnerable families in the Rurenge sector. The Belgian government through the International Red Cross, donated -500,000 (approximately Frw400m), which was earmarked for the construction of houses. Each house, estimated at Frw1.5 million will have a toilet, kitchen and a bathroom. The same amount was earmarked for different developmental activities for returnees and other vulnerable residents. This include; seeds, supply of agricultural tools, stocking goats, agricultural training, food security as well as rehabilitating water sources. The money will also help in training and educating all the residents of Rurenge sector on health and home hygiene.

77. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Council Boss Assures Bakassi Returnees of Adequate Care: Leadership (Abuja): 11 August 2008.**

Returnees from Bakassi who are currently quartered at a camp in Mbo local government area of Akwa Ibom State have been assured of better life and adequate care. The Chairman of Mbo local government council, Mr Victor Antai, gave this assurance during a solidarity visit to the temporary camp of the Nigerians who were displaced as a fall out of the International Court of Justice's ruling on the troubled Bakassi Peninsula which was subsequently ceded to the Republic of Cameroon. Addressing the huge crowd of returnees, some of whom are from Akwa Ibom State, the council Chairman described their home coming as an act of God, saying that "whatever situation one finds himself or herself in this life should be considered as a challenge," adding that he had seen what they passed through in the aftermath of the crisis as a result of the ICJ judgement. According to him, "the entire Mbo local government area and the people of Akwa Ibom State sympathise and empathise with all of you, remember that whatever happens, you are now back home in your own country. "You should now know that your troubles are over". He assured them of good accommodation and better health care, stressing that he would bring their plight to the attention of Governor Godswill Akpabio, and urged them to show understanding by being law abiding while in Mbo. Responding, the Chief of the Yoruba community in Ibaka, headquarters of Mbo local government council, Chief Johnbull Obadiah, expressed happiness over the council chairman's visit to the camp to identify with the victims' plight and for his brotherly assurance with the hope of bringing succour to them. He, however, pleaded with the Federal Government not to abandon them at this trying period of their lives, but to ensure that all the returnees were properly and adequately re-settled in any place of their choice so as to be integrated into

the Nigerian society."Majority of the people here were doing very well before the crises and many lost their entire property including life savings, while an unspecified number died in the process and, as I am speaking to you, some are still lying in the hospital, seriously injured,"he lamented.Obadiah, therefore, enjoined all Nigerians to be united and come to the aid of the returnees irrespective of their states of origin.The Yoruba community leader described Governor Akpabio as a great leader and a detribalised Nigerian, stressing that that was evident by the quick response of the Chairman of Mbo local government and the people of the area towards the hapless returnees.He assured that the returnees would maintain peace by not taking the law into their hands during their stay in Mbo, until they were permanently resettled.

- **Mauritania: More Would-Be Migrants Fleeing Post Coup: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 14 August 2008.**

More Africans are risking transatlantic crossings to Europe after Mauritania's military coup last week, according to Jerome Dukiya, a Catholic priest in the port town of Nouadhibou.Two years ago, Nouadhibou was one of the most highly-trafficked departure points for would-be migrants trying to escape to Europe by boat.Since the numbers attempting the crossing from Nouadhibou, as well as deaths at sea, spiked in 2006, the Spanish government and European border security agency, Frontex, have helped Mauritanian officials tighten its coastline patrol, rescuing, and turning back would-be migrants.But Dukiya says people are still finding ways to escape, and more so now after a coup on 6 August, when army officers arrested President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abadallahi in his home. Top members of the president's former guard have since declared power through a military council. President Abdallahi remains in detention."When people see that border guards are less vigilant, or simply not there, they [would-be migrants] take advantage of the more open coastline to flee." The Catholic priest says the national military takeover has diverted attention from securing the country's borders."I know when people have left to try and make it to Europe by sea because I will not see them at church for one to two weeks. Since the coup, less are coming to services."The head of the UN International Organization for Migration in Nouakchott, Traore Abbas, says while it is too soon to measure how many more are trying to leave illegally, the numbers will jump."Anytime you have changes in maritime surveillance, there will be changes in migration patterns. We expect the numbers who are repatriated [to Mauritania] to increase."On 13 August, more than 100 African migrants arrived on the shores of Tenerife beach in the Spanish Canary Islands, according to Spanish police, bringing the total to more than 400 arrivals, from unspecified countries, this week.Turkish media reported earlier this week the capture of 30 migrants at sea, a number from Mauritania, earlier this week.During the first seven months of 2008, more than 7,000 migrants reached Spain by boat, about 10 percent less than last year, and nearly 60 percent less than 2006, according to the Spanish government.Representatives of the European Union (EU), one of Mauritania's main partners in its efforts to control clandestine migration, have said the recent coup threatens its more than US\$200 million in aid.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Closure of Camps On Hold Pending Court Ruling, Says UN Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 15 August 2008.**

South Africa's Constitutional Court has instructed officials in Gauteng province not to dismantle six temporary shelters housing foreigners forced to flee their homes by xenophobic violence, pending a ruling on the issue, the United Nations said today. Today was the deadline announced by the provincial government for the closure of the camps, whose residents are mostly Zimbabweans, as well as people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia, Mozambique, Burundi and Rwanda. "Most of the sites are still intact and although some of the people have left in anticipation of the closure, there remains a substantial number of people in those camps," Yusuf Hassan, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in South Africa, told UN Radio today. A spate of xenophobic attacks in May on foreigners and ethnic minorities in South Africa claimed the lives of 56 people. UNHCR says that while most of the 40,000 people displaced by the violence have returned to their home within the country, some 8,000 people remain at camps in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Mr. Hassan said that at the moment there are about 3,500 people in six sites in Gauteng and another 4,500 in the Western Cape. The agency has completed an assessment of those remaining in the camps and, along with its partners, is assisting them with cash donations. The Constitutional Court is expected to resume its consideration of the case on Monday.

- **South Africa: Xenophobic Victims' Future Uncertain: [Cape Argus](#) (Cape Town): 9 August 2008.**

Victims of the recent xenophobic attacks will have to sit tight until Thursday. Only then will they find out whether they will be forced out of makeshift camps around the country - because the judge hearing an urgent application by the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in SA and the Wits Law Clinic says "I am not a machine". Acting Judge Piet Ebersohn said he did not have time to read the papers because they were not filed in time. "I'm going to postpone the case until next week. I'm not a machine," he told the applicants this week, adding that he had thousands of papers in urgent cases to read. The Wits Law Clinic and the Consortium want the court to compel the government to communicate and introduce a comprehensive reintegration strategy that protects the rights of all. They are also seeking an order for the government to restore the Rifle Range shelter in Joburg and to refrain from dismantling it until such time as a comprehensive strategy is in place. The xenophobic violence that swept South Africa in May, leaving at least 62 dead and hundreds injured, marked one of the darkest two weeks in the country's 14-year democracy. Tens of thousands of Zimbabweans, Mozambicans, Malawians, Congolese, Nigerians and other Africans scooped up their children and ran from mobs with little more than the clothes on their back. Many were so traumatised by the violence that they rushed to board buses and trains out of South Africa. The rest - close to 40 000 at one point - piled into police stations, churches and community halls, from where most were later bundled off to government-run camps. Now, barely three months later, the government is shutting down the shelters, leaving around 7 000 people facing an uncertain future. On Thursday, the Home Affairs Department said it would deport the

more than 100 displaced refugees and asylum-seekers who were removed from the R28 highway in Krugersdorp last week. The men were detained at the Lindela Repatriation Centre. About 80 of them have refused to co-operate with the department in finalising their claims. Those being deported have been given 10 days to appeal. Meanwhile, medical humanitarian organisation Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) has called on the South African government to uphold its obligation to protect refugees. The camps should not be closed without viable options being made available to the displaced. This requires communication and consultation. The uncertainty, says MSF South Africa general director Sharon Ekambaram, has led to high levels of stress and anxiety - both of which harmed their mental and physical health. "During the last week of July, 19 percent of the more than 300 consultations carried out were for stress-related conditions."

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: Dozens Beaten As They Are Deported From UK, Says Report: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 12 August 2008.**

Dozens of people from East Africa including some children have been systematically abused, beaten and in some cases threatened with torture for failing to co-operate with attempts to deport them from Britain, according to a new report. Outsourcing Abuse by Birnberg Peirce & Partners, Medical Justice and the National Coalition Against Deportation Campaign says an alarming number of injuries have been sustained by asylum deportees at the hand of private "escorts" contracted by the UK Home Office to force people to return home. Of particular concern in Kenya maybe the fact that of the 113 cases of alleged abuse involving attempts to deport African detainees to their home country by air, 22 per cent were on Kenya Airways flights, the second highest number behind British Airways. In Nairobi, Kenya Airways declined comment saying the allegations involve the British Home Office. The report also reveals evidence of widespread and seemingly systemic abuse of vulnerable people who have fled their own countries seeking safety and refuge, and says that assault claims have largely been brushed off by the Home Office. Amongst the dozens of cases reported are those of a Kenyan woman, known only as Ms BM who, despite known to be suffering from a series of mental illnesses, alleges that she was handcuffed and sat upon by security officers at Yarl's Wood Immigration Centre during her battle to stay in the UK. Most of the cases of abuse however concern Ugandans, and 29 cases are cited in the report. Many allegedly suffered racial abuse including a man known as Duncan Kasasa who was taken to Heathrow Airport and told he would be put on a plane home despite a very high blood pressure level and evidence that he was dizzy, sweaty and confused.

You are just faking it

One of the 'escorts' for Mr Kasasa reportedly told him: "You bastard. You are going back to Uganda. You are just faking it, pretending." He was handcuffed onto the plane and allegedly had his legs tied together. Once on board he was punched and forced into a seat. A pillow was put over his mouth to stop him shouting out. Some of the reports of abuse in the report are extremely detailed and some even involve children. In a

particularly distressing case involving one Ugandan woman, the SN Brussels pilot intervened to prevent the forced deportation after a woman was beaten and almost lost consciousness after being held around the neck. Several women in particular are alleged to have attempted to take their own lives because of the abuse they are said to have received. The report readily recognises that some asylum seekers do not have valid claims to refugee status but stresses that should not prevent their human rights being ignored. The London Labour MP Dianne Abbot said that the information contained in the 70-page document was "one of the most shocking reports about our (UK) immigration system that I have seen in 20 years as a Member of Parliament." The report catalogues the frightening state-sponsored violence that happens to asylum-seekers when they are being deported. This report suggests a complete failure [by the Home Office] to investigate many of the allegations. "This report is distressing and upsetting for anyone to read. But for (UK) Ministers it is a damning verdict on their inability to inject even a shred of humanity into a flailing immigration system." Ms Abbot went on to say that "together with every right thinking person, those who read it will not want to believe what it contains. If the Home Office, Ministers and officials alike, is sensible it will pay due attention to the dossier. They should recognise that our national reputation is not something to be treated lightly or wantonly, and that, if even one of the cases is substantiated, that amounts to something of a preventable national disgrace." Lord David Ramsbotham, one of the authors of the report said: "I have seen many serious injuries with long lasting effects; crushing of nerves at the wrist from forceful pulling on handcuffs, limitation of neck movement by patients whose heads were pushed under aircraft seats, numbness of the face after blows around the cheek and eye. I have also seen a dislocated wrist, giant bruises and swellings the size of my fist.

"I have seen far worse abuses but do not have the patient's permission to reveal confidential medical information. Our report includes evidence from 18 independent doctors. Some of these findings are worse still. They include dislocation to the knee requiring a plaster cast and several people rendered unable to walk for extended periods. Some were denied wheelchairs, pain relief and other essential treatment although in state custody." An independent doctor Frank Arnold who was asked for his view on the evidence presented said that the report "reveals the extent of lawless disregard for basic rules in the application of force, combined with a wholly inadequate system for investigating often extremely serious criminal allegations." Ms Harriet Wistrich, of the legal firm Birnberg Peirce & Partners, one of the authors of the report said she had "been shocked to discover, the extent of casual racism and inhumanity from officers employed by the Home Office and its subcontracted private companies." The Home Office uses charter flights and military planes to deport to places like Afghanistan and Iraq, and even arranged a private jet to deport one suicidal 14-year-old girl and her mother. Meanwhile, asylum applications are at a 14-year low, yet the proportional use of detention has increased 7-fold. One shudders to think what will happen if they fulfil their announcement to deal with 450,000 unresolved cases within five years. The report's findings, are based on nearly 300 cases of alleged physical assault and racial abuse, and follow a four-year investigation into concerns about the control and use of private security firms in the deportation process. Many of the allegations were first published in The Independent in October last year when ministers then dismissed the cases as being unsubstantiated and

requested more evidence. The Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith has now been given the names and details of 48 of the claimants who want the Government to order fresh investigations into their cases. A particularly disturbing feature of the report is that many of the allegations of abuse are made by refugees who came to this country because they claim to have been tortured or persecuted in their own country. The authors say many of the alleged victims can no longer be contacted as they have been deported or are too frightened to put in claims in case it has an adverse effect on their applications.

- **Somalia: Six Missing After Attempted Sea Crossing From Somalia to Yemen - UN Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 13 August 2008.**

Six people are missing after a smuggler's boat transporting 175 people from Somalia to Yemen ran into difficulties in heavy seas this weekend, the United Nations refugee agency reported today. On Saturday a fishing boat carrying about 175 people was stranded in deep water when it broke down while approaching Yemen's Mayfa'a Hager coast after setting off from Marera village near Bossaso on the northern tip of Somalia, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Some were rescued by fishermen while another group managed to leave on a smaller boat and reach the coast through heavy storms and choppy seas. Upon arrival they alerted UNHCR's local partner, the Society for Humanitarian Solidarity (SHS). The Yemeni Coast Guard and SHS deployed three boats to rescue the stranded passengers. The first attempt took place late on Saturday night, but was not successful because of the atrocious weather. A second attempt at dawn on Sunday led to the rescue of more people. Survivors reported that six passengers were still missing. All rescued people were transferred to Mayfa'a reception centre, where they are being assisted by UNHCR and its partners, and provided with food, blankets, shelter and medical care. UNHCR says the weekend incident marks the end of a brief lull over the summer, when bad weather traditionally prevents human smugglers from operating in the gulf. In the last week alone, nine boats have brought more than 458 people, mainly Somalis and Ethiopians, to the coast of Yemen. "This is a steep increase from 2007 and the numbers will continue to rise," said Myra Sabongi, UNHCR's Protection Officer in Aden, Yemen. "We are not even half-way through August, but the number of arrivals is already significantly higher than for the entire month of August 2007. Similarly, this July, more than 233 people arrived to the shore, compared to 57 during the same month in 2007." So far this year, more than 22,532 people have made the perilous Gulf of Aden crossing aboard smugglers' boats. More than 165 people have died trying to make the voyage this year and 220 are missing. Over the past year, the refugee agency has stepped up its work in Yemen and appealed for over \$17 million to provide for additional staff, better assistance, more shelter for refugees and training programmes for the coastguard. UNHCR has also enhanced its presence along the coast and opened an additional reception centre earlier this year. In April, a regional conference was convened by UNHCR in cooperation with the Mixed Migration Task Force for Somalia to establish a regional mechanism and long-term plan of action on refugee protection and mixed migration in the Gulf of Aden. The flow of people across the Gulf of Yemen includes a significant number of refugees. "Yemen has carried a major burden in dealing with irregular migratory movements in the region, yet has maintained an open-door policy to refugees," said Claire Bourgeois, UNHCR's Representative in

Yemen. "Support from the international community however remains an absolute necessity."

78. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB) **WEST AFRICA**

- **Nigeria: Europe, America Plunder Africa for Doctors - Prof Idris: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 15 August 2008.**

This year's National Merit Award recipient, Professor Muhammad Idris, has accused advanced countries of Europe and America of still under-developing Africa in the area of health care by poaching her physicians. Solution to brain drain of medical doctors from the continent would, according to him, remain a mirage for a long time as the advanced world continues to lure them with money and other benefits. Idris, who dropped this bombshell in Gombe while commenting on the award he described as "an honour of accomplishment," said the situation was aggravated by the high cost of establishing medical schools and training of physicians coupled with their slow stride towards keeping pace with demands on the professionals. According to him, personnel mainly from Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa account for 23% of the about 850,000 physicians in the United States today. The Chief Medical Consultant of the University of Maiduguri said Britain was able to establish only one medical school between 1900 and 1970 but were only able to create additional ten ones from 1970 till date following the private sector participation. He accused the advanced countries of further under-developing Africa by luring away her best brains in the medical profession because it is expensive to train doctors over there. "I was privileged to participate in an international summit in Europe where medicine took the centre stage and my questions of when the underdevelopment of Africa through poaching of her doctors would stop was swept under the carpet. One of them said it would never stop because it was too expensive for us to train them, therefore, we rely on Africa for our needs." To this end, Idris advised Gombe State government to make adequate financial arrangements before venturing into the proposed establishment of capital intensive school of medical sciences in the state university; otherwise the plan would end up as a pipe-dream. He pointed at a situation of 1976 when the Federal Government opened about twenty medical schools across the country and twenty years later, many could not function as medical students of Bayero University Kano and Uthman Dan-Fodio University Sokoto had to be transferred to University of Maiduguri before they could graduate.

- **West Africa: Ghana, Togo, Benin Parley Over Bird Flu: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 14 August 2008.**

Ghana's Veterinary Services Directorate, alarmed at the resurgence of avian influenza (bird flu) in Nigeria, is seeking a meeting with its eastern neighbours, Togo and Benin Republic to discuss common measures to prevent it from spreading to their countries. Dr Enoch Koney, Acting Director, said a similar cross border meeting had been planned with Cote d'Ivoire to the west and Burkina Faso to the north. Nigeria is sited to the east of Ghana. Ghana declared itself free from the disease about two years ago after culling and

other measures. Speaking on Tuesday in Kumasi at a day's simulation exercise on avian influenza, he said all regional directors of agriculture as well as veterinary officers had been informed about the new case in Nigeria. Koney said this was to strengthen surveillance in all avian influenza risk-prone areas and asked them not to be complacent in their prevention and control measures. He urged them to have a constant check at all live bird markets and monitor the staging posts of migratory wild birds at wetlands while they strictly enforced import permits for poultry and poultry products. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has warned that a new strain of avian influenza never before reported in Africa has been identified in Nigeria. It said tests conducted by Nigeria and by the FAO showed that the new virus strain which was similar to strains identified last year in Italy, Afghanistan and Iran was genetically distinct from other forms detected in Nigeria in 2006 and 2007. It pointed to other avenues the virus could have taken to Nigeria, such as international trade or illegal and unreported movement of poultry. "This increases the risk of an avian influenza spread to other countries in Western Africa,"

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Namibia: Health Experts, Security Personnel Meet Over Bird Flu: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 14 August 2008.**

Officials from the Ministry of Health and Social Services, marine experts, and representatives of the Police and the Namibian Defence Force are in Walvis Bay for a two-day workshop on avian influenza, commonly referred to as bird flu. The workshop is aimed at formulating a Rapid Response Team at local level to complement the country's efforts as part of SADC countries' efforts to control the spread of the disease. The workshop follows an earlier visit by representatives of the FAO to the coastal towns to assess the implementation of avian influenza response. At SADC level, the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) in South Africa organised similar workshops where training and sensitisation on bird flu was provided. The training was aimed at passing on knowledge to the various countries' representatives, who would in turn pass over the knowledge to relevant stakeholders in their own countries. Avian influenza is an infection caused by avian (bird) influenza viruses. These influenza viruses occur naturally among birds. Wild birds worldwide are reported to carry the viruses in their intestines, but usually do not get sick from them. However, avian influenza is very contagious among birds and can infect domesticated birds, including chickens, ducks, and turkeys, often killing them. Infected birds shed influenza virus in their saliva, nasal secretions, and faeces. Susceptible birds become infected when they have contact with contaminated secretions or excretions or with surfaces that are contaminated with secretions or excretions from infected birds. Domesticated birds may become infected with avian influenza virus through direct contact with infected waterfowl or other infected poultry, or through contact with surfaces (such as dirt or cages) or materials (such as water or feed) that have been contaminated with the virus. Migratory birds making their way into other countries beyond their origins have been reported as one of the major factors fuelling the spread of bird flu to those countries. Due to the large presence of migratory birds often found along the Namibian shores and coastline, the Ministry of Health deemed it necessary to convene the workshop as a direct response to earlier regional efforts to prevent a

catastrophe in the event of another outbreak of the disease. Infection with avian influenza viruses in domestic poultry causes two main forms of disease that are distinguished by low and high extremes of virulence. The "low pathogenic" form may go undetected and usually causes only mild symptoms (such as ruffled feathers and a drop in egg production). However, the highly pathogenic form, H5N1 virus, spreads more rapidly through flocks of poultry. This form may cause diseases that affect multiple internal organs and has a mortality rate that can reach 90-100 percent often within 48 hours. The State veterinarian at Walvis Bay, Dr Elizabeth Homateni-Kamberuka, who is facilitating the workshop, said the workshop became vital in order to form a Rapid Response Team that would be deployed in the event of an outbreak of bird flu. "This workshop is important for the region to be prepared and respond as rapidly as possible in the case of an outbreak, as these people will be deployed in the field to deal with a confirmed or suspected outbreak of Avian influenza in humans or birds," she said. Although the H5N1 virus does not usually infect people, infections with these viruses have been reported in humans. Most of these cases have resulted from people having direct or close contact with H5N1-infected poultry or H5N1-contaminated surfaces. Of the human cases associated with H5N1 outbreaks in poultry and wild birds, more than half of the people reported to be infected with the virus have died. Most cases have occurred in previously healthy children and young adults and have resulted from direct or close contact with H5N1-infected poultry or H5N1-contaminated surfaces. In general, H5N1 remains a very rare disease in people. The H5N1 virus does not infect humans easily, and if a person is infected, it is very difficult for the virus to spread to another person. While there has been some human-to-human spread of H5N1, it has been limited, inefficient and unsustainable. Nonetheless, because all influenza viruses have the ability to change, scientists are concerned that H5N1 virus one day could be able to infect humans and spread easily from one person to another.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Makerere Medical School Laboratory Wins Award: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 12 August 2008.**

THE Medical Laboratory Observer Magazine (MLO), a USA-based monthly magazine, has ranked the Makerere University Johns Hopkins University Core laboratory at Mulago Medical School as the best in medical laboratory in 2008. It is one of the three laboratories in Africa to be accredited by the College of American Pathologists. Representing the Makerere University Chancellor, Prof. Mondo Kagonyera, Stephen Maloba, the chairman of the Makerere University Appointments Committee, said this at an Academic Fair at Makerere University recently. The fair aimed at showcasing the different achievements by the various faculties, schools and institutes at the university. Maloba said the university led the way in innovation in Africa, adding that the institution had a track record in research, especially in science. "Among the innovations realised at Makerere University are the discovery that the Nevirapine drug prevents transmission of HIV/AIDS from mother to child," he said. "Our students from the Faculty of Technology were selected from five African universities to represent the

continent on an international team of 12 institutions of high repute working on the development of a modern car, projected to be the cheapest in the world," he added

- **Uganda: Man Kills Wife Over HIV Infection: *The Monitor* (Kampala):15 August 2008.**

Police in Rukungiri have arrested a man who allegedly killed his wife of 10 years by hacking her with a machete after he learnt he was infected with HIV, the virus that causes Aids. The police identified the suspect as Mr Julius Tumwesigye, 30, and said he blamed his infection on his wife.

According to the officer-in-charge of crime in the area, Mr Jackson Mugisha, the suspect stabbed his wife, Glorius Kyarikunda, 25, at 10am on Tuesday in Kikarara Trading Centre in Bwambara Sub-county, Rukungiri District. The couple had two children aged six and four. Residents, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Daily Monitor that Kyarikunda had fled to her parent's home on Sunday after a fight with her husband. The attack is reported to have occurred two days later when Kyarikunda returned with the children to collect her property and found an enraged Tumwesigye. It was at that point that Mr Tumwesigye allegedly pounced, hacking her to pieces. She died moments later. Mr Tumwesigye, who was by now drenched in his wife's blood, attempted to run but neighbours, who had been drawn to the homestead by Ms Kyarikunda's screams, arrested him. It was the timely intervention of the Police that saved him from the mob that was baying for his blood. A blood-stained machete was recovered from the scene of the crime. A post-mortem report showed that the deceased died from deep cuts inflicted by sharp object. Mr Mugisha told Daily Monitor, that such murders seldom happen in Rukungiri. "It is the only murder of the kind that I can recall in a long time," he said, in a telephone interview. However, murders generally have been on the increase in western Uganda. Several weeks ago, a mentally ill man in Bushenyi hacked his family of six to death before killing himself. A well known HIV, gender and human rights activist, Dr Lydia Mungherera, who lives openly with HIV, yesterday condemned the attack and called for swift justice. "It is horrific that a woman is hacked to death on being blamed to have infected a man with HIV," Dr Mungherera said. "No one knows who infected who in this case. It has become a common practice for women to be blamed in society as the cause of the pandemic. It is very bad to hack a person you have been living together with for long." Tumwesigye had, by yesterday, not yet been charged. Dr Eugene Kinyanda, a consultant psychiatrist with the Medical Research Council said Mr Tumwesigye's act could be due to lack of counselling services in the area. He said: "Such psychosocial problems that are not attended to eventually result into brutal murders because of delusion. But sometimes it may be due to mental illness or frustration after realising one has contracted HIV." According to Mr Moses Muramuzi, a neighbour to Mr Tumwesigye, the suspect had become withdrawn in recent days after discovering that he was HIV positive. "He vowed to deal with his wife whom he accused of bringing it to him," Mr Muramuzi said. "He claimed he had no outside relationship." About a million people in Uganda are living with HIV but activists warn of increasing attacks, especially within homes. At a recent workshop held in Soroti, the Regional Manager of the charity ActionAid Uganda, Ms Ann Akwango, said violence against women living with HIV and

Aids is increasing and revealed that statistics from Pallisa District had indicated 100 out of 465 HIV-positive women questioned during a survey earlier this year, had experienced some form of violence after revealing their status to their husbands. It is feared that this type of violence will scare partners from revealing their status, drive the epidemic underground and lead to increasing infection and deaths from people afraid to seek professional care and support.

- **Uganda: Locally-Made ARVs Go on Sale: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 12 August 2008.**

THE first Ugandan-made Anti-Retroviral (ARV) drugs are now on sale in the country. Emmanuel Katongole, the chief executive of Quality Chemical Industries, a pharmaceutical company manufacturing the drug, said yesterday the Luzira-based factory produces 60 million tablets everyday. "In Uganda, there are about 300,000 HIV/AIDS patients who require ARVs. The 60 million tablets we make everyday is a good beginning," he observed, adding that they had capacity to expand production very soon. Meeting about 20 permanent secretaries of various ministries at the plant, Katongole said the tablets were being sold to accredited centers. "The Government is the biggest client. We also sell to several charity organisations which deal in HIV/AIDS. A dose costs \$8 (about sh12,800)," he told The New Vision on phone. The plant, which President Yoweri Museveni launched early this year, has been licensed by the National Drug Authority. "Officials from the World Health Organisation inspected our premises. They said they were impressed but are yet to grant us their licence," marketing director George Baguma added. He explained that the company had put in place several safety measures to guarantee quality. "For any tablet we sell, we store a sample and use it to examine the drug's quality basing on the feedback we get from our clients." Quality Chemical Industries is the first factory in Africa to produce ARVs. It works in collaboration with CIPLA, the leading ARV-drug producers based in India. Katongole said expatriates were training local pharmacists to take over production after five years. "We shall employ about 600 when the company takes off fully." He complained about the unreliable electricity, saying it costs the company a lot of money. "Whenever power goes off, we spend sh5m per hour to run the plant using generators."

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: New Aids Drug on Trial: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 12 August 2008.**

The global search for biomedical actions to help fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic has discovered new treatment options. The options include novel HIV possible treatment procedure called Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), clinical trials and Tenofovir Disoproxil Fumarate (TDF) drug use. Prophylaxis is any medical or public health procedure whose purpose is to prevent, rather than treat a particular disease. The global AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC), August 2008 report unveiled the PrEP trials for TDF, an Antiretroviral (ARV) therapy. The report released at a global HIV/AIDS forum which ended last week in Mexico, revealed that TDF and emtricitabine

drug combination was also being tested. According to the report, the trials are said to be currently underway in some African, Asian, Latin and North American countries. Health Minister Dr Jean Damascene Ntawukuliryayo, Tuesday said the trials had not yet come to Rwanda, "We haven't received such a report but when we do, our biomedical research specialists will take-up its recommended clinical trials," minister promised. The report underlines the list key issues of the trials which need governments, donors, researchers, and advocates attentions for PrEP deal to succeed. The aim is to look for the safety and efficacy of PrEP, in which the AIDS patients could take Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs with hope of reducing their risk of acquiring new HIV. "It is time for PrEP to be placed high on the AIDS advocacy and global health agendas" the report reads in part. "This means supporting high-quality, accelerated research on PrEP and preparing for whatever results may come from its trials, as soon as 2009." It further explained that public health leaders, advocates, policy makers and communities impacted by HIV/AIDS need to be better prepared for the results of PrEP trials. Figures released by Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) ahead of the summit revealed that the number of AIDS patients around the world had gone down. However, infection rates are still rising in some countries and that the access to the right treatment is also an issue. The six-day conference convened about 20,000 scientists, government officials and campaigners from around the world.

79. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **West Africa: Flood Relief Efforts Continue: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 15 August 2008.**

Disaster relief teams have fanned out across West Africa to assess how badly the region was hit during the past month of heavy rains. Tens of thousands were affected in Togo, Burkina Faso, Niger, Liberia and Mauritania according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA). In Niger, more than 40,000 thousand people were affected by heavy rains which started on 14 July. In the country's second most populated city, Zinder, hundreds are camping in the local elementary school. Nobert Allale, a disaster relief manager at the Dakar-based International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), says schools are a refuge for those without family or money to rent a new home. Allale visited Zinder on 22 July, one week after the rains first hit. "The situation is stable now. Families have been given water and food. We are now in the process of distributing mosquito nets, pots and pans. We are past the emergency response phase." Allale says there is no plan in place yet for where these families will go once the school year begins October, "We need to look to long-term solutions. We know the rains will come. We cannot blame nature alone for these annual catastrophes. It is nature plus man's inability to adapt. People live in mud homes in flood-prone areas. If they build on the same site year after year... this is what happens." In Togo, heavy rainfall has led to bridge collapse, and cut off most of the cell phone network. A team from the International Monetary Fund is expected 27 August to review flood damage as a part of its more than US\$60 million commitment. Major donors cut off most aid to Togo during

recent years of bloody tumult, which included allegedly rigged elections and army crackdowns that sent thousands fleeing to neighbouring countries. Donors are slowly coming back following Togo's 2007 legislative election, which monitors said was mostly free and fair. According to the World Bank, Togo has accrued more than US\$100 million in debt since 2002 from past World Bank loans. The European Union recently approved a five-year more than US\$180 million loan, which will partly go toward rebuilding the country's infrastructure. Elsewhere in West Africa, Liberian government officials have said recent storms are the worst in recent history. They say heavy rainfall and construction on wetlands have pushed out about 1,000 from their homes. Disaster relief coordinator Allale says IFRC is training a rapid response team of 10 members from throughout West Africa to be based in Niamey, from where they will be able to quickly reach an emergency. "We learned from our mistakes last year when not all the disaster response staff had visas to get into emergency areas. This year, IFRC has paid for the visas in advance so the team will not be held up with paperwork. We are learning."

- **Ghana: Proposed Gold Mine: [Accra Mail](#) (Accra): 14 August 2008.**

Environmental and human rights organizations from 3 continents have criticized plans by Colorado-based Newmont Mining Corporation to develop an open-pit gold mine in a Forest Reserve in Ghana. The groups this week released expert reviews of the technical aspects of the mine project that document deficiencies in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The expert reviews point to major gaps in the EIS regarding reclamation plans, the potential for acid drainage, risks of water contamination with heavy metals and cyanide, as well as impacts on biodiversity. "Ghana's forests have almost disappeared," said Daniel Owusu-Koranteng of Wassa Association of Communities Affected by Mining (WACAM), a coalition of Ghanaian communities affected by mining. "Ghana can't afford to build a gold mine inside one of our last remaining forest reserves." If built, the open-pit of the mine would sit mostly inside of the Ajenjua Bepo Forest Reserve and destroy a quarter of the forest remaining in the Reserve. Species of conservation concern that would be at risk by the proposal include the Pel's flying squirrel (*Anomalurus pelii*) and several other mammal, bird, and plant species in and around the Reserve. The project's proponents have downplayed the biodiversity of the Ajenjua Bepo Forest Reserve, claiming that it is already so degraded that destroying a large part of it is an acceptable cost. However, Scott Cardiff of EARTHWORKS notes, "Many threatened species occur in the Reserve. The forests are also important for communities and livelihoods, and for the area's water supply." "Large-scale gold mining in this ecologically fragile forest reserve could also undermine food security in the area," notes Mike Anane of FIAN-Ghana, a human rights organization. Clearing vast stretches of forests and topsoil can disrupt ecological conditions that are required to maintain optimal agricultural productivity. The technical analyses were prepared by Stuart Levit of the US-based Center for Science in Public Participation, and Scott Cardiff, a conservation biologist with EARTHWORKS.

- **Ghana: Who is to Blame for the E-Waste Menace?: [Public Agenda](#) (Accra): EDITORIAL: 11 August 2008.**

The dumping of electronic waste on Ghana by the industrialized countries has reached disastrous proportions, as each week several container loads of obsolete, computers and television sets are cleared at the Tema Harbour and driven into town with fanfare. While the importers are making several thousands of cedis from their trade, little thought is being given to the fact that most of the items are contaminated with hazardous chemicals. According a recent report by Greenpeace, e-waste is currently among the fastest growing waste streams across the world because of the exponential growth in the use of electronic equipment, especially computers. The research revealed that some of the e-waste arriving in Ghana contain toxic metals including lead in quantities as much as one hundred times above levels found in uncontaminated soil and sediment samples. Some of these substances also contain phthalates which is known to interfere with sexual reproduction, besides a high level of chlorinated dioxins known to promote cancer. The danger is that many children engaged in collecting, dismantling and assembling the e-waste do not wear any protective equipment and are exposed daily to lethal doses of hazardous chemicals like mercury and lead. That aside, many of the chemicals have the potential of affecting children's reproductive systems, while others can affect the brain and nervous development of the children. E-waste dumping has serious repercussions for the country since the waste products are dismantled on the banks of the lagoon and other water bodies and when it rains the toxic chemicals are flushed into the water bodies. It is a known fact that Ghana's environmental restrictions are so lenient and this accounts for the increasing exportation and dumping of e-waste in Ghana. Government should therefore, as a matter of urgency implement existing regulations and introduce stringent laws to curb the uncontrolled importation of e-waste. The EPA should institute regulations and by-laws that would make it impossible for the developing countries to dump their e-waste on the country. The government agencies at the harbours should examine the type of goods that are brought into the country and ensure that they fall within internationally accepted standards; since many of the developed countries tend to bring the products as donations.

- **Nigeria: FG Earmarks \$1bn to Stop Gas Flaring: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 15 August 2008.**

The problem of gas flaring may be a thing of the past in Nigeria as the Federal Government has set aside \$1 billion to address the ugly situation. Minister of State for Energy (Gas), Dr Emmanuel Oduşina, dropped this hint yesterday at a press briefing held in Abuja by the Ministry of Energy (Power). Answering questions from newsmen, Oduşina said the amount would be used to build infrastructure that will prevent gas flaring in Nigeria. He said that the government is flaring 2.5 million cubic feet of gas per day, saying that the issue of gas flaring must be well tackled once and for all. The minister, who accompanied the Minister of State for Energy (Power), Mrs. Fatima Ibrahim, to the press briefing, said the issue of gas flaring has been on for many years but there was no appropriate law to back government action towards solving the problem. He said before the problem is tackled, certain things must be put in place. According to the minister, the problem must not be left for the government alone. He said that all the oil and gas-producing companies in Nigeria, such as Shell, Chevron, Agip, amongst others, must play a role. To address the problem, he said, certain infrastructure must be put in

place."And as a matter of fact, in this year's budget, I think about \$1 billion has been set aside on short-term basis to put infrastructure to stop gas flaring."The minister who stated that gas is very vital to Nigeria, stressed that the product is required to develop the nation's industry and power the "power plants" which generate electricity for the nation.The minister said government was taking a pragmatic approach to tackle the issue, after that Federal Government will then make a pronouncement on the matter."We want to take a different approach this time around to end gas flaring and before the end of this year, that in the next few months when they have brought the plan and everything we need to do, then I will announce it. But gas flaring must stop."On the Independent Power Project (IPP) started by the last administration, Odusina said prior to the commencement of the project, no adequate plan was made on where to get the gas to power the stations."There is no infrastructure in place. Because you have to put infrastructure in place and harness the gas and transform the gas to power the plants", he said adding that the gas master plan will address all the problems."By the end of next year, we assure the nation, I am saying categorically we should be able to generate 6000 megawatts of electricity through the supply of gas".Meanwhile, the Federal Government yesterday set up a committee on National Policy on Gas.Briefing journalists after the National Council of State's meeting chaired by Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, Governor Malam Babangida Aliyu said the council had set up a committee to look into the policy and report back to it before the end of October.Members of the committee include the governors of Imo, Osun, Rivers, Niger, Kaduna and Yobe States.The council also directed state governors to liaise with members of their Houses of Assembly to finalise the legal imperative for the deduction of state funds from the excess crude account to fund the country's energy sector.Aliyu also disclosed that the National Tax Policy was presented to council while members were advised to set up a Debt Management Office in order to ensure that states do not take loans that they might not be able to pay within the period of their tenure.Other decisions adopted by the NEC were the need to encourage Nigerians in the Diaspora to come home and render much-needed services instead of considering them as lost to foreign lands; as well as encouraging Nigerian youth to engage in voluntary public work to gather enough experience and marketability for higher paid jobs rather than loitering about.The council also encouraged state governors to peer-review each other; looking at what the others are doing among the governors and sharing information of best practices in terms of good governance.The governor also revealed that the council directed each state to establish Debt Management Office because this time around, it will not be like in the old days when each state and ministries and others just went about taking loans."Many of the states are still indebted with a lot of debt on their portfolios. We said each state should establish debt management unit which will now be linked to DMO at the centre, so that we ensure that debts or loans that are being taken are properly monitored. I remember that the last discussion we had was that every state or governor should be able to take the kind of loans that he should pay within his tenure. But when we have this Debt Management Office, at least we will be able to monitor what is already on the ground and what we are capable of taking."

- **Nigeria: Erosion - the Anguish of Nanka Community: [This Day \(Lagos\): 13 August 2008.](#)**

Nanka community in the Oruma North local government area of Anambra State is on the verge of being washed away by flood a threat which has defied all solution over the years, and left the people hapless and helpless. But Charles Onyekamuo writes that the Nanka conundrum is only a tip of the iceberg when juxtaposed with the monumental environmental degradation that is now the trademark of the whole of Anambra State. He sat there at the verandah of that modest bungalow at Amako village in Nanka, Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State that Saturday morning marooned like a victim of a ship wreck. He sat alone and was lost in thought. Amala Dede Ezeokeke, 65, a professional driver now a subsistence farmer had every reason to be lost as it were. Not too long ago, Ezeokeke lost all that he had acquired as a man to devastating flood erosion that visited his Amako village in Nanka sweeping away his four children and house. The children, Emeka then 10, Sunday 8, Izuchukwu 6, and Okechukwu, 4 all males were victims of the flood and quake which created a deep gully of about 200 feet stretching over a square kilometer. But how did it happen? Ezeokeke explained. "I understand that it started raining that fateful day. My wife and I were not at home. My wife went to the market while I was away transporting passengers to Lagos. I am a professional driver. So, I was told upon my return three days later that as soon as the rain, very heavy as I learnt fell, it swept off my home and four children, creating a heavy gully." When I came back, about two days later oblivious of what happened, I saw many people in what used to be my house. No one cried, but they wore forlorn faces. Only my wife was crying and she held me by the hand and asked me to follow her. She led me to a corner of the compound and showed me the four graves where all my children were buried. I never believed it, and I went berserk. Suddenly, people held me and took me away. They held me indoors in my brother's place where I been living like a refugee for four months and people were coming to console me and give words of encouragement," he said. Immediately after the incident, Ezeokeke wife, Joan, out of depression and left the house and became mad. "She died about a year later," he said. "I have lost every sense of work. I don't even know what to do. Vehicle owners refused to employ in the belief that I have not got the mind to drive again. That is how I took to subsistence farming. I want people to help me. I still want to marry and have children and have a roof over my head. I can't do these things because I don't have the money," he told THISDAY recently. Nanka is generally an endangered community. There are no fewer than 18 active erosion sites scattered around the community, all life threatening. On Thursday, June 19, a major vertical and horizontal earth movement took place at Isiakupenu erosion stretching to Ifite village. In the near quake that characterised the episode, the only link road to the Amako village also within the same stretch was chopped off and thrown into the belly of the existing gully hitherto bordering the said road. Farm lands belonging to farmers from Amako and Ifite villages with economic trees and crops were all buried in the gully created by the erosion. Families also lost their dear ones working on the farms when the tremor occurred. Uzoamaka Okeke 35, widow and mother of five, told THISDAY that although erosion menace had for a long time ravaged their farmland, she and husband with other extended family members had gone to farm on their land when suddenly it began to rain heavily. According to her, by the time they prepared to take their farm implements to go, the slide occurred and her husband and farm implements were buried inside. "He was close to where the slide occurred and we ran away, shouting and crying. This is about two months now. I am 35 years old and my husband was 60," she said. She said the villagers

are now afraid and hardly sleep at night especially if it rains. "At night, we go to sleep with families in the neighbouring villages, which are not yet affected. Some other people go to a nearby secondary school. What we need now is assistance from governments from both state and federal levels, and in fact to be relocated elsewhere," she said. Beside Amako and Isiakupenu-Ifite gully stretches, major earth movements had taken place in some other villages of Nanka before the recent incident. Indeed, villages like Ubahu, Enugwu and Umudala are literally circumscribed by often inter-connected erosion stretches. The people of the area are not oblivious of the sad reality of their precarious existence. In an April 22, 2008, save our soul (SOS) letter by Nanka Patriotic Union (NPU) to the former Commissioner for Environment in Anambra State, Dr Ifedi Okwenna, they identified a total number of 18 erosion sites within the five of the seven villages, each actively challenging the inhabitants to either pack out or be swallowed. "It is recalled that the major landslide at Obunwe erosion site in Enugwu Nanka in the '80s rendered many families homeless and refugees. Not too long ago at Amako village, a man lost his four children to one single flood erosion. It was a disaster too many," the Nanka Erosion Control Committee (NECC) wrote. Chief Okeke-Ogene, member of the Nanka Erosion Control Committee (NECC) said the people are conscious of the sad reality of their precarious existence and have therefore pursued a consistent policy of multiple catchment pits to empty flood water within their compounds and environs. "Thus, no family consciously allows water from their compounds to escape into the road", he explained adding that access roads either tarred or concreted with water channels on both sides depending on the capacity of the village, all in a bid to direct flood water away from the death-threatening gullies. Erosion control efforts in the community, he said consume almost the totality of the earned income of an average Nanka person that very little is left for subsistence. He said that in spite of these efforts by various (NPU) administrations to alert successive governments of this havoc, it was only the Alhaji Shehu Shagari-led administration that made a committed attempt to check Nanka erosion when it awarded phase one of the erosion control contract to Ronasco Company Limited which started flood channelisation. He noted that these stones at the moment had scattered and given way with the result that the speed of flood increased as flood water now falls from diverse heights, deepening and expanding daily the areas of impact. "This scenario is also true of other areas where this control measure terminated abruptly. Had it continued, perhaps, our experience today may have been a smiling one," he said. Okeke-Ogene said he and members of the committee felt so bad that the people of his community are actually suffering from "psychological trauma" as a result of the erosion disaster. But he noted that this psychological problem is heightened by the fact that the history of erosion disaster in the community is old. "The erosion menace has attracted the attention of the former Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, yet nothing came out of it. The entire community is tired of receiving "sight seeing" visitors and is only interested in people with solutions to the problems. The visitors we have had are only interested in knowing how we are dying," he said. Chief Okeke-Ogene noted that the only aid his community had received since the most recent erosion incident was from Chief Paulycarp Emenike of Nero's Pharmaceutical Company who donated one million naira for feeding of the victims. As things stand now, the Nanka erosion committee chairman said there is an immediate need for the state government to give Amako an alternative access. "If this is done, governments-state and federal must now develop a

comprehensive erosion control master plan for Agulu-Nanka-Oko-Ekwulobia erosion bed," he said. He added that various levels of government should show some attitudinal change towards erosion control in the area as the menace had gone beyond tree planting. "It is more of flood control powered by modern technology. Only after this major thrust can any talk of trees and shrub planting be meaningful," he emphasised. Okeke-Ogene expressed surprise that the Anambra State government abruptly halted the Nanka/Awgbu road project which among other economic benefits he said has the added advantage of emptying flood water into the "Odo stream" in the area. "It is strongly suggested that this project be re-appraised with a view to continuing and completing it as quickly as possible to save lives and farm lands." It is important to note that the deluge of water from Igboukwu and Isuofia when it rains are major contributory factors to the reactivation of major earth movements in Nanka, Oko and Ekwulobia and must also address Igboukwu/Isuofia flood zone", he said. A member of the committee, Mr. Ikechukwu Ezenwakwo shared the views of the chairman and said they are appealing to international agencies and erosion control experts from all over the world to save Nanka from being wiped out by flood erosion menace. Another member of the Nanka Erosion Control Committee, Mr. Alex Igwilo from Ifite village, said in spite of the usual appeal for help from both the state and federal governments, public spirited individuals touched by the plight of the people can also reach the committee. He also appealed to people who made pledges of support in the past without fulfilling same to step forward and redeem them because the problem is becoming hydra-headed. The people are now destitute and have no shelter over their heads. They can't even feed themselves because they cannot farm again," he said. Former Nigerian vice president, Dr Alex Ekwueme whose own community, Oko is being threatened by erosion menace along the Agulu-Nanka-Ekwulobia erosion bed said on a visit to the Nanka villages that there is an urgent need for the rehabilitation of the Emergency Housing Fund for displaced victims of the erosion. He also decried the Federal Government's non-challant attitude to the erosion disaster and called for a change of heart. However, as things stand, the Nanka erosion conundrum appears to be a tip of the ice berg considering the vast environmental degradation that is now the hallmark of Anambra state. Former Anambra State commissioner for Environment, Dr Ifedi Okwenna who resigned recently told THISDAY that the state has a lot of environmental problems. According to him, the state has no systematic sustainable development pattern. Projects, he said were not approved with regards to their environmental implications and there was no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) done. The result he reasoned is that people, including land excavators do whatever they like and create sites which keep increasing everyday. He said a recent statistical study carried out by his ministry showed that over 1000 erosion sites and about 500 of them very active. "If you have 10 today, tomorrow they will be 30, just like that. And today, I can tell you we have well over 1000 erosion sites in Anambra State, and of course about 500 of them are very active," he said. As part of environmental management strategy of the Obi administration in Anambra State, Okwenna said before his resignation from office, they had asked every local government area administration to provide five hectares of farm lands and with 21 local governments in the state, will give the state 105 hectares of farmlands to be converted to forest areas for its aforestation programme. The state, he emphasised had made arrangements to procure and introduce through its tree planting campaign the Jathropha plant - a bio-diesel utility plant that protects the

environment from the incidence of flood and erosion and processed for carbon sequestration and bio-diesel."Our determination while I was there was to make Anambra State the home of this plant in Nigeria," he said, adding that if the plant survived in Anambra, it will be a potent conservative agent for the state's top soils and provide fuel for energy. Part of the arrangements the state had entered into, he said was to take delivery of 20,000 seedlings of the plant from the federal government for planting in these hectares of land to be acquired from the local government areas."That alone will help us conserve the environment and we form as it were Environmental Committees in the 21 local government areas to help us control erosion. We were to equip them with new technologies and knowledge on erosion control. There might be grants to them to enable them control the small ones. In schools, and in the markets, we are forming environmental clubs to develop environmental friendly organisations, considering that the geology of our area is bad," he said.

- **Liberia: Erosion Renders Several Homeless - President Johnson Sirleaf Empathizes With Victims: [Liberia Government](#) (Monrovia): 11 August 2008.**

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has visited flood affected areas in Virginia and Brewerville on the outskirts of Monrovia, expressing deep regrets to residents of the areas for the losses sustained. Accompanied Sunday by the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Public Works, and Montserrado County Representative Victoria Lynch of District #13, the President visited areas including the Cece Beach Resort and surrounding areas, which suffered massive losses. The Liberian leader assured residents of the areas that the Ministry of Public Works would conduct an assessment of the flood affected areas to determine the scope of Government's response. According to an Executive Mansion release, President Johnson Sirleaf lauded the Liberian National Red Cross for providing emergency response for the displaced, now sheltered at Hotel Africa and a public school in Brewerville. The Liberian leader, who provided rice and other food items to the displaced, attributed the flooding to global climatic changes, compounded by the illegal erection of makeshift structures in the swamps and alleys of the country. The President called on zoning law violators to avoid erecting structures in these areas as Government has begun a demolition exercise. The weekend's floods were the second major disaster in the Monrovia area and its environs in few weeks. Flood waters left hundreds of citizens displaced last month in several areas in Monrovia and its suburbs, including King Gray. The latest disaster has been attributed to rising waters from the Atlantic Ocean which reportedly swept away several buildings and other structures as tidal waves rushed inland.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Namibia: Government Halts Game Capture: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 15 August 2008.**

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism last week stopped the capture of oryx scheduled for last weekend on Farm Claratel in the Khomas Hochland area. Neighbouring

farmers in that area had objected to the capture of the free roaming oryx. Some of the farmers even threatened to seek a court interdict to prevent the game capture from going ahead. Director of Parks and Wildlife Management, Ben Beytell told New Era he stopped the capture on instructions from Minister Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah. Beytell said the ministry conducted an inspection to see the condition of the fences. "I stopped the capture until we have conducted an inspection on the farm to see if the fences of the farm are without holes that allow game to go in and out," said Beytell. The inspection was also aimed at determining the number of game on the farm. The inspection has since been done and Beytell said he was waiting for the report. Some farmers, led by Nico van der Westhuizen of Farm Arbeidsgeno, last week complained in a letter to the minister about the game capture because of the condition of the fence which was meant for cattle and not game. They said they feared that their game would be caught, thereby reducing their wildlife numbers on their farms as was done in the past. The ministry had issued a permit to the owner of Claratal to capture 300 Oryx, based on the management plan of the Auas Oanob conservancy, of which he is a member. The conditions stipulated on the permit allowed the farm owner to capture game and sell as long as the wildlife were not exported. Van der Westhuizen said if the situation continues, there would be no game left in the area because there is decrease in game numbers due to the game captures. Another neighbouring farmer said the members of the conservancy had approved the game capture.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: EAC Marine and Fisheries Body to Be Revived: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 15 August 2008.**

The East African Community (EAC) Secretary General, Juma Mwapachu, earlier in the week revealed that negotiations to re-establish the East African marine and fisheries organization were underway. Mwapachu was speaking in Kenya after a week long familiarization tour of defence institutions and establishments in Kenya that are involved in the EAC co-operation agreement on defence matters. The joint EAC fisheries and marine organization existed under the former EAC (1967-1977). Mwapachu said that the new version would involve research and development to tap the maritime and fisheries resources of the East African water bodies, both offshore and inland, for the benefit of the East African people. Mwapachu also met with several Kenyan security officials concerned with the EAC and held wide ranging discussions about co-operation in defence policy research and development. He further announced that joint EAC military exercises are set to take place during 2009/2010; and that the establishment of a strong EAC Directorate of Peace and Security desk is underway. Brigadier Ngewa Mukala, the Deputy Commander of the Kenya Navy, said that the East African Indian Ocean coastline has great strategic significance and that Kenya was undertaking initiatives along with international stakeholders to safeguard the regional security and maritime interests. The East African Indian Ocean coastline has recently seen an upsurge of violent attacks to cruise ships from Somali pirates. The pirates have also affected the supply of relief services to sick and starving people affected by war in Somalia. The US along with other major powers has increased security patrol on the ocean as a result. Mukala said that East

Africa's maritime zones remained largely untapped by the East African countries. The resources include fisheries, oil and gas. The best tuna fish resources found in the Indian Ocean with Kenya having a potential of 150,000 tonnes per year, translating into 30 billion Kenya Shillings annually, however these resources are currently being exploited virtually exclusively by foreign interests.

- **Somalia: Drought, Fighting Worsens Situation of 'Ogaden Refugees': UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 12 August 2008.**

Drought and recent fighting around the town of Beletweyne, in central Somalia's Hiiraan region, have aggravated the plight of at least 1,000 Ethiopian refugee families, who were already facing acute food shortages, local sources told IRIN. Most of these refugees, living in camps for the displaced in Bilis-did and Bulokorah (on the outskirts of Beletweyne), are Somalis from Ogaden in Ethiopia's Somali region. They fled in 1977 during the war between Ethiopia and Somalia. "Most of us fled from Kumisar, Afdub, Rebo, Omar Don and Dhur-dher locations in Kalafe district of the Somali region of Ethiopia," Kamis Abdi Day, an elder of the two camps, told IRIN. "We were farming communities; some of us fled during the war while others arrived following the drought that hit the region." The refugees are also known as the Rer Shabelle, meaning families who live alongside River Shabelle. Before the latest fighting in Beletweyne, they survived by doing manual work in the town and in farms surrounding the camps. "It seems the international community forgot us when Siad Barre was overthrown," Day said. With the recent fighting, Day said, most of the displaced were unable to earn their keep as markets were closed and movement impeded. "We are now facing starvation and malnutrition," he said. Day said the group used to receive international aid during the Barre administration; he was ousted in 1991. "Things changed with Barre's removal from office; since then, we have not gotten much help; only ACPO [a local NGO] has supplied us with some food. We could not flee the latest hostility [in Beletweyne] because we are poor people and we don't know where to go." A journalist based in Beletweyne, who requested anonymity, said the refugee situation was deteriorating. It seems the international community forgot us when Siad Barre was overthrown. "They have not had much to eat since fighting [between insurgents and government forces] erupted in the region," the journalist said. Despite the presence of local partners of UN agencies, the Ethiopian refugees in Bilis-did and Bulokorah camps were not receiving any aid, the journalist said. The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR-Somalia, confirmed that the groups were considered "persons of concern", although they were not receiving specific assistance from UN relief agencies as refugees, aside from general assistance programmes for vulnerable communities in the area.

- **Uganda: 100,000 Trees Planted Countrywide: The Monitor (Kampala): 15 August 2008.**

A total of 100,000 species of tree seedlings have been planted in six districts countrywide in a move to mitigate the impact of climate change. The Ministry of Water and Environment contributed Shs43.8 million under Farm Income Enhancement Project to purchase the seedlings from the National Forestry Authority and transport them to

districts. They include; Mbarara, Bushenyi, Gulu, Lira, Soroti and Kitgum. State Minister for Environment Jesca Eriyo said on Tuesday that the initiative was launched with planting of 3,300 trees at Katyazo Parish, Rwanyamahembe Sub-county in Mbarara District. Ms Eriyo led three other ministers to the planting of trees during celebrations of the International and National Youth Day on Tuesday in Mbarara. She said the other days are World Forestry day (June 5), World Environment day (March 23), International Women's Day (March 8) and International Labour day (May 1) all aimed at massive tree planting to curtail increasing desertification. Ms Eriyo said 20 per cent of the environment degradation is a result of deforestation and wetland encroachment leading to floods, soil erosion and water-borne diseases among others. Forests provide firewood, timber, shelter, control of desertification, windbreakers, fruits and food among others. "Mitigation efforts against climate change require activities that contribute towards restoration of vegetation, control of floods and siltation of water bodies and soil fertility restoration to absorb carbon dioxide, reduce droughts and control disease," Ms Eriyo said. Presiding over the main youth celebrations, President Yoweri Museveni attributed the cause of pollution to poverty among the local people. "When you are poor, you use firewood, engage in traditional agriculture that causes soil erosion and environmental degradation through over grazing," Mr Museveni said. Speaking about "Youth and Climate Change; Time for Action", the day's theme, Mr Museveni said climate change can be controlled by bringing development to Africa particularly in Uganda. "That is why the government is building dams in Bujagali and others at Karuma and Hoima to get rid of using firewood and resort to electricity," President Museveni said. "We must also modernise agriculture to avoid degradation of the environment." He asked the youth to participate in family activities to improve farming for better income and environment improvement. Acting Commissioner in charge of Environment Support Services Rachel Musoke said the government would work with local authorities to ensure implementation of tree planting in all districts. "We have arrangements with the districts to buy their own seedlings and sensitise them on the benefits of the project. But we also ask the individual families to plant their own because community forests may not be theirs," Ms Musoke told Daily Monitor.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Post Conflict Environmental Assessment Kicks Off in Country: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 13 August 2008.**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is carrying out a post conflict environmental assessment in Rwanda fourteen years after the Genocide of Tutsis. Officiating at a consultative workshop that ended yesterday at hotel Novotel, the UNEP-post conflict and disaster management Rwanda Project Coordinator, Hassan Partow, said the workshop aimed at providing a portrait of the overall environment in post conflict Rwanda. "Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) provided scientists who carried out desk studies from which a team of experts from UNEP will pick key environment drivers facing the country that can have impact on the country's long term development programmes," Partow said. He noted that the UNEP had come in late because that is when the Rwandan government called for an environmental assessment. "UNEP does not initiate environmental assessment in any country, it only

comes in when invited by the government of a given country," explained Partow noting that the Rwandan government called for UNEP's environmental assessment in 2006. In his remarks, the United Nations Development Programme country director Anthony Ohemeng-Boamah noted that the country had made remarkable environment development in accordance to the Millennium development goals. Meanwhile REMA's director of environment impact assessment and enforcement Theobald Mashinga who opened the workshop on behalf of the State Minister for Mineral resources, noted that the government had been looking forward for the environmental assessment report for long time. "We hope its findings will be our environmental conservation baseline," Mashinga said. He added that the research will also look into the needed capacity for various local institutions engaged in the country's ecosystem rehabilitation. In an exclusive interview with The New Times, Frank Turyatunga, the Africa representative at the Global Resource Information and Database (GRID-Arendal), a UNEP funded programme based in Norway, said environmental assessment was important not only to Rwanda but to the whole region especially because of the shared natural resources. "An assessment is important because it studies the evolvement of ecosystem in natural resources like rivers, lakes, forests and swamps most of which are shared by different countries," Turyatunga said. Several presentations at the meeting on Rwanda's ecosystem indicated that there have been considerable efforts after 1994 to encourage restoration of the lost greenbelt. The environmental assessment research is to be carried out by a team of fourteen UNEP environmental experts who are in the country for a ten-day field study of the highlighted damaged environment. The study is expected to end in December this year while a complete report will be presented by March 2009

80. ENERGY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Oil Bunkerers Escape From Prison: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 15 August 2008.**

FOURTEEN Filipinos arrested by the Joint Task Force, JTF, for illegal oil bunkering in Nigeria and remanded at the Okere Federal Prison, Warri, on the order of a Chief Magistrate Court have since disappeared from prison custody even as they are billed to appear in court today as ordered. Vanguard gathered that their Nigerian collaborators, an Ijaw of Delta State origin and an Edo man from Auchu have been working assiduously to facilitate their release and escape from the country. They were allegedly released to attend a High Court session in Benin City to hear argument for their bail two weeks ago and where never returned to Okere Prison to perfect their bail papers till date. It was learnt that men of the JTF provided security escort for the oil thieves to Benin City for the case as requested by the prison authorities. Efforts to get confirmation of the whereabouts of the illegal oil bunkerers from the Warri Prison authority proved abortive just as a source at the JTF Headquarters claimed that since they were granted bail Benin they longer know the whereabouts of the Filipinos whose case comes up today, Wednesday, at the Chief Magistrate Court in Warri.

- **Nigeria: Militants Destroy NNPC Gas Pipeline: [Daily Champion](#) (Lagos): 14 August 2008.**

MILITANTS in the Niger Delta have damaged the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) gas pipeline through which gas is transferred from the Alakiri Gas flow station to the Port Harcourt Refinery. But NNPC's/Group General Manager (Public Affairs), Livi Ajuonuma told Daily Champion on phone last night that he was not aware of the development insisting that no report has been lodged with him. A terse statement by Mr. Tamuno Ebitari, spokesperson of the Niger Delta Vigilante and Niger Delta Patriotic Force respectively said the latest destruction was to demonstrate its ability to go beyond sea level to attack oil facilities. It reads: "This morning at about 8.00 am, the diving intelligent unit of the Niger Delta Vigilante and the Niger Delta Patriotic Force sabotaged the NNPC gas pipe transferring gas from the Alakiri gas flow station to the Port Harcourt refinery. This particular one was chosen to demonstrate our might in going beyond sea level to sabotage oil facilities." This is one of our plans to cripple the economic base of Rivers State. Since Governor Rotimi Amaechi said he has over a N100 billion in the banks and could not develop River State because of our leader. Ateke Tom, we will stop him from accumulating more money to be stolen."

- **Nigeria: Vandals Rupture Agip Oil Pipeline in Delta: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 16 August 2008.**

SUSPECTED pipeline vandals have ruptured Nigeria Agip Oil Company (NAOC) pipelines in Burutu Local Government Area of Delta State but unfortunately for them, they could not accomplish their mission of carting away the oil pipes. Saturday Vanguard learnt that the vandals, thinking that there was no oil in the pipeline, tampered with the pipeline at three points, only for oil to start gushing out. "Because their mission was to dismember and steal the pipes, they took to their heels on seeing that oil was flowing everywhere. However, they have seriously polluted Okontu community and the neighbouring communities by their criminal action", a source told this reporter. The Delta Waterways Security Committee (DWSC), which has been able so far to check the operations of militants in the state was understood to have sent some of its members to the area to assess the situation on ground. "They are not militants, they are boys who came to steal oil pipes", a member of the Committee explained, adding, "As you are aware, the DWSC is waging a war against crude oil thieves, pipeline vandals and militants in the state. We don't want such criminal activities in our waterways and to a large extent, we have succeeded in making the state safe once again for investors, and we want to keep it up".

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Nuclear Power 'Makes Better Sense Than Coal': [Cape Argus](#) (Cape Town): 12 August 2008.**

Nuclear power emits proportionately the same quantity of greenhouse gases as renewable energy forms like wind and solar power, and only about 100th of the average emissions

of power generated by coal, oil and natural gas. The inclusion of this statement is one of the changes made in the final scoping report for a new conventional nuclear power station of up to 4000 megawatts (MW) that Eskom wants to build. Scoping is the initial stage of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) process where all potential impacts of a project are identified. The final scoping report, just completed and sent to the national environment department and released to the public, has incorporated changes in the light of comments received on the initial draft version. However, its major findings remain unchanged. These are that two of the proposed five sites mooted for the possible construction of South Africa's next conventional nuclear power station should be dropped from consideration at this stage (the Brazil and Schulpfontein sites, both on the West Coast in the Northern Cape province), while the other three sites - Koeberg (Duynefontein), Bantamsklip (near Pearly Beach) and Thyspunt (near Cape St Francis) should be further investigated. The anti-nuclear power lobby has long taken issue with claims by proponents of nuclear power that it is an essentially clean technology that produces very few greenhouse gas emissions, which are the main cause of human-induced climate change. The anti-nukes argue that, if the full nuclear energy cycle is taken into account - from mining the uranium all the way through to the disposal of nuclear waste - it cannot be considered clean. However, the final scoping report now states otherwise. Its executive summary includes this additional text: "Over the full life cycle - from mining of the uranium, iron ore and other minerals, manufacture of the components and construction of the power station, operation and maintenance of the power station through to decommissioning of the station and the management and disposal of waste - nuclear power emits less than 11 grams of carbon equivalent per kilowatt hour." This is the same order of magnitude as wind and solar power, including construction and component manufacturing, and two orders of magnitude below (i.e. one hundredth of) the average for coal, oil and natural gas. "Nuclear power thus has the potential to make a substantial contribution to sustainable development and a significant contribution to reducing South Africa's greenhouse gas emissions." Due to South Africa's rich resources of uranium, it makes sense for Eskom to utilise this energy source. "The scoping summary also discourages the reliance on coal-fired power stations saying this would not help in reducing greenhouse gases, nor meet the vast electricity needs of the country, especially in the coastal areas." Renewable forms of energy are also under investigation and are likely to be constructed. It then continues with the original wording of the draft report: "At present, however, the identified renewable forms of energy - for example, wind and solar - are inadequately developed to provide large-scale power generation facilities that can supply a reliable base-load and easily integrate into the existing power network in South Africa." The final report is available at many public libraries, including the main Cape Town library (re-opening on September 1), Milnerton, Table View, Atlantis, Hermanus and Gansbaai, as well as from the Cape Town offices of Arcus Gibb at 14 Kloof Street, and online at www.eskom.co.za/eia under the "Nuclear 1" link. Interested and affected parties can submit comments at any stage of the EIA process.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **East Africa: Nile Basin Countries End Power Trade Talks: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 13 August 2008.**

Nine Nile Basin countries have concluded the second preparatory meeting to discuss power trading between utilities in Eastern Africa aimed at providing cheaper electricity to member countries. The meeting jointly organised by the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Plan (NELSAP), Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP), Common Market for East And Southern Africa (COMESA) with funding given to the EAPP by the USAID East Africa was held at the Imperial Royal Hotel Kampala and ended on Thursday 7 August. Countries, participating in the negotiations include: Rwanda Burundi Kenya Tanzania, Ethiopia, DR Congo, Sudan, Egypt and Uganda. They are expected to sign bilateral and transmission Wheeling agreements. Under the bilateral arrangements any two of the member countries can engage in electricity trade and ten countries have paired up already to prepare for the trade negotiations which are expected to start in November, should the funding come. The wheeling agreement (Transit Agreement), will allow any two countries in the region that are not necessarily neighbours to trade in electricity. It will also facilitate the construction of pylons for interconnection of power between the countries and it will be the basis upon which the percentage to compensate the electricity transitory country will be calculated. According to Mr Nagash Engedasew the Executive Secretary of EAPP, the meetings are part of the process of preparing to implement the Power System Interconnection Project that entails High Voltage connection lines which are inter-border transmission lines as well. Uganda and Kenya have had a 50-year-old similar arrangement, which expired this year, and they are already renegotiating the renewal of the agreement. Among the benefits of the project are, improving availability of power and economies of scale since there will be larger markets. It will also enhance the exploitation of diverse power sources like gas, geo thermal and hydro electricity. It will also help in energy access for rural population because of cheaper energy and contribute to poverty reduction, which it is hoped will contribute to foreign direct investment.

- **Kenya: Boosting Biofuels Without Compromising Food Security: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 13 August 2008.**

The oil-rich seed of a poisonous shrub that thrives in arid climates with poor soil lies at the heart of plans by Kenya to reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels without threatening food security. "We are definitely focusing on the jatropha plant for oil production," Faith Odongo of the Ministry of Energy told IRIN. In May 2008, the ministry unveiled a five-year strategy to develop the bio-diesel industry to "enable more Kenyans to enjoy and derive comfort from the supply of bio-diesel for agricultural production, employment creation, rural-urban balance and blending in the motor vehicle industry". The strategy includes detailed proposals for the cultivation of the jatropha curcas shrub as well as the processing of its seeds, also known as Barbados nuts or Physic nuts, and the distribution of the resulting bio-diesel for transport and power generation. Odongo said the key objectives of the government strategy included the diversification of rural energy sources by promoting the replacement of kerosene - commonly used for domestic use - by bio-diesel. She said the outlook was "positive" and that pilot cultivation projects in various parts of the country had been encouraging. "Research trials in Mpeketoni, Lamu [a coastal town] where there is no power [have shown] people using the little oil they got from the seeds to light their lamps." Odongo said the oil extracted from the seeds could be used in community managed bio-diesel

electricity generators. The government predicts that as a result of biofuel development, by 2012, Kenya's imports of diesel will have fallen by five percent and the proportion of Kenyans who use kerosene for lighting will have dropped from three-quarters to half of the total population. Cultivation of jatropha in arid areas brings another benefit, according to the strategy paper - the improvement of the existing forest cover would help counter "the effect of deforestation and degradation as well as serving as carbon sink". The strategy adds: "The use of marginal land ensures that the high potential areas are not converted to energy production areas and therefore it guards against competition between biofuels and food production." Setting up the Kenya Biodiesel Association, which brings together all the stakeholders in the sector, is also part of the strategy, as a "one-stop shop" to coordinate the industry's various sectors. In recent years, various organisations and individual farmers have been experimenting with jatropha production. Elijah Ndogo, a coffee farm manager in Ruiru, central Kenya, has planted six hectares with jatropha. "We use a lot of diesel in the factory, sometimes we pollute the environment, we were looking for an alternative to cut costs," he told IRIN. Jatropha has the potential for improving the household income amongst the rural poor of the developing world. "It is too cold here, the rate of growth is lower, the results will be belated," he said, adding that he had also lost some of the seedlings to cutworms and millipedes in 2007. The prices of seeds have also gone up, he said: "In 2006, a kilo seeds went for 1000 shillings (US\$15), today half a kilo of seeds goes for 3000 shillings (\$46), it's very expensive." According to Miyuki Liyama, an economist with the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), when farmers began planting jatropha in 2006, "they did not have enough scientific knowledge and they did not know the agronomy of jatropha". She also said the government would have to do more to make its strategy viable. "There is no ready market for biofuel in Kenya yet," she said. According to media reports, this hasn't stopped a Japan-based company, Biwako Bio-Laboratory Inc, from announcing a 10-year, US\$19.4 million commercial bio-diesel project using jatropha seeds grown over an eventual 100,000 ha of land.

81. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Domestic Excess Crude Account Hits N405 Billion: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 15 August 2008.**

Nigeria's domestic excess crude account as at June 2008 stood at N404.92 billion, while the foreign account as at the month under review was \$15.3 billion, the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) has said. Speaking at a brainstorming session on the New Approach to Crude Oil Benchmarking, Chairman of RMAFC, Mr. Hamman Tukur, said the session was initiated to introduce new concept of benchmarking that would exclusively translate crude oil revenues into infrastructural development. He said the event was also meant to dedicate excess crude oil revenues, not included in the annual budget, to funding critical sectors of the economy. "The problem with this old system is that we do not normally go back to the National Assembly and account for the remaining benchmark. For example, as at June 2008, the excess foreign

account stands at \$15.3 billion, while 445,000 barrels of crude oil was lifted and refined locally everyday, which amounts to N405 billion."There has to be an account for the difference between \$15.3 billion and the amount of the sale of the barrels for June," he said. Tukur said the practices of oil benchmarking over the years had led the country into creating the clause "excess revenue account" in the budgetary allocation, which he said was illegal. "In recent years, the creation of the Excess Revenue Account as one of the nation's fiscal policy instrument of managing revenue inflow into the Federation Account has been seen at the commission as well as many others as an aberration of the constitution particularly Section 162 of the 1999 Constitution. All these excesses are not known to the law," he said. According to him, the excess crude money was not incorporated into budgetary allocation because the nation's policymakers emphasised that Nigeria did not yet possess the "absorption capacity" to spend the money and maintained that the use of the money would cause inflation. "How can they say that despite the infrastructural and developmental decay Nigeria is experiencing? The economic policymakers do not seem to tackle the major issues in Nigeria." "We have iron ore, coal and other minerals; still we cannot access them because of the economic theories of these intellectual minds and leading public analysts," he said. He observed that the lacuna in Nigeria was the absence of political will and discipline in the system, adding that "we should change our approach to budgeting for a change".

- **Ghana: Multiple Taxation Killing Small Enterprises: [Accra Mail](#) (Accra): 14 August 2008.**

Executive Director of the National Board for Small Scale Industry (NBSSI), has said multiple taxes paid by small and medium scale entrepreneurs is a major obstacle retarding their growth. He said Government and its allied institutions in the small businesses sector must initiate policies to create sound business environment that would promote the growth of Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (MSMEs). Nana Boakye said this at a workshop jointly organized by the Ghana Journalist Association (GJA) and the KAB Governance Consult and the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund (BUSAC) in Sunyani. The one-day workshop, which was attended by Brong-Ahafo regional members of the GJA and proprietors of small and medium scale enterprises, formed part of a project dubbed: "Using the media to strengthen business advocacy in Ghana". Nana Boakye explained that NBSSI had set up Business Advisory Centres (BAC) that educated MSMEs on business management and urged proprietors to access the Centres' services to promote the growth of their businesses. He said his outfit had also established a revolving fund, which provided credit facility to small and medium scale enterprises and entreated businesses to apply to enable them expand their businesses. Mr Bright Blewu, General Secretary of GJA stressed the need for the media to establish cordial relationship with small and medium enterprises so as to assist them to thrive. The participants called on NBSSI to re-position itself to better support the development of MSMEs.

- **Ghana: It's a Deal! The Sovereign Parliament of Ghana Has Spoken: [Accra Mail](#) (Accra): 14 August 2008.**

After months of debate, demonstrations, bickering, court action, even threats of breaking international agreements by political forces arrayed against the sale of 70% of Ghana Telecom (GT) to Vodafone PLC, the country's legislature yesterday agreed for the sale of part of Ghana Telecom to UK mobile giant Vodafone to go on. It was a major debate that saw Parliament House full to capacity yesterday and the decision arrived at would be one of the most far-reaching in the history of telecom development in Ghana. The government's plan to offload 70 per cent of its shares to Vodafone UK met stiff resistance from some political, civil society and religious groups in the country. Often more parochial and sentimental than economic the opposition to the sale was predicated on two arguments: That the sale price was too small and that Ghana should not sell shares of such a "strategic national asset." The rest was nit-picking at details of the sale agreement. Some groups including opposition political parties argued that the \$ 900 million for which the company's 70% is being sold amounts to a give away. After five hours of intense debate characterized by raucous claims and counter-claims by majority and minority Members of the House, it was clear that a vote had to be called. The Speaker of Parliament, The Rt. Hon. Ebenezer Sekyi Hughes called for the vote after valiantly trying to call his House to order several times. The majority from the NPP side attained 124 of the votes against 74 of the minority, who were mostly NDC members. Parliament was recalled from recess to sit on Tuesday, August 12 following the House's inability to conclude its consideration of the Ghana Telecom sale and purchase arrangement for UK-based Vodafone to acquire 70 percent of GT shares. Ghana Telecom was a wing of the then Post & Telecommunications (P&T) Corporation that was established after World War II. Until then, P & T was a department of the Ghana Civil Service under the supervision of the Public Works Department (P.W.D). On 20th February 1997, Ghana Telecom was officially privatized through the sale of 30 % shares to G-Com Ltd., a consortium led by Telecom Malaysia Berhard. The company was given an exclusivity period of five years which ended on 20th February 2002. In February 2002, the Government of Ghana abrogated the Management Contract with G-Com Ltd., and subsequently assigned Telenor Management Partner (TMP) in July 2002 to develop a four year Business Plan for GT covering the period 2003 - 2007. Following the acceptance of the Business Plan, the Government of Ghana entered into a Management Contract Agreement with TMP in February 2003 to implement the proposals in the Business Plan. TMP run the affairs Of Ghana Telecom until December 2006 when the government decided to end the relationship. A six member team headed by a Chief Executive Office was appointed on December 6, 2006 to run the day to day operations of GT. GT (then P&T) was incorporated in 1974. The enactment of the statutory corporation transformed what had been a Telecommunications Division into Ghana Telecom Company (a company limited by shares) with the Ghana Government being the majority shareholder. The government in October 2006, announced its decision to privatize Ghana Telecom by divesting about 66.7 per cent of its shares in the company, to raise additional capital, and improve on the performance of the company. Consequently, a transactional adviser was appointed in April 2007 to set the process in motion. When the bids were opened, a number of companies put in their bids, with three companies emerging out of the six that were short listed for the second round, but the government and the three companies were unable to reach satisfactory terms. New negotiations later began with Vodafone, the world's leading mobile telecommunications group and on July 3, 2008, the Government of Ghana announced the sale of 70% share to

Vodafone. Yesterday's vote in parliament has finally put the seal on the deal and it is now left for Vodafone to deliver on its promises.

- **Nigeria: Zain to Invest \$1bn Annually, Targets 300m Subscribers: Leadership (Abuja): 15 August 2008.**

The Managing Director of Zain Network, Mr. Bayo Ligali, yesterday said that the recently launched brand which took over from Celtel Nigeria Ltd, is targeting a customer base of over 30million subscribers by 2011. Towards this end, the company is committing more funds to expand its operations in terms of coverage, capacity and quality. Aside from the \$1.01billion the group paid for 65 per cent of Vmobile in 2006, it has invested additional \$2billion in the Nigerian market and plans to invest \$1billion annually until 2011, when it hopes to become the market leader in Nigeria. Making these statements during a parley with some select media men at Transcorp Hotel, Abuja, the Managing Director/CEO noted that its customer base has increased from the level of 5million from the days of Vmobile to the present 15million customers. He stated that the Zain group operations in 12 African countries formerly branded as Celtel have already created one network, the world's first borderless mobile network. This, according to him, serves 160million people or approximately 20 per cent of Africa's population. He disclosed that, Zain group is recognised as the pre-eminent company in the Middle East and Africa region and currently has over 15,000 employees, with 2,500 from Nigeria. "It offers a range of advanced mobile voice and data services to over 52million customers with over 15.5million from Nigeria", he added. With the change to Zain, he posited, one network has been expanded to 22 countries across Africa and Middle East, enabling its customers to fully benefit from a global brand with superior breadth and quality of service, connecting people across national boundaries, linked with the opportunity to move freely across geographical borders without roaming charges and without having to pay for incoming calls. With the proposed launch of Ghana and Saudi Arabia networks later this year, 24 countries would be fully connected to the Zain brand network. According to Ligali, the change to Zain will bring a lot of benefits to Nigerians aside from being part of one big family - one network spread across Africa and Middle East. "Our cost of operations will begin to go down due to the economies of scale of being a member of a large group, a big global player, as we negotiate better and pay less for equipment and other resources. For example, the ultra low cost handsets, which we launched a few months ago, the world's first \$20 handset, could not have been possible without the power of Zain", he further said. Another significant benefit of Zain, in the words of the CEO, is that more job opportunities will be created for Nigerians as the network expands. He also disclosed that Zain currently employs 2500 people directly and another 10,000 indirectly through its dealers' outlets. The engineering, construction, security, advertising, media and printing industries, he assured, would continue to be major beneficiaries of Zain operations. Giving insight into how Zain brand name came to be, Mr. Ligali stated that Zain, formerly MTC, acquired Celtel International in 2005 for \$5.36billion. After the acquisition, it continued to operate in Africa as Celtel, while developing a new brand that will unify its operations in a single, memorable and campaignable identity. In 2007, he continued, MTC was formerly rebranded Zain, and its Middle East operations changed to

the new brand name. Consequently, on August 1, 2008, the 14 African operations, formerly known as Celtel rebranded to Zain, and that includes Nigeria.

- **Liberia: House Seeks New Law to Allot U.S\$1Million: [The NEWS \(Monrovia\): 15 August 2008.](#)**

An Act seeking to authorize the executive branch of government to allocate US\$1million in every fiscal budget for the smooth conduct of national census in the future has been introduced at the House of Representatives.Sponsored by Lofa County Representative Eugene Fallah Kparkar, the Act was introduced Thursday during regular session.The proposed law was read for the first time at Thursday's session following which it was sent to the committee room for review. The second reading is expected next week when brought to the floor. After that reading, it could constitute a third reading, provided the lawmakers decide to enact it due to its urgency.Lawmakers who are pushing the new legislation have given legal justification for their decision. They said the new law would enable government to allocate sufficient money for the census every ten years other than soliciting financial assistance from donors which at times become complex.According to the proposed Act, immediately upon its passage, the Executive Branch of government shall proceed every fiscal year to appropriate and reserve US\$1 million for the conduct of National Census.Section II of the proposed Act authorizes members of the Legislature to immediately include said amount in the next fiscal budget, and subsequent ones until the conduct of national census within ten years."There is a widespread recognition that the availability of sufficient financial and other resources for the conduct of future national censuses is ethical to prevent the hardships that were experienced during the 2008 National Population and Housing Census," the Act stressed.Sponsors of the Act observed that the 2008 census experienced an unanticipated donor pullout, resulting to serious financial difficulties and other unnecessary impediments during the entire process.The lawmakers believed that the census is important in providing data for national socio-economic planning for the development of the country as well as improving the understanding of the Liberian people about socio-demographic and economic characteristics for the population of the country.Article 39 of the Liberian constitution empowers the National Legislature to cause the census of Liberia to be undertaken in every ten years, and same should be undertaken by the government.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa: SADC Summit Under Way: [Inter Press Service \(Johannesburg\): 15 August 2008.](#)**

A free trade agreement is one of the main points on the agenda at the Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit presently under way in Johannesburg, South Africa. The summit will also discuss political problems in Zimbabwe, Malawi and Lesotho and consider protocols on gender and poverty eradication.The summit formally opened on Thursday with the outgoing chair, Zambia, handing over to South Africa who will hold the position for a year. South Africa's Minister of Trade and Industry, Mandisi Mpahlwa, chaired the SADC Ministerial Task Force on Regional Economic Integration

which deliberated on a customs union for SADC and the regional free trade area which will be launched on August 17. At the Ministerial Task Force on Regional Integration, chaired by South African foreign affairs minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, the crisis in Zimbabwe was the main talking point among delegates, with Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe controversially participating in the summit. The Botswana president Ian Khama is boycotting the summit in protest. "The authorities in Harare under the present circumstances should not be represented at the political level at any SADC summit as that would be equal to giving them legitimacy," said a statement from Botswana's foreign ministry. Power-sharing talks between Mugabe's ZANU-PF party and the two factions of the Movement for Democratic Change are stalled; the leaders of all three parties to the talks are present at the summit. Speaking at a press briefing on Wednesday, SADC Executive Secretary Tomasz Salomão conceded that while the region faced challenges, it remained stable: "There are no conflicts and no wars. Yes, we do have challenges in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. The summit will give us a chance to see how we address these challenges and the challenge that we had a few months ago in South Africa." Salomão was referring to xenophobic attacks that took place in South Africa in May this year, claiming more than 60 lives and displacing tens of thousands of migrants. Also on the agenda is the Southern Africa Gender Protocol. The draft protocol commits member states to gender parity at all levels of government; to amend or repeal laws that discriminate against women; devise policies and laws to enable equal access to economic resources by women and men; bring in gender-sensitive policies to fight HIV and AIDS and enshrine gender equality in their constitutions. The protocol was not signed at previous summits and gender activists are hoping that it will be in signed this year. Speaking at the protocol alliance strategy meeting on Thursday morning, South African Minister in the Presidency Essop Pahad assured the women and men present that it will be on this year's agenda. "August in South Africa is women's month, so it is important that this historic summit is happening here. South Africa is committed to signing it." It is not only Africa's time that has come, but Africa's women's time that has come. "The protocol has been approved by SADC's Council of Ministers and will now pass to heads of state for final deliberation. Also recommended to heads of state are a protocol on poverty eradication and food security; consideration of reduced energy supplies in the region; and the re-admission of the Seychelles -- which pulled out of SADC in 2003, unable to meet its financial obligations to the regional grouping. SADC, which was formerly known as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), has been in existence since 1980 when it was formed in Lusaka, Zambia with the slogan "Southern Africa: Towards Economic Liberation". SADC's current member states are Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

- **Namibia: Multinational Bridge Gets Greenlight: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 15 August 2008.**

The construction of a multinational bridge that will link Namibia, Botswana and Zambia stretching at least 700 metres from the scenic Impalila Island in Caprivi could animate the island's largely moribund economy and create jobs. The bridge will link Botswana and

Zambia and is to be constructed from Kazungula Border Post where four SADC states namely Namibia, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe share the Zambezi River. Namibia became involved in the project when neighbouring Zimbabwe declined to have the bridge pass through its waters and Zambia and Botswana decided to approach the Namibian Government to have the bridge pass through Namibian territory at the strategic island. Namibian Works and Transport Minister Helmut Angula told the media that the bridge is an intensive capital project that aims at linking the Impalila Island to Zambia in the north and Botswana in the south. He said the three countries have already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and that the Government instructed the Ministry of Works and Transport to carry out a feasibility study regarding almost 700 metres of Namibian territory off Impalila. Angula said the two neighbours have acquired funds from outside the SADC Region to help in the construction of the bridge though Namibia is still struggling to secure foreign funding. The plan comes at a point when Namibia is still devising plans to link its communities living at Impalila. Currently, the island can only be accessed via engine boats and dugout canoes, making lives very difficult for its inhabitants. The bridge will provide salvation to the residents of Impalila whose source of income is cross-border trade with residents of neighbouring Zambia and Botswana. At the moment, the inhabitants of the island find it tough to transport their products to market places at Katima Mulilo and other neighbouring countries. It is believed that with the incoming free trade agreement envisioned in SADC, they will be able to transport their produce via Zambia or Botswana to Katima Mulilo or even trade freely with neighbouring states. Angula also met with regional and local authority leaders in the Caprivi Region to share ideas on the way forward. He said in the meantime, the regional council strongly recommends a ferry to help cater for transport between Impalila Island and the town of Katima Mulilo. The minister stressed that his ministry would review existing studies in order to establish the way forward on the regional council's request to have a ferry that would commute between Impalila and Katima Mulilo transporting goods and people. Meanwhile, Angula outlined other projects which his ministry intends to carry out in the region such as the upgrading of the M'pacha Airport and the renovation and establishment of roads in game parks and assigning of Government houses to line ministries as well as the possibility for auctioning some houses.

- **Southern Africa: SADC Trade Talks 'Tense' Over EU Agreements: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 15 August 2008.**

FOREIGN Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma yesterday admitted to tensions among members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) over individual countries' separate trade negotiations with the European Union (EU). Member countries' commitments to economic partnership pact (EPA) arrangements threatened to scupper the effective implementation of the SADC free trade area which will be launched over the weekend. Its onset will mark the second step in a process set to culminate in a customs union by 2010, a common market by 2015 and a monetary union by 2016. "The development around the EPA negotiations with the EU needless to say have created some tensions among us but I'm sure those are not insurmountable and we'll be able to overcome them," said Dlamini-Zuma at the opening of a two-day SADC foreign ministers' meeting. The gathering is taking place in Johannesburg ahead of this weekend's

heads of state and government summit. Meanwhile, the attendance of Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe remained uncertain. Yesterday, Botswana and Zimbabwean officials sat across from each other, with foreign affairs minister Simbarashe Mumbengegwi and Obert Mpofu, the minister of industry and international trade representing the Harare government.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Djibouti: Access to Food Halved: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 14 August 2008.**

Access to food in Djibouti has been cut by more than 50 percent because of reduced availability and rising prices, according to a humanitarian official. "The price of rice [the main staple] had gone up by 28 percent since January and by 88 percent from [the average price] in 2007," Nancy Balfour, the disaster management coordinator for the Zonal Office of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), told IRIN. Djibouti imports 80 percent of its food, most of it traditionally from Ethiopia, which is suffering food insecurity of its own and has banned the export of several cereal crops. "Household budgets have also gone down," Balfour said. Unemployment in the capital is estimated at 60 percent. The urban and peri-urban populations that have not been covered in past humanitarian interventions are the most affected, she said. Other hard-hit areas include Obock in the northwest and Ali Sabieh in the southeast. The peri-urban areas also had limited water supply. "The pastoralists are concerned with trying to keep livestock alive," she said. Low rainfall and subsequent drought over the past few years have caused massive livestock deaths in the mainly pastoralist country and also led to a decline in pastoralist trade and income. The global acute malnutrition (GAM) rate among children between six months and five years averages 16.8 percent, reaching 25 percent in the northwest region, according to a Joint Appeal and Response Plan for Drought, Food and Nutrition Crisis released by Djibouti's government and the UN in late-July. The drought had made it difficult for pastoralists to cope, forcing many to migrate to towns. "People are dropping out of pastoralism," Balfour said.

The migrants live in poor conditions in informal settlements in and around towns where they lack adequate access to water and sanitation facilities, she said. The IFRC is supplying 10,000 people with food and water. Balfour said the organisation was also helping set up temporary water supplies where people were displaced as well as improving water access in the rural areas as a preliminary measure. A more detailed needs assessment is being carried out to identify gaps, she said. According to the Joint Appeal, US\$31.7 million is needed to help tackle the crisis, which is affecting about 120,000 people. These include 36,000 sub-urban people (mostly formerly semi-nomadic), 8,500 refugees and 20,000 asylum-seekers. Strategic priorities of the appeal include increasing food distribution in rural areas as well as for urban and sub-urban populations by implementing a food/cash voucher programme. The UN World Food Programme is increasing the number of rural people targeted for food aid from 47,000 to 80,000, with at least 50,000 urban dwellers included in future aid distributions, the spokesman for East

and Central Africa, Marcus Prior, said on 31 July. The government has also reduced taxes on agricultural inputs, basic food commodities and cooking fuel, in an effort to relieve the high food prices. The UN World Health Organisation is also assisting in the provision of essential healthcare to the most vulnerable groups in the districts of Obock, Tadjourah and Dikhil, according to a report, Health Action in Crises Highlights No 220 - 4 to 10 August 2008. Djibouti was ranked second after Haiti in May on the World Bank watch-list for food-insecure countries with a high probability of social unrest.

- **Somalia: Foreign Companies to Manage Puntland Ports – President: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 15 August 2008.**

The leader of Somalia's Puntland regional government, Gen. Mohamud "Adde" Muse, has announced that foreign companies will manage the region's key ports as part of a recent economic deal. During a Thursday interview with VOA Somali Service, President Muse addressed many issues including the security situation and the upcoming presidential election. On security, the Puntland leader said the administration has established a "six-month plan" to improve security, but stated that hundreds of people entering Puntland are helping contribute to insecurity. President Muse said Puntland security forces have "arrested 40 pirates" and was waiting for assistance from foreign governments who pledged to help the regional authority's campaign against piracy. But the Puntland leader suggested that shipping companies who pay ransom are "only encouraging piracy," adding that local police have the ability to detain the pirates. "After four years, we have finalized an agreement and the animal quarantine will open 10 to 15 days," President Muse said, while answering a question about a delegation from the Middle East that visited the port city of Bossaso, the region's commercial hub. He indicated that the animal quarantine "will be the biggest in the Horn of Africa" once its opened and that Somalis will be able to export livestock to markets in the Middle East. Management of the Port of Bossaso "will be completely handed over" to Arab companies, which he did not name. He cited the Port of Djibouti as an example, which is wholly managed by United Arab Emirates-based Dubai Ports World.

- **Tanzania: Experts Call for Issuance of Long-Term Loans: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 14 August 2008.**

The Government has been challenged to help create the environment for farmers and industrialists to access long-term loans to develop their projects. The call was made in Dar es Salaam last week by the head of a local social and economic research think tank (ESRF) in an exclusive interview with this paper. According to ESRF executive director Dr Bohela Lunogelo (pictured), currently there are very few sources of long-term capital in the country. He said the existence of only one financial institution that provides long-term financial to farmers and industrialists, is not healthy for national development. "The Government has during the past two years been injecting capital in the Tanzania Investment Bank, but the grant issued has not been adequate to serve all farmers and industrialists," he said. Development experts meeting in Dar es Salaam voiced the same view, saying long-term financing should be enhanced as a measure to achieve sustainable economic growth. They said repayment for the loans should range between 10 and 50

years. Dr Lunogelo pointed out that due to prevailing inflationary trends, it is expensive to borrow from commercial banks where the average lending rates are above 20 per cent. He called on Tanzanians to save part of their incomes as a way of addressing the problem of investment capital. He however, noted that the lasting solution is for the Government to revive or establish investment banks. Dr Lunogelo added that the State should also inject more capital in community banks because they are better positioned to help people access capital. He cited the Mufindi Community Bank and Mwanga Community Bank which have proved to be very successful and effective in this area. The banks, he explained, are a good channel for lending to savings and credit cooperative societies which serve many ordinary people at the grass roots.

- **Tanzania: Community Banks Vital in Poverty War: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): EDITORIAL: 14 August 2008.**

A new idea in the money sector, the community banks, have shown beyond reasonable doubt that they can play a big role in providing financial services, especially in the rural areas, where the majority of the population lives. Recent reports indicate that the seven already licensed banks are not only growing fast, but also serving segments of the economy long shunned by the mainstream banks. Some experts are already citing the new banks as the right response to the failed cooperative unions, which used to give comprehensive rural financial services. Last year, the microfinance banks recorded impressive ratios in yields and profitability. Some of them featured among the best performers in the financial sector. In fact, some have demonstrated that they can do even better than some blue chip banks, including the local branches of multinationals. Micro, small and medium enterprises, which not long ago were regarded as not being creditworthy, have been the major beneficiaries. Rural folks have also greatly benefited from community banks. But unfortunately, their presence remains limited and confined to very few regions. Those, which have already made their presence felt, are Dar es Salaam Community Bank, Mbinga Community Bank, Kilimanjaro Cooperative Bank, and Mufindi Community Bank. The others are Uchumi, Kagera and Mwanga. With more than 80 per cent of their operations being microfinance, community banks are best suited to take financial services to the grassroots to serve the "unbankable" majority. In some countries, these financial institutions have helped to stimulate growth and played the catalyst role in the war against poverty. This can be replicated in Tanzania by increasing the number of community banks, and establishing them in all districts with branches up to the village level. The Government should help raise the core capital of the new ones and also inject more funds into those already doing business.

- **Kenya: Civil Servants Given Huge Salary Increase: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 15 August 2008.**

Civil servants Thursday welcomed their pay increase which in some cases tripled their take-home packages. A clerk at the Immigration office in Kisumu, who declined to be named, said that the news of the increment was "too good to be true". "It does not seem real and I will only believe after I see my payslip," he said. In Kericho, the Kenya Civil Servants Union, branch officials commended the Government for the increment. After

announcing the new pay deal, Public Service minister Dalmas Otieno said: “We are spearheading the process of transforming Kenya to a globally competitive and prosperous nation.” Branch chairman Evans Karani said that although inflation was high, the new salaries will mitigate against the high cost of living. He called on public servants to reciprocate the good gesture by working with dedication and commitment.

More than doubled

Their comments came after salaries for the 120,000 unionisable civil servants were more than doubled on Thursday in one of the biggest single pay increases for employees in the public sector. The increase will benefit employees in Job Groups “A” to “L” who form the bulk of the civil service. These range from cleaners and messengers to district officers, chiefs and district education officers, among others. However, the new pay does not include house and other allowances. But it still leaves a huge gap between the salaries of these workers and those earned by senior civil servants like permanent secretaries, directors of State corporations and other top civil servants. Some members of this group take home as much as Sh800,000 a month in salaries and allowances compared to the Sh35,275 for the top bracket among those in the union. The lowest paid civil servant, the cleaner or messenger, will now earn a basic salary of Sh7,829 a month, up from Sh3,000. This is in addition to Sh3,000 a month house allowance and Sh375 medical allowance per month, bringing the monthly total to Sh11,204. The new increments will raise the Government wage bill from Sh9.04 billion per year to Sh12.6 billion, excluding the money spent on allowances for all civil servants. Among those to benefit from the increase are immigration officers and executive officers in ministries, some of whom will see their basic pay rise from an average Sh14,215 per month to an average Sh35,275 per month. With a house allowance of Sh20,000 per month, medical and other allowances, the officers will now take home more than Sh50,000 per month. The increment will be backdated to July as this is when the Government’s financial year begins. Last month, the Saturday Nation brought to the limelight the plight of underpaid public servants in a lead story titled Shame of Public Service Salaries: Underpaid workers skip lunch and walk to work as cost of living rises. Nyanza Provincial Public Health Officer Tom Andebe said that the increment would boost morale in the civil service and enhance efficiency. In Kakamega, civil servants said that the improved salaries were timely and would help cushion them against economic hardships.

Lower cadres

The provincial spokesman of the civil servants’ union, Mr Bernard Lumiti, said they would study the new salaries before issuing a comprehensive reaction. “We thank the Government for looking into the plight of the lower cadres in the civil service by giving them a pay rise,” he said. The lowest paid civil servant in Job group A will now earn Sh7,829 from Sh3,310. The salaries do not include house and medical allowances which raise the package to Sh11,204. The highest civil servant in job group L will now earn Sh30,472 up from Sh11,690. With house and medical allowance, the workers will get Sh 51,972. The minister said that the increase was as a result of negotiation with the Union of Kenya Civil Servants who had been demanding a 29 per cent increase. The staggered

increase has been implemented in phases since 2005. The latest instalment marked the final salary awards. "Any other awards will be freshly negotiated," Mr Otieno said. The minister said the Government had provided Sh3.5 billion this financial year to be distributed to the employees in the listed job groups. "The distribution of this salary adjustment takes into account the disparities within job groups and the need to motivate staff in the lower and middle class. The increase also takes into account the Government's ability to pay within the current budgetary constraints," the minister said during a Press conference in his Harambee House office in Nairobi. He said the move was in line with the Government policy to harmonise the terms and conditions of service in the public service. "The implementation is the final salary award in the civil service within the harmonisation framework whose first phase was implemented with effect from July 1 2005," said Mr Otieno who was accompanied by Union of Kenya Civil Servants officials led by secretary-general Tom Odege and assistant national treasurer Rehema Ibrahim. According to him, the salary scales have been shortened to enhance the annual increments and make it more meaningful and to provide horizontal equity within respective job groups. A newly-recruited graduate in job group J will earn Sh21,304 from the previous Sh15,088. When added to a house allowance of Sh6,000 and medical allowance of Sh990, the new graduates will earn Sh28,294. Those in job group L, like district officers, will benefit the most as they will earn Sh51,972 per month. Their house allowance stands at Sh20,000 while medical allowance is Sh1,500. After giving the awards, Mr Otieno urged civil servants to be committed to their work, embrace work ethics and spearhead the process of transforming Kenya into to a globally competitive and prosperous nation. Mr Odege thanked the Government for motivating the workers and termed the increase "a historic move" since unionisable workers in the Government have never been specifically recognised. He said that they will start negotiations for house, medical and commuter allowances. Mr Odege said civil servants had no reason to complain any more or demand favours to deliver services. He asked his members to be committed and improve service delivery. The increase immediately sparked an outcry from the Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers chairman, Mr Akelo Misor, who challenged the minister for Education, Prof Sam Onger, to follow suit and take teachers to the same level as civil servants. Mr Misor accused the Teachers Remuneration Committee of sleeping on the job when the public service continued to improve the salaries of workers. According to him, it was unfair to play divide and rule over teachers and civil servants' affairs because they both served the country with dedication. He said teachers could decide to leave Teachers Service Commission and join the Public Service Commission unless TSC changed its punitive policies such as insisting on performance contracts, interdictions and stoppage of salaries. However, the civil servants union officials asked teachers not to view their welfare in negative light but work hard to improve teachers salaries.

Figures were wrong

"Without a teacher there can be no doctors, engineers, pilots and other professionals, including our ministers; so I urge the teachers unions not to fall in the trap of blackmail but continue with the work the late Ambrose Adongo left behind," Mr Odege said. Civil servants interviewed said figures given by the minister were wrong because they had

surpassed the salaries quoted and some are already earning more than reported. "We are way above the salaries quoted and it is likely to cause confusion. The increase is little because we are already earning more or close to what was announced," a civil servant who sought anonymity told the Nation.

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- **Uganda: Fake \$30 Million Seized at Hotel in Gulu: [New Vision \(Kampala\)](#): 14 August 2008.**

A 21-year-old man was arrested on Sunday over possession of 30 million fake dollars stuffed in a briefcase. Bosco Kilama was apprehended from Opit Travellers Inn; commonly known as Buganda Pub, after the army had been tipped off, Capt. Alex Ahabyona of the 4th Division, said. The briefcase was sealed with a note bearing the inscription: "Don't handle with bare hands." "We got a call and immediately deployed at Opit Travellers Inn where the culprit was. He was alone during the time of arrest," Ahabyona said. He said Kilama was part of a gang of "three dirty dealers" headed by a resident of Pabbo sub-county in Amuru district, who are now on the run. He said Kilama had promised to take the security people to where his accomplices were hiding but they had been warned and had "taken cover". Kilama, a builder in Pabbo, said he did not know where the money came from but that a man he identified as Akera of Pabbo had asked him to deliver it to someone at the inn. "I knew that it was a bad deal, but I was promised seven million shillings as a reward to take the money to the cashier of Opit Travelers Inn," Kilama said. Gulu deputy resident district commissioner Milton Odongo warned against such deals. He urged the Police to find the conmen. "This arrest should not come as a surprise. Now that the LRA war is over, we should start fighting conmen who are all over the north," Odongo said. Last month, the army arrested three men from Amuru who impersonated LRA commanders soliciting aid so as to abandon the war.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: World Bank Praises RPF on Development: [The New Times \(Kigali\)](#): 15 August 2008.**

A paper released recently by a Commission on Growth and Development under the World Bank has praised the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) on its development ideology. This was revealed by Dr. Thomas Rusuhuzwa Kigabo, a chief economist working with the National Bank of Rwanda (BNR) in an interview Tuesday with The New Times at his offices in Kigali. Dr. Rusuhuzwa said that Rwanda's economic growth was due to the party's positive ideology. "Ideology is a very powerful weapon that I compare to a bomb. The positive ideology of RPF gave birth to policies like decentralization and others that made Rwandans be actors in the development of the nation," he explained. "Usually when a country comes from war; Genocide in Rwanda's case, the economy may grow because of donations, aid and grants, and diminishes when some countries pull out; but it was not the same case with Rwanda. Her economic growth was sustained, which I call a Rwandan miracle," Dr Rusuhuzwa went on. Rusuhuzwa said

that the core of the RPF's ideology is summarized into nine points, one of which is strong social and economic development. He added that the RPF has an ideology of optimism, hard work and community empowerment, and is described as a key of the development that is in Rwandan hands. He also noted that RPF's positive ideology builds national self-confidence and the will for all Rwandans to own their future. "This positive ideology was in the minds of RPF members even before beginning the struggle. That is why we have unique policies that have helped this nation grow in a tremendous way economically. We have Gacaca, the Umuvunyi (Ombudsman), with others that converge together to create a secure environment," he said. Rusuhuzwa added that developing a nation cannot be attained if peace is not built, noting that it (peace) is among the RPF's nine-point programme. Asked whether the paper would not be viewed as trying to just portray the RPF in good light, Rusuhuzwa was quick to answer that it is not based on speculation but that it was based on scientific research approved by over 50 world renowned researchers. Christophe Bazivamo, the Vice Chairman of the RPF, told The New Times that the country's economic development has been solely on positive ideologies that helped in drafting good policies. Bazivamo said that good governance and justice are among the many factors that have given birth to developing programmes like Ubudehe (local collective development action) which allows citizens to participate in the country's economic growth. He added that RPF members believe in debates and gathering all resources to reach to conclusions and allow participation of all citizens. Bazivamo added that the former regime did not give a chance to citizens to contribute towards their development, and that every infrastructure that was completed was credited to individuals or different project owners. The 19-page paper titled: 'Leadership, Policy Making, Quality of Economic Policies, and Their Inclusiveness' was presented to a group of world researchers in Washington DC in June this year.

- **Burundi: Country Set to Join Regional Capital Market: [The Nation \(Nairobi\): 12 August 2008.](#)**

Burundi could soon be integrated to the East African capital market enabling firms in Kenya to cross-list in that country. Capital Markets Authority chief executive officer Ms Stella Kilonzo disclosed that Burundi was lined up to be the next member of the widening East African Members States Securities Regulatory Authority. Speaking during a consultative meeting in Rwanda, Ms Kilonzo, who is the chairman of the securities authority, said this would boost the regional capital markets. "There was strong commitment to incorporate Burundi as a member in order to advance the growth and harmonisation of the regional capital markets," she said. It was agreed that a team which included the East Africa secretariat would visit Burundi to discuss the goals and objectives of the securities regulatory authority and explore opportunities for mutual assistance with a view to having Burundi join. The representatives at the meeting were capital market authority CEO's from Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. Rwanda became a member of the authority in March this year. Mr Tharcisse Kadede, the principal economist at East African Community Secretariat also attended.

Single destination

Members of the East African Members States Securities Regulatory Authority meet three times a year to deliberate on capital markets regulation and development issues. During the meeting, presentations were made by International Finance Corporation representatives and consultants. The issues included a review of the ongoing project to introduce a regional certification program for licensees participating in the regional capital markets. The states also discussed how to develop the East African Community as a single investment destination. The members noted the importance of public education and partnership with the media in the development of capital markets. The authority was established in 1997 as a forum for East African capital markets regulators through the signing of a memorandum of understanding by Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.

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- **Cameroon: Korean Scientist Shares Experiences With Rice Farmers: [Cameroon Tribune](#) (Yaoundé): 13 August 2008.**

Ndop (Ngoketunjia)- Prof. Kwang Ho Park, Head of Department of Crop Sciences of the South Korean National College of Agriculture was in Ndop recently to share experiences towards reactivating and improving on rice production. Prof Kwang Ho Park who doubles as Korea's Director General of Agriculture and Rural Development Institute was on the field to evaluate potentials to garner and harness resources to take Cameroon's rice production forward. Dr Bernand Nwana, Secretary General of Cameroon's Chamber of Agriculture accompanied Prof Kwang Ho Park to the Upper Noun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA), Ndop, Babungo, Bagolan, Biagom plain and Santcho in the West province. On the-spot in Ndop, the South Korean Scientist unfolded what could be said to be a package of mysteries. Is it all about the result of intense research work on threats, weaknesses, opportunities and strengths in high yield production of rice in South Korea, part of the U.S and some African countries where cost and labour are being beaten. It is also about waste on manure, herbicides, fungicides and insecticide applications. Prof. Kwang Ho Park introduced research findings applicable on the ground with assistance from a multi purpose machine that can serve 45 hectares of land daily. The new mechanism is said to cut labour, pest, infections and works against wild wind. Impressed by the presentation Dr Samuel Chi Wanki, the General Manager of UNVDA served Prof Kwang Ho Park a map of rice growing areas in the North West. The team which also included Nemtat Emmanuel Usman, North West Secretary of the Chamber of Agriculture also visited UNVDA installations, the UNVDA constructed dam, 600 hectares of empty rice farms and some demonstration farms transplanted plus vast land laying fallow. Curtains dropped on the visit of the North West and West Provinces with a visit to the abandoned SODERIM rice installations in Santcho, West Province.

- **Rwanda: Agriculture Regains Major Role in Economy: [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information](#) (Kigali): 13 August 2008.**

Agriculture has moved back as the second biggest contributor to the national economy after a worrying drop seen in the period ending 2006, new macro economic figures suggest. The service sector continuously contributed most to the GDP at 48%, followed by the agricultural sector that is now adding some 31% to growth, according to the

Quarterly Economic Review for January-May 2008 from the National Institute of Statistics. Government told its donor partners at the November last year annual meet that Agricultural production had contracted significantly compared to previous years - one reason for which it needed more resources to revamp the sector. The drop was however attributed to natural factors. From 2003 when agriculture contributed some 37 percent, it was to take a slide to 33 percent after three years. The Service sector - seen in largely expanding banking and tourism -, and industry have been however steadily going up. Officials said the trend - though not positive - was a good sign indicating that their plans to diversify the economy away from quantitative production to largely value-added methods - are working. Some diplomats engaged by RNA expressed concern with the trend due to the fact that up to 70% of the population was dependant on agriculture for livelihood. Now, the manufacturing (industrial) sector which was booming has moved far back bringing in 16 percent of the receipts. For example, last week, local brewer BRALIRWA said it has been producing less since 2007 due to the rocketing costs of production. The firm announced price hikes on all its products. The Quarterly Review figures show there was a 14% increase in food production in the season of early 2008 compared to the same period last year. "This was mainly due to the 81% increase in cereals production and 28% increase in roots and tubers", the Review says. "This can be attributed to the large increase in production of mainly maize and to a lesser extent wheat for cereals and cassava for roots and tubers." These crops were grown extensively through the Crop Intensification Project that the Ministry of Agriculture has undertaken in which production is shifting from subsistence to commercial in some areas. Through this project, 400 tons of improved maize seeds were grown on 20,000 hectares in the Eastern province. Sixty tons of wheat seed were planted on 2000 hectares in the Northern Province. About 5 million cassava cuttings from improved varieties were purchased from local private seed multipliers and distributed to farmers in the Southern province. Government wants to start up a factory to turn the cassava into an export product. The latest economic data also notes a rise in prices in the first quarter of this year compared to the same period in 2007. The increase in the consumer price index is attributable primarily to the rise in prices of 'food and non-alcoholic beverages' (+2.01%), including bread and cereals (+6.88%) and meat (+6.55%). The data says equally to note is rising prices for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels (+4.69%) and furnishing, household equipment and routine household maintenance (+4.81%) and transport (+11.4%) should be noted. On annual change as well, the rise was attributed to the price rises for food and non-alcoholic beverages (1.0%) including bread and cereals (+5.61%) and meat (+7.53%). "Also, rising prices for housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels (+15.06%) and furnishing, household equipment and routine household maintenance (+7.64%), transport (15.12%) and education (18.43%) should be noted", the government data notes. Total agricultural production for early 2007 was slightly above 3 million tons but shot up to about 4 million tons in the similar season of 2008. National food security improved within the same period, notes the Review. It also shows that for the first time in the last 4 years production exceeded consumption needs. For season 2008A, consumption in kilo-calories/person/day reached 2176 kcal/person/day which is 104% of the globally recommended daily requirements of 2,100.

82. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Bakassi Community Demands N200 Billion Compensation From FG: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 13 August 2008.**

The Bakassi community has demanded a N200 billion compensation from the Federal Government, over the planned ceding of its homeland to Cameroon. It also wants the government to halt the handover scheduled for Thursday August 14 in obedience to the order of an Abuja High Court which restrained the FG from giving effect to the Green Tree Agreement to cede Bakassi to Cameroon. The community spoke in Lagos through its lead counsel Mr. Kayode Fasetire who argued that while the Federal Government was having an agreement to give the disputed area to Cameroon, the people were not part of it. Fasetire said nothing less than N200 billion should be paid as compensation to settle these people noting that the Federal Government has no reason handing over the Bakassi citizens to Cameroon Republic. His words: "The Federal Government is not ready to comply with the ratification of the National Assembly, that is why it is not resettling these people, the government is not ready to pay compensation, rather it wants to handover in a hurry, the reason for this, we don't know." The modality of the International Court of Justice ruling between Nigeria and Cameroon Republic did not state the actual date of handover but the Nigeria government wants to hand over on August 14 without proper remuneration to the Bakassi citizens. "The agreement between Nigeria and Cameroon, stating the handover by August has to be ratified by the National Assembly. As well, any responsible government is expected to seek the welfare and the security of its citizens. Any responsible government that wants to handover land to another country, needs to settle the citizens who are going to be displaced, and before handling over, the people needed to be paid and that is our stand. And what we expect the federal government to do, is to have an extension of time, within which it will take care of all these issues, but as the case is now, it is the federal government that wants to hand over the people to the Cameroon in accordance with the rule of law."

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: AU, SADC, Commends Mbeki On Mediation: [BuaNews](#) (Tshwane): 16 August 2008.**

African Union Commission (AU) Chairman Jean Ping has expressed confidence in President Thabo Mbeki's mediation in Zimbabwe, saying that the continent has no doubt there will be a political solution in the country. "I would like to express my gratitude to President Mbeki for his tireless efforts that he has shown in helping the Zimbabwean brothers overcome their differences and to take on in the interest of Zimbabweans the new challenge that confront their country," Mr Ping said. Addressing delegates at the official opening of the 28th Ordinary Summit of SADC at the Sandton Convention Centre on Saturday, Mr Ping said the AU was working closely with SADC and Mr Mbeki to set up support negotiations between Zimbabwe political parties. "We need to double our efforts to promote good governance and the rule of law for the sake of people of

Zimbabwe," Mr Ping said. Also addressing delegates at the summit, President Mbeki said SADC had been committed to assist the people of Zimbabwe to overcome their challenges. "I would like to take this opportunity to salute the leaders of Zimbabwe and in this way extract the masses of the people from the dire conditions in which they find themselves in." "This summit affords us the possibility to assist the Zimbabwean parties to finalise their negotiations so that together they can engage the work to achieve a national healing and reconciliation," President Mbeki said. He said he was certain that the millions of Zimbabweans, both inside and outside the country, were awaiting great expectations on the outcome. "The Zimbabweans are waiting for a positive outcome from our deliberations ... we will do everything in our power to help the Zimbabwe parties to strike a deal on peace negotiations," President Mbeki said. Zambian Foreign Minister Kabinge Pande said SADC's responsibility was now to double its efforts to aid in implementing resolution taken at the AU Summit in Egypt where member states have called on for a government of national unity in Zimbabwe. He said the SADC region should continue to uphold peace and stability as it did before for future generations to receive peaceful and prosperous future. "I therefore have no doubt that similar support will be given to President Mbeki as he took over the baton," said Mr Pande.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: MP Byenkya Right On Smaller Parliament: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): EDITORIAL: 15 August 2008.**

Hoima Woman MP Beatrice Byenkya this week called for a reduction in the size of the national parliament, while addressing a governance workshop on multiparty politics in Hoima town. Ms Byenkya rightly argued that a developing country like Uganda needs to reduce its public expenditure by avoiding excessive and unnecessary spending. It is not the first time such comments have been made, but rather than grow smaller, Parliament has only continued to grow with each passing election. Currently our Parliament is bursting with 330 members, a number that is likely to grow as more and more districts are created across the country. It defeats reasoning that a poor country like Uganda, which cannot fully finance its national budget and has to depend on foreign aid to pay for basic social services, would opt for such a large and wasteful parliament. Various studies have shown that almost half of the MPs in the House do not contribute to the debates yet the taxpayer continues to shoulder the burden of footing the maintenance of this excess legislative manpower. At an average of Shs7 million each MP earns per month, if Parliament was reduced by half, the government would be saving over a billion shillings each month. The remaining fewer, but better-facilitated MPs, would be able to do a better job of checking the other arms of government and there would be more money to spend on other programmes of public interest. One of the key reasons why poverty remains rampant in our country is the excessive expenditure on public administration which drains away most of the money that would have helped extricate the ordinary person out of poverty. But also in order to raise money for such a large public expenditure, the small taxable base is over-stretched by high taxes thereby depriving workers and employers of the ability to save and invest. Reduction of public spending is not necessary for Parliament alone, but across all sectors. The country needs to cut down on the number of

districts, which would free money now being spent on resident district commissioners, district education officers, chief administrative officers etc, to raise money to fund other crucial sectors of the economy. We don't need the over 120 presidential advisors either. After all, most of them have not met the President or offered him any advice for years. A leaner, transparent and efficient Parliament is better for our democracy than a bloated, wasteful and inefficient one.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: At Last! Government Assumes Total Control Over Bakassi: [The Post](#) (Buea): 15 August 2008.**

Going by concerted diplomatic action, and the strong resolve by Cameroon and Nigeria to implement the now famous Green Tree Accord, every inch of the disputed Bakassi Peninsula reverted to Cameroonian ownership, Thursday, August 14. As we went to press late Wednesday night, everything was set for a hitch-free handover in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. According to Nigerian tabloid, *This Day*, ahead of the historic handover of Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon, there is a massive security build-up in Calabar and other areas around the disputed peninsula. On his part, Nigerian President, Umaru Musa Yar' Adua, has disclosed that his government had so far committed 4 billion Naira (N4 billion) to the resettlement of Nigerians affected by the ceding of territories in Bakassi (N3 billion) and Borno (N1 billion). The Cameroon Government has dispatched a delegation of top government officials comprising Ministers, men of law, journalists etc. Also, members of the Mixed Commission on the implementation of the Greentree Accord, diplomats and other concerned officials are all in Calabar for the event. In a statement on State radio, Cameroon's Communication Minister, Jean Pierre Biyiti Bi Essam, said the handover signalled the triumph of peaceful negotiations between two countries and not the victory of one country over the other.

Union President Prays For Peace

Meantime, the President of the Nigerian Union in Cameroon, Andrew Essien, has called on all Nigerians living in the country to pray for a hitch-free handover. He said his compatriots have been mobilised to commit the event into God's hands. The Nigerian Consul General to the Northwest and Southwest Provinces of Cameroon, Dr. Kenneth Nsor, is already in Nigeria, leading a delegation to witness the handing over ceremony. The final handover of authority to Cameroon would mark 15 years of dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the Peninsula. After the first handing of partial authority over Bakassi on August 14, 2006, some infamous incidences that claimed the lives of Cameroonian soldiers and members of some supposed Nigerian dissident groups came close to destabilising the years of peaceful negotiations. After August 14 handover, the Government of Cameroon will need five more years before it will exercise control on the population of the area.

Symbolism

After August 14 handover, Calabar now holds a new symbolism in the history of peaceful negotiations in Africa as Cameroon is given full authority over Bakassi Peninsula. The United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, has described the transfer of Bakassi to Cameroon as "a model for negotiated settlements of border disputes." He referred to it as "a landmark event". On the eve of this history-making event, Robert A Wood, Acting Deputy Spokesman of the US Department of State wrote: "The United States commends the Government of Cameroon and the Government of Nigeria for their commitment to the peaceful handover of the Bakassi Peninsula on August 14, 2008. The United States continues to encourage the two governments to implement the 2002 International Court of Justice ruling and the 2006 Greentree agreement. We believe the efforts of Cameroon and Nigeria to resolve this border dispute peacefully serve as a positive example of conflict resolution."

Protests

In spite of the overwhelming excitement expressed by both governments and the international community, many Nigerian groups opposing the handover have registered their disappointment. Apparently, in order to pre-empt any unfortunate events by the opposing groups, the venue of the handover was changed to Calabar. Fears were rife that rebel groups opposing the handover could stage an attack and jeopardise the event. This Day reports that Senator Bassey Ewa-Henshaw representing Cross River South, where Bakassi falls, condemned the Federal Government's insistence on keeping to the August 14 handover date, despite its security implications. In a letter to President Umaru Yar'Adua, dated August 1, 2008, according to the tabloid, Ewa-Henshaw said, "it is hard to imagine that anyone who loves Nigeria will insist that we go ahead to implement the Green Tree Agreement as it is, in spite of the dangerous security implication which our military have pointed out." Meanwhile, before Nigeria fully handed over the Bakassi Peninsula, Cameroon had invested on institutions such as sub-prefectures and police forces to step up its presence in the region. The Delegate General for National Security, Edgar Alain Mebe Ngo' said the Cameroon government has created several police units in Bakassi. Statutes signed by President Paul Biya created three special police units - the Public Security unit, immigration and emigration stations as well as intelligence units. These police units are located in four island districts - Idabato, Kombo Abedimo, Kombo Itindi, and Upper Bayang. Besides the police posts, the government also set up several administrative structures. Recently, a delegation from the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation visited one of the administrative units. Also, a new Divisional Officer for Kombo Abedimo, Eduard Takor, who replaces Felix Fonya, who was murdered. After Nigeria handed over 80 per cent of the Bakassi territory in 2006, Cameroon, with the support of the international community, began to mark its presence in the region by establishing social infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, roads, rural electrification and water supply.

Fate Of Nigerians

Following the handover of Bakassi, Nigerian residents in the area have three options; either to go back to Nigeria, obtain Cameroonian nationality or stay in the area under

Cameroon rule. VANGUARD reports that no fewer than 37,000 Nigerians displaced from the disputed peninsula are being resettled at Ibaka in Akwa Ibom State.

83. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Government Hands Over Bakassi to Cameroon: [Nigeria First \(Abuja\): 14 August 2008.](#)**

Nigeria has formally handed over the Bakassi Peninsular to the Republic of Cameroon at a solemn ceremony held on August 14, in Calabar, Cross River state of Nigeria.

This is in conformity with the Judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at the Hague's ruling of October 10, 2002 and the provisions of the Green Tree Agreement of June 12, 2006 signed between Former Nigeria's President Ousegun Obasanjo and President Paul Biya of Cameroon at Green Tree, New York. The United Nations, United Kingdom, United States of America, France and Germany witnessed the signing of the agreement. The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Mr. Michael Aondoankaa signed the instruments that formally handed over the territory on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria and his Cameroonian counterpart signed on behalf of his country. In his address Mr. Aondoankaa noted that Nigeria has a responsibility to keep her commitment to the international community, and to promote international peace and African brotherhood. He said it is also an attestation of the total commitment of President Yar'Adua to the rule of law. He noted that the consideration of attendant benefits of peace and good neighborliness outwits painful losses of ancestral home and others too numerous to mention. He however pledges the commitment of the federal government to the welfare of all affected citizens. Earlier, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, in his address read by the UN Special Representative in West Africa, Said Djinnit, noted that the days' event marked another milestone in mutual cooperation between Nigeria and Cameroon. He acknowledged the event as a promising example, which would serve as a model in many places in Africa and a progress in the name of international law and peaceful coexistence. The representative of Cameroonian government, Mauris Kamte in his address noted that the days' event is a celebration of newfound peace between Nigeria and Cameroon. He said that the two countries have long standing geographical and historic ties with the people living harmoniously through intermarriages and in an atmosphere of calm and serenity. Present to witness the formal handing over ceremony were the representatives of the United Kingdom, United State of America, France and Germany. Also present are senior government officials of Nigeria and Cameroon, members of the follow up committee and the mixed commission among others.

- **Liberia: Nigerian Troops to Remain Beyond 2011 - Gen Yusuf: [Leadership \(Abuja\): 15 August 200.](#)**

Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. Gen Luka Nijeh Yusuf, said the Nigerian troops currently maintaining peace in Liberia would remain in the West African Coast region beyond 2011 after the United Nations (UN) mandate expires in three year's time. The Army Chief disclosed this in a recent interview granted to joint Nigerian and Liberian media representatives in Monrovia, Liberia, as contained in a press statement signed by the Director of Army Public Relations and made available to LEADERSHIP, it said that Nigerian troops would assume responsibility of maintaining the peace in Liberia after the UN mandate expired in 2011, adding that, "This arrangement is sequel to a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) jointly signed by Nigeria, Liberia and the UN." The statement further stated that Gen Yusuf said the aim of the MoU was to ensure that Liberia does not slide back to war and chaos by the time the UN "drew-down" phase in the mission was completed. He, however, noted that the length of stay of the Nigerian troops would depend on how long it would take to train enough Liberian troops to take over from their Nigerian counterparts. Meanwhile, the Director-General of Army Public Relations at the Army Headquarters, Brig-Gen Emeka Onwuamgbu, told our correspondent that because of the confidence reposed in the Nigerian Army by the UN, the troops had been charged with the responsibility of providing security in Monrovia and the most volatile parts of the country. "The Nigerian Army troops were charged with the responsibility of providing security in Liberian capital and most volatile parts of the country," he said, adding "because of the confidence we have in Nigeria, UN mission thinks it has the capability and efficiency to do the work." Onwuamgbu, however, said the Army was very grateful to President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua for approving the upward review of UN allowance of \$600 to \$1,028 per soldier per month, and it had gone a long way to boosting the morale of Nigerian soldiers. "A lot of improvement has been witnessed in the Army and they are committed to sustaining democracy in the country by way of subordinating it to the civil authority," he stated.

- **Côte d'Ivoire: '1,000 Micro-Projects' Initiative Launched By UN Mission: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 14 August 2008.**

The United Nations mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) today launched a \$5 million project to speed the reintegration of ex-combatants from the country's civil war, as well as young people at risk. The "1,000 micro-projects" initiative was launched in Bouaké by the UN's top envoy in the West Africa nation, Y.J. Choi. The projects seek to support ex-combatants, ex-militias and young people at risk, along with children and women associated with the Ivorian conflict. The projects cover a range of activities, including technical training, agriculture, market-gardening, cattle rearing, fishing, forestry, construction, transportation, motor mechanics, public works and catering. The aim of the micro-projects is to reduce poverty and youth unemployment. In addition, it is hoped that they will help provide a secure and stable environment for free and fair elections while reintegrating ex-combatants into their former communities. Mr. Choi will also visit Séguéla, Korhogo, Odienné, Guiglo, Issia and San Pedro for a sensitisation and information tour on the micro-projects initiative. Last month the Security Council extended UNOCI's mandate by six months, stressing the importance that much-delayed presidential elections, now slated for November, are conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa, Zimbabwe: Botswana Draws Country's Fire: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 16 August 2008.**

Zimbabwe launched a scathing attack on Botswana Saturday after the neighbouring country boycotted a regional summit to protest against President Robert Mugabe whose government Botswana considers 'illegitimate'. The long-running Zimbabwean crisis was expected to loom large at the ongoing South African Development Community (SADC) in South Africa where Mugabe will come under pressure from his peers to cede executive powers to his main rival.

Mugabe's re-election

Botswana's President Ian Khama is not attending the summit because his government does not recognise Mugabe's re-election. Mugabe ran alone in the June 27 presidential run-off election after the main contender and Opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai pulled out citing state-sponsored violence against his supporters. The poll was condemned around the world and criticised by regional election observers. The 14-member SADC urged Zimbabwe's leaders to forge an inclusive government. The Herald newspaper, a government mouthpiece, claimed that the main reason Botswana boycotted the summit was because it wanted to pull out of the regional grouping on the orders of the United States. Referring to President Khama's government as a "military junta", the paper said Botswana desperately wanted to host the US's African Military Command (Africom) against a SADC resolution rejecting proposals to set up the base in the region. "It has emerged that there is more to the Botswana military junta's planned boycott of the SADC summit than the alleged protest over President Mugabe's legitimacy and attendance," the paper claimed quoting unnamed sources in the neighbouring country's government. "Sources in Botswana say the reason for the planned boycott is that the junta is considering pulling out of SADC as a prelude to hosting the Africom. Zimbabwe, they say, happens to be a convenient scapegoat for getting out of the block that has drawn the line on accommodating Africom." Botswana has taken the toughest stand among Zimbabwe's neighbours against Mugabe's government and there are fears of escalating tensions between the two countries if the political crisis drags on. The diamond-rich country is the host to the SADC headquarters and by boycotting the summit it would ratchet pressure on the regional group to deal more decisively with Harare. Millions of Zimbabweans have already fled across the borders, with a number of them crossing into Botswana to escape the world's highest inflation, widespread unemployment, and chronic shortages of food and fuel. Last week, Botswana deported a former political editor of the Herald newspaper employed at the University of Botswana accusing him of abetting Mugabe's rule.

Deportation

The deportation angered the Zimbabwean government, which said it was illegal and a violation of human rights. Early this year, the Zimbabwean government accused Zambian

President Levy Mwanawasa of taking orders from Western countries after he called a special SADC summit to discuss the political crisis in the country. Mwanawasa, SADC'S outgoing chairperson, will be succeeded by South African President Thabo Mbeki at the helm of the organisation.

- **Southern Africa: Mugabe Casts Long Shadow Over SADC Summit: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 14 August 2008.**

THIS weekend's Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit has all the elements of a dysfunctional family's Christmas gathering, if one member comes another chooses to stay away. Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe was invited despite the wish of some SADC members that he be shunned. He is accused of stealing the country's presidency and orchestrating a terror campaign against the opposition. His presence is likely to split the 14-member grouping. SADC executive secretary Tomaz Augusto Solomoa yesterday said all regional heads of state and governments, including Mugabe, had been invited to the summit. "It's now up to the relevant authorities in Zimbabwe to decide who's going to come," he said at a media briefing. Foreign Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma said Zimbabwe had confirmed its attendance but not who would represent the country at the Johannesburg meeting. It was also unclear if Botswana head of state Ian Khama would attend. Dlamini-Zuma said it would be sad if he stayed away. A critic of events in Zimbabwe, Khama had threatened to boycott the summit if Mugabe was invited. The outgoing SADC chairman, Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa, is recuperating from a stroke, and it is uncertain if acting head of state Rupiah Banda will attend. Dlamini-Zuma said it was unclear if the Zambian constitution allowed an acting head of state to be out of the country in the president's absence. President Thabo Mbeki is due to take over chairmanship of SADC from Mwanawasa. Siphamandla Zondi, of the Institute for Global Dialogue, said the weekend summit would reflect an uncanny tussle between "the normal security agenda that usually dominates" and issues of economic and human development. The challenge for the outgoing chairman was to strike a balance between the two agendas, thereby setting the brief for Mbeki, the incoming chairman. For SA - the dominant economy that elicited a measure of hostility in the region - perceptions that it was placing its own economic interests ahead of regional interests could undermine support for the political agenda, said Zondi.

- **Angola: Over 30,000 Land-Mine Victims Get Assistance: [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 15 August 2008.**

At least 39,171 people in Angola have benefited from the assistance programme to the land-mine victims of National Inter-Sectoral Commission for De-mining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH), from January 2007 to the first quarter of 2008, ANGOP learnt Friday in Luanda. Some 8,000, out of the above number, have benefited from physical rehabilitation, 6,000 of technical aid, 11,000 economically reintegrated and 14,171 children, with special educative needs. The programme also covers, among others, being familiar with the targeted group, urgent and continued assistance, physical rehabilitation, psychological support and social reintegration, economical reinsertion, management of public and legislative policies, aimed at an integrated rehabilitation of

people affected by those explosive devices. Speaking to ANGOP Thursday, the CNIDAH's director, Madalena Neto pledged that within two-year time the situation of the people victim of landmines in Angola will be different. The programme of assistance to the victims in the country involves the ministries of Health, Transport, Education, Social Welfare, Public Administration, Employment and Social Security, Family and Women Promotion, Public Works and Urbanism. It is estimated there are some 70,000 to 80,000 people victims of landmines in Angola.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: African Union to Mediate Among Leaders:** [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 15 August 2008.

The Somali interim government's top leaders have traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with emerging reports telling Garowe Online that the African Union plans to mediate among them. On Friday, President Abdullahi Yusuf and Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein flew from the capital Mogadishu, while parliament Speaker Sheikh Adan "Madobe" Mohamed flew from the airstrip in the southwestern town of Baidoa, where the country's parliament is based. Inside sources said AU officials who secretly visited Mogadishu this week extended an invitation to the Somali leaders to visit AU headquarters in Addis Ababa. But President Yusuf "refused" to travel to Addis Ababa yesterday, after he disagreed with discussion points during AU mediation efforts, the sources added. The President has staunchly rejected Prime Minister Nur Adde's decision to fire Mogadishu Mayor Mohamed Dheere, calling it a "constitutional" dispute. It is not clear where the AU efforts will lead, but Somalia's transitional government has been plagued by a series of disputes among top leaders since its inception in 2004.

- **Sudan: Ethiopian Forces to Join UN-African Union Force in Darfur:** [UN News Service](#) (New York): 15 August 2008.

Ethiopian forces will shortly join the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID), bringing with them their engineering skills to be used in the areas of water installation and the erection of tents and electric power lines. The advance party of the first Ethiopian Infantry Battalion to join UNAMID - which seeks to quell the deadly fighting and humanitarian suffering that has raged in the Sudanese region since 2003 - is scheduled to arrive in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur state and the headquarters of the mission, over the weekend. UNAMID said the contingent will be deployed in Kulbus and Silea, both located in West Darfur. An estimated 300,000 people have been killed in Darfur, an arid and impoverished region on Sudan's western flank, since 2003, either through direct combat or disease, malnutrition and reduced life expectancy, while another 2.7 million people have been forced to flee from their homes. In a related development, UNAMID's Nyala office has received reports that following talks between Deputy Special Representative Henry Anyidoho and South Darfur Governor Ali Mahmoud, the issue of restricting fuel allocations to the Kalma camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) is being resolved. Oxfam, a non-governmental organization, has "informed us that its fuel allocation was approved as

requested, and they were allocated sufficient fuel to run their water pumps in Kalma for a week," UN spokesperson Farhan Haq told reporters in New York. Other aid agencies have also expressed their satisfaction with the current Government fuel allocations, he said.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Congo-Kinshasa: South Kivu - Monuc Completes the Training of Two More FARDC Integrated Battalions: United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa): 14 August 2008.**

Two more FARDC (DRC Armed Forces) integrated battalions completed their training undertaken by MONUC forces in Luberizi camp, South Kivu province. Alan Doss, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in the DRC and the DRC Defence Minister Chikez Diemu were in attendance at the closing ceremony for the 1,800 soldiers of the FARDC 14th and 15th integrated battalions. The three month training programme, which included courses in military tactics, weapons handling, logistics and professional ethics, was undertaken by Pakistani Blue Helmets. The FARDC battalions also received training in human rights, child protection, the Geneva conventions and MONUC's mandate. In his speech, Mr. Doss stressed that "the implication of MONUC in the training of the FARDC constitutes a major advance of the United Nations in the reform of the DRC security sector." Obviously, this training contributes to the progressive improvement of the professional capacities of the FARDC, with greater cohesion in its units, a marked republican ethos, as well as the example given by its officers. Mr. Doss also remarked on the "profitable collaboration between the chiefs of staff of the MONUC military and of the Congolese Armed forces," before congratulating the FARDC soldiers. DRC Defence Minister Chikez Diemu also welcomed the good collaboration with MONUC in the reform of the security sector. "When in trouble you find out who your best friends are," he said. The Minister also reiterated the importance of the FARDC in the implementation of the Nairobi communiqué, and the role of the army as a "spearhead for development." To date, MONUC has trained twelve FARDC integrated battalions, and it continues to support the efforts of the Congolese government in the creation of a professional republican army, with the goal of training 28 FARDC integrated battalions by September 2009. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1756 authorizes MONUC to collaborate closely with the Congolese government in the reform of the security sector, in order to consolidate the peace process and the economic development of the country.

84. REBEL, MILITANCY AND "WAR ON TERROR"

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Dialogue, Best Way to Tackle Terrorism – Sultan: Vanguard (Lagos): 14 August 2008.**

SULTAN of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar III, has observed that crises and terrorist acts could be minimized if parties to conflicts engaged in dialogue. Speaking while receiving a British member of parliament, Nazir Ahmad who paid him a courtesy

visit recently, Sultan Sa'ad expressed his readiness and willingness to extend a hand of friendship to achieve a peaceful world, adding that the importance of peace in this contemporary world could not be over-emphasised. He commended the British parliamentarian for his visit to Sokoto, which he described as fruitful and aimed at enhancing co-operation between Muslims in Nigeria and those in the United Kingdom. Earlier in his remarks, Nazir Ahmad, called for more efforts in promoting harmonious co-existence and peace between Muslims and Christians even as he prayed for mutual understanding among the followers of the two religions all over the world.

- **Nigeria: JTF Kills 12 Militants: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 16 August 2008.**

For the third week running, the Joint Task Force in Rivers State yesterday recorded another hard blow on militants when at Alakiri, near Okrika, 12 of the hoodlums were killed when they attacked a naval patrol boat. The attack by the militants was said to have taken place at 3.45am when the naval component of the JTF was returning to base at Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt when they ran into an ambush set up by the militants. According to one of the personnel who engaged the hoodlums, they attacked the naval boat from two flanks in an ambush but were beaten back and heavy casualty inflicted on them. The two boats at the end of the encounter were sunk and all the 12 occupants of the flying boats were killed in the attack where two naval personnel were wounded but none fatally. When contacted, the Naval spokesman in the state, Lt. Olabisi Way said their men were ambushed and attacked but beat back the hoodlums with superior weapons and training and inflicted the casualties on them. "Twelve militants in two speed boats this afternoon (yesterday) around 3.45pm, engaged naval component of Joint Task Force Operation Flush III in a gun battle that left the 12 militants dead and two naval personnel wounded." The naval patrol team was returning to naval base, Port Harcourt when it ran into the ambush of militants at Alakiri near Port Harcourt. The militants opened fire immediately on the naval personnel. In self-defence the naval team retaliated. This led to the killing of the militants and destruction of the militants speed boats. "Recovered from the dead militants are two General Purpose Machine Guns, three AK47 rifles and 388 rounds of live ammunition. The Nigerian Navy is using this opportunity to appeal to other militants to lay down their arms as issues affecting the Niger Delta are being addressed by the federal and State governments," Way said. Within the last three weeks, no fewer than 24 militants have been killed in different clashes with the navy. Only last weekend, over 15 bodies of militants floated at Bonny and were recovered after an encounter with the navy. Also last week, four militants were killed and four AK47 rifles, a GPMG and grenade recovered from them. There seem to be a reversal of hostilities as the navy and JTF are having the upper hand in encounters with the hoodlums. Just this week, leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante Movement, Mr. Tom Ateke claimed to have destroyed a pipeline at Alakiri linking the Port Harcourt refinery. However, natives said the explosion was due to rust which had been reported to relevant authorities before the blast.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Indict the Criminals, Not the Religion: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): EDITORIAL: 2 August 2008.**

In any society, there exist criminal elements who pose a grave danger to the same society that gave birth to and nurtured them. And in every society, since the beginning of time, there has always been a mechanism to isolate and punish the criminals as individuals out of the wisdom that there is not such a thing as collective guilt and that no man should be ever punished for the crimes of his brother. However, things often go terribly wrong when criminal elements commit crimes in the name of their religion because to the undiscerning members of the larger society, this subterfuge might not be that obvious. The outcome is often suspicion among compatriots, misguided harassment and arbitrary arrests by government law enforcement agencies. This is where the Muslim community in Kenya finds itself. It is our submission here that Islam is not synonymous with terrorism. Islam is a religion like any other. Islam clearly explicitly outlaws terrorism and destruction of lives and property. Criminal elements purporting to kill and maim innocent people in the name of Islam must be isolated and made to face the law as individuals. Targeting and punishing Muslims because of their religion and thereby violating their human rights cannot be condoned, any more than singling out any other religion for the crimes of a few of its adherents. In the same vein, it is timely to recall that last year President Kibaki formed a committee to look into the grievances of Muslims. He has an obligation to Muslims to make the findings public pending implementation. Similarly, Prime Minister Raila Odinga made a slew of promises to Muslims. He, too, must make good those promises.

- **Kenya: Terror Suspects - Long Detention in Foreign Land a Violation of Our Rights: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 16 August 2008.**

Nine Kenyans arrested in January last year while fleeing from Somalia after the fall of the Islamic Courts Union spoke out for the first time on Friday from their detention camp in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and pleaded to be brought back home. It also emerged that only nine Kenyans and not 17 were being held in Ethiopia where they were taken after their arrest. Speaking to Sunday Nation on phone, they said they were willing to face the law if the government felt they had committed a crime or were members of the Al Qaeda terror network instead of languishing in the secret cells. The Kenyans said their cells were in deplorable conditions and guarded by Ethiopian policemen who do not understand English but who constantly beat them up.

Little light

Out of the more than 100 suspected Al Qaeda members alleged to have been part of the ICU, ousted by Ethiopian military-led forces in December 2006, only the Kenyans remained in detention, they said. Six of them live in a 12-by-12 cell while the other three are in an eight-by-six cubicle at Jarmeda's Old Stadium on Haille sellasie Avenue. They are Said Khamis Mohammed, Kassim Mwarusi, Ali Musa Mwarusi, Swaleh Ali Tunza, Hassan Shaaban Mwazume, Bashir Chirag Hussein, Abdalla Khalfan Tondwe, Abdi Mohammed Abdullahi and Salim Awadh Salim. "The secret cells are protected by 15-

metre high walls and a small window that sneaks in little light, if any," the cellmates said. The stadium is opposite a military camp and police flats. They said they only get out for 10 minutes to have either lunch, breakfast or dinner. Due to the cold weather that is characteristic of Addis Ababa, water seeps through the floor of their cells, wetting their mattresses, the detainees said.

Secret house

They wondered why they were still being held, one year and eight months since they were arrested while trying to cross into Kenya through Kiunga in Lamu. "Immediately after our arrest we were transferred to Nairobi where we were interrogated for about a month and later secretly flown to underground cells in Baidoa, Somalia," they said. They were then airlifted to Ethiopia where they have spent the rest of the time, save for occasional transfers from the cells to Bole in a secret house. Two of them have developed health complications because of beatings by the guards, they told Sunday Nation. One of them, Mr Hussein, 50, is suffering from back pains and a broken leg after he was roughed up by 10 policemen, they said. Mr Hassan Mwazume said he had a broken elbow, an injury he first sustained in a road accident during his transfer to Mombasa from Kiunga by anti-terrorism police. He says his health was deteriorating going by the symptoms he has been grappling with lately. "I feel very cold on my left side ribs," he said. They said they have been separately interrogated by agents from American Federal Bureau of Investigations and Criminal Investigation Agency; Britain's Scotland Yard and Israel's Mossad over their suspected links to Al Qaeda. "They interviewed us in turns and said they did not find anything on us and recommended that we be released. However the Kenya Government has not acted," claimed Mr Awadh. Last week a team of Kenyan Criminal Investigations Department and anti-terrorism police officers visited, interviewed them and took pictures. "Three days before the visit we were treated well and for the first time we sun-bathed. However after they left, the same cruel treatment resumed," they said. Mr Awadh said the detainees were Kenyans and they expected to be treated according to Kenyan laws. "We are in a country that we do not belong to, we have been here without any due process of the law," he said.

Documents

Mr Hassan Mwazume said if they are suspected of having committed any crimes then they should be charged in Kenya. They had only gone to Somalia to work and had nothing to do with terrorism. They also had documents to prove they were Kenyans. "Some of us were seeking jobs while others were working. We have no links to terrorism but if our government feels that we are linked to terrorism, we are ready to be charged in a court of law than living in these squalid conditions," said Mr Khamis. Mr Hussein said they deserved to be in Kenya where they have families. "For how long will this mistreatment go on? We seek the Government's intervention," he said. Foreign Affairs Minister Moses Wetangula recently said the Government was in the process of bringing back the suspects. Nominated MP Sheikh Mohammed Dor, also the secretary general of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya, said Muslim leaders are pushing the government to bring back the individuals. "I have been promised that the

Government was working hard to bring them back home. I hope this will happen soon," he said.

- **Kenya: Use Al Qaeda's Frozen Assets to Pay Blast Victims, US Court Urged: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 6 August 2008.**

A legal battle over Sh462 million thought to be al Qaeda money has started in the US with lawyers saying the money should be used to compensate the forgotten Kenyan victims of the American embassy bombing in Nairobi. The money, which is about \$7 million, is part of al Qaeda's frozen assets. A preliminary hearing on how to calculate the damages could take place later this year, said Mr Philip Musolino, a Washington attorney representing hundreds of the 6,000 Kenyans injured, blinded or bereaved by the Nairobi blast 10 years ago. "I'm still hopeful," Mr Musolino said last week. "We're not giving up." Thursday August 7, 2008 is the 10th anniversary of the near simultaneous embassy bombings in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. In Nairobi 257 people were killed and another 6,000 injured. In Kenya, a fresh hunt for terrorism mastermind Fazul Abdullah has been intensified after he evaded arrest last weekend. Police have asked the public to contact them on telephone number 0714 746144 if they have information on the wanted al Qaeda mastermind. Fazul is accused of plotting the Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam bombings. He is also blamed for the bomb attack on Paradise Hotel in Kikambala, Kilifi, on November 22, 2002, and the attempted downing of an Israeli jetliner as it took off from Mombasa the same day. At the weekend, police raided a house in Malindi on suspicion that Fazul was hiding there but they found he had just fled. A couple and their son have been charged with assisting Fazul to escape arrest. In the past, attempts to push for compensation through the courts and other arms of the US government have all ended in failure. Efforts in the US Congress to gain redress for Kenyans through the legal process have also been unsuccessful. Hopes that Senator Barack Obama, an American with Kenyan roots might intervene on behalf of the Kenyan victims have not been fulfilled so far. Mr Obama is the Democratic candidate in the US presidential elections to be held in November. "I don't believe Senator Obama has had time yet to look at this particular matter, which is surprising," Mr Musolino told the Nation. But another US senator did raise the compensation issue in a speech commemorating the 10th anniversary of the 1998 US embassy attack. Democrat Russ Feingold, the chairman of the Senate's African Affairs sub-Committee, told his colleagues last week that "while some of those responsible have been brought to justice, there is still work to be done to ensure that the remaining suspects are held to account for their involvement in these heinous acts and that victims receive fair and just compensation." Judges who have ruled on the case in the past decade have not been sympathetic to arguments that the US should be held liable for damages due to alleged negligence. Mr Musolino and other US attorneys representing Kenyan clients had maintained that American officials knew prior to the 1998 attack that an al Qaeda cell was operating in Nairobi yet did nothing to bolster security at the embassy, which should have been seen as a likely target of a terrorist attack. However, the suffering and losses sustained by Kenyans are attributable to al Qaeda, not to US, which was itself victimised by the attack. American officials have also pointed out that the US has provided Sh2.7 billion (\$42 million) worth of assistance to Kenyans and Tanzanians affected by the twin bombings. In regard to the current attempt to gain access to al

Qaeda's frozen assets, Mr Musolino said he would try to arrange testimonies by Kenyans through a video link to the federal court in Washington that is considering the case. "Difficult questions" must also be resolved on whether to apply American or Kenyan law in calculating potential compensation, Mr Musolino said. "The attack took place in Kenya but on what is thought of as American territory," he said. "Kenya's statutes pertaining to wrongful death "are not quite as broad as American law," the lawyer said. A 2006 "Terrorist Assets Report" by the US Treasury Department cites \$7.7 million in "blocked funds" linked to al Qaeda. "That's the money we're looking at for getting back to our clients," Mr Musolino told the Nation. Little is publicly known about the sources of the funds frozen by the US government. The information cannot be accessed under the US Freedom of Information Act or by lawsuits or other stories and special reports on the August 7th blast, go to the InDepth page.

- **Somalia: 56 Killed, 80 Wounded in Violence: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 16 August 2008.**

More than 50 people were killed in Somalia's capital Mogadishu since Thursday in some of the worst violence in weeks, Radio Garowe reported. Fighting sparked Thursday afternoon along a key road that connects Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport and the Villa Somalia presidential palace after suspected insurgents attacked government security forces. The road was closed as President Abdullahi Yusuf and Prime Minister Nur "Adde" Hassan Hussein traveled to the airport on their way to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the African Union plans to mediate between the two leaders. One Ethiopian soldier was killed in the initial blast. Four civilians were killed when the Ethiopian soldiers opened gunfire afterwards, according to witnesses. In a separate attack, two Ethiopian soldiers and three civilians were killed when a hidden landmine exploded, destroying an army vehicle and a civilian car near Arbiska area. Ethiopian troops traveling in the southern outskirts of Mogadishu came under attack Friday afternoon, when at least three explosions targeted the army convoy. The soldiers opened gunfire indiscriminately on two buses full of civilians, killing at least 40 people. Witnesses confirmed to Radio Garowe that "many women and children" were among the dead. "We were busy burying the dead this morning [Saturday]," said a man who did not want to be named. Medical sources at hospitals in Afgoye and Daynile said 30 and 50 wounded people were admitted since Thursday to the two hospitals, respectively. Hundreds of thousands of civilians fled Mogadishu violence and reside in meager conditions along the road that connects the capital to the agricultural town of Afgoye, 30km to the south. Somalia's interim government, backed by Ethiopian troops, is violently opposed by Islamist rebels who have vowed to wage a bloody insurgency until foreign troops are expelled from Somali soil.

85. NORTH AFRICA

- **Women Organize And Forge Alliances: [Africa Renewal](#) (United Nations): 12 August 2008.**

In recent years women in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia have secured more rights, greater access to education and a modest increase in their political representation. But

entrenching those achievements will require joint advocacy by women's organizations, governments and religious groups, argues Leila Rhiwi of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). "To guarantee and consolidate the gains of the last few years we must follow through with the application of the reforms," she told Africa Renewal. "If you do not have advocacy, then no change happens because institutions are always reluctant to change." The need for concerted effort is even more acute in the face of growing opposition by conservative groups and clerics who claim that such initiatives violate Islamic law or are contrary to the Koran. Such opposition in North Africa, Ms. Rhiwi says, reflects the wider spread of conservative trends throughout the Muslim world. "Ideas coming through the media and especially satellite television are affecting us," she explains. "In Morocco, most of the people discussing women's rights in the media have conservative interpretations of the law. There is an absence of progressive voices."

Resistance and backlash

Ms. Valentine Moghadam, a gender specialist at the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), observes that the "political discourse in Egypt is dominated by the conservative polemics of the Islamists." Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, a researcher on the region, has reported that Morocco's adoption of a new family law in 2003-04 "won the king much credit among liberals and women." Louisa Dris-Ait-Hamadouche, another researcher, has noted that as a result of contradictory conservative and liberal interpretations of shari'a law, debate over the role of women in North Africa "moves back and forth between secular values and religious (and traditional) principles."

Support from clerics

Women's groups have learned to adapt to differing situations, explains Ms. Rhiwi. "They are very strong, they know the culture. They know the religious context in which they live and can use either universal human rights arguments or religious arguments for their cause." Most often, Ms. Rhiwi adds, "to succeed we must find clerics with progressive interpretations of the Koran to support us." Such support does exist. When the Egyptian government in 2004 appointed a female judge to the Supreme Court, conservative groups attacked the move as a violation of Islamic law. When the government named 30 more women judges three years later, there were further denunciations. That reaction prompted the government to ask for a ruling on the legitimacy of the nominations from Al Azhar University, the Muslim world's oldest seat of religious learning and the highest authority on Islamic law in Egypt. The mufti of Al Azhar ruled that the appointments did not violate Islamic law. The mufti had previously judged that Islam allowed equal opportunities for men and women to end unhappy marriages, a ruling that helped efforts by the government and women's groups to change Egypt's marriage and divorce laws. Women's organizations in Morocco have also sought to work closely with clerics, Ms. Rhiwi reports. "We needed society to understand that the conservative clerics were not the sole interpreters of Islam." Through such partnerships, she adds, women's organizations were able to obtain Islamic rulings that supported legal changes, such as increasing the age at which women may legally marry, granting women and men equal

rights in marriage and divorce and securing women's custodial rights to their children. Ms. Rhiwi believes that continued advocacy by women's groups is vital. "We realized this is crucial after noticing that most resistance to the implementation of new laws came from the very men and women charged with putting a new system in place," she says. "We have to do a lot of training of judges and people working in the legal system, to mobilize people and educate them." Nevertheless, Ms. Rhiwi is confident that the advances made by women in North Africa are here to stay. "We do recognize that there are conservative voices out there. But we know there are also progressive voices. I don't think we can regress now. I think we are at a good place in the process. But the equilibrium is very fragile."

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- **Egypt: Academic Sentenced to Two Years in Prison Over Articles Published Abroad, Threatened With Loss of Citizenship: [Arabic Network for Human Rights Information](#) (Cairo): PRESS RELEASE: 12 August 2008.**

On 2 August 2008, the Al Khalifa Misdemeanors' Court sentenced Dr. Saad El Din Ibrahim in absentia to two years in prison. The case stems from a claim filed by one of the People's Council members, who is also a member of the ruling party, and by the undersecretary of the Lawyers Union-Giza against Dr. Ibrahim, the director of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Developmental Studies and a professor of sociology at the American University in Cairo. The claim alleged that he published articles with false information about Egypt abroad, damaging national security and defaming the image of Egypt. The claim also demanded his punishment in accordance with Articles 77 and 80 of the Egyptian Penal Code. Previously, ruling party members had raised several other cases against Dr. Ibrahim, thereby sending a message to political dissidents that dissent will be met with charges of "defaming the reputation of Egypt." Although this verdict in reality is a political ruling to repress the Egyptian opposition, it is also unlawful in more than one way. One of those unlawful aspects is that such a claim cannot be raised by incompetent and disinterested parties, while the person who raised the claim against Dr. Ibrahim is a disinterested party and not an expert in the issue. Following the sentencing, a new legal action was filed to withdraw Egyptian nationality from Dr. Ibrahim, alleging that he has damaged the public interest and reputation of Egypt. The claimant overlooked Article 16 of Law no. 26 - year 1975 regarding Egyptian nationality, which gives a list of reasons justifying the stripping of Egyptian nationality. The reason given by the claimant - damaging the public interest and reputation of Egypt - is not among those reasons listed in the article. ANHRI's Legal Aid Unit for Freedom of Expression rejects this verdict, which was entirely based on a report issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that did not verify the validity of the accusation. The Legal Aid Unit also condemns the repression of all those who challenge the regime's policies in Egypt and denounces politically-motivated legal actions, which are like a sword hanging over the head of

freedom of opinion and expression and a tool of repression the regime uses to deter dissidents.

- **Morocco: Student Activist Arrested for Criticising Authorities:**
Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (Cairo): PRESS
RELEASE: 12 August 2008.

ANHRI calls on the Moroccan authorities to release Jadda Boubkar, a 22-year-old student and prisoner of opinion, who was arrested while leaving the university in Taza City on 21 July 2008 because of his student activity, his support for the boycott of complementary legislative elections and his criticism of educational policies and police repression against students. The imprisoned student was interrogated on 26 July and again on 6 August. He was questioned about his membership in the Democratic Route (La Voie Democratique) and his student activism. In his answers, he stated that his right to belong to the Democratic Route and his student activism are part of his right to hold opinions and communicate them. The investigating judge decided to postpone proceedings until 13 August. This delay will keep Boubkar in detention and is believed to be punishment for his criticism of the faculty administration's cooperation with political police, and especially the administration's provision to the police of students' personal information, including their political orientation. "In democratic countries, a person may face imprisonment for committing a crime and breaking the law, but in Morocco a person may be imprisoned for having opinions and expressing them peacefully, which is an attribute of despotic regimes," said Gamal Eid, executive director of ANHRI. ANHRI demands that the Moroccan government release Jadda Boubkar immediately, put an end to police repression and guarantee the right to peaceful protest and free expression.

- **Egypt: Case of Missing Editor Still Unresolved After Five Years:**
Committee to Protect Journalists (New York): PRESS RELEASE: 14
August 2008.

The Committee to Protect Journalists is dismayed by the failure of the Egyptian authorities to shed light on the disappearance of a prominent journalist, five years ago today, in one of the most secure districts in Cairo. Reda Helal, a senior editor at Egypt's leading state-owned daily "Al-Ahram," mysteriously vanished on August 11, 2003, on his way home from work in a heavily guarded area in the center of the Egyptian capital. Helal, who was then 45, lived in an area in downtown Cairo with important state buildings and diplomatic missions, including the Egyptian parliament and both the British and U.S. embassies. To date, the Egyptian government has not offered any information it may have regarding this chilling disappearance. CPJ has repeatedly requested to meet with officials from the Interior and Information ministries and also with "Al-Ahram"'s chief editor, Osama Saraya. Those requests, placed respectively through the Egyptian Embassy in Washington and Egypt State Information Service in Cairo, have all been ignored. "We are outraged by this long and cruel silence about the disappearance of our colleague Reda Helal," said CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon. "We call on the Egyptian government to finally disclose the findings of its investigation into this crime. We find it hard to believe that, after five years, the country's ubiquitous security branches

have no significant information about our colleague's fate." Helal's disappearance has for years also spurred a strange silence in the usually vocal Egyptian media, including at his own newspaper, where he had been a leading writer. Egyptian journalists told CPJ in 2007 that this perplexing silence might be explained by his "unpopular pro-American views, his support of relations with Israel, and by a degree of fear." CPJ's report on the disappearance also found that Helal was "a career pro-government journalist." The failure of the Egyptian authorities to shed light on Helal's disappearance, coupled with the unceasing police and judicial harassment of many critical journalists over the past few years, has prompted self-censorship and led to the deterioration of press freedom in Egypt. CPJ named Egypt one of the top 10 backsliders in press freedom in the world last year.

- **Egypt: Female Film Director Faces Possible Flogging At Behest of Lawyer Affiliated With National Democratic Party: [Arabic Network for Human Rights Information](#) (Cairo): PRESS RELEASE: 13 August 2008.**

One of the lawyers affiliated with the Egyptian National Democratic Party (NDP) who is a specialist in "Hesba" cases (which involve alleged insults to God, which are deemed harmful to Islamic society) against authors and artists has demanded the flogging of an Egyptian female movie director. He sent an official warning to the Sheikh of Azhar demanding the execution of his request, said ANHRI on 13 August 2008. The Hesba lawyer gave the Sheikh of Azhar eight days to execute the flogging of the prominent Egyptian female movie director, Enas El-Dighaidy, whom he said should receive eighty lashes because of a movie she directed, called "Diaries of a Teenager Girl", which he claims defames Egypt. It is worth mentioning that this same Hesba lawyer demanded, in one of his previous court cases, the punishment of an Egyptian actress because she refrained from wearing a veil. He was also one of the lawyers who demanded that Ibrahim Eissa, chief editor of "Al-Dustour" newspaper, be put on trial in the case known as "the President's Health case". ANHRI notes that Hesba has become a nightmare for authors and artists. Such Hesba cases could not have increased without the government's blessing and its cooperation with the Hesba lawyers. Such an attitude by the government allows for a heavy pressure to be exerted on brave journalists and bloggers, who are still paying a high price for allowing us to enjoy the benefits of a small margin of freedom of expression.

The Freedom of Expression Legal Aid Unit of ANHRI is strongly supporting El-Dighaidy and all Egyptian artists and creators and calls on all active entities and civil society organisations to stand against in both the religious and political spheres to the phenomenon of Hesba, whether these cases are filed by fame-seekers or instigated by the Egyptian government. ANHRI also calls on all serious media institutions to ignore those Hesba lawyers and not to publish their names in order to avoid making false stars out of them and to minimise their chances of exercising more influence on the NDP, as well as to assure the right of every journalist or author to express him or herself, regardless of whether one agrees or not with their views.

- **Mali: "The Algerian Police Took... All Our Documents And Then Beat Us. They Do That to Everyone": UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 4 August 2008.**

Abdoulaye (not his real name), 27, tried to illegally migrate from Mali to Spain a few months ago, but he was intercepted by the Spanish authorities in northern Morocco and sent home. Since then he has been living in Gao, the last big town in Mali before the Sahara crossing, trying to scrape together enough money to try again.

"I left Gao for Spain. Crossing the desert took several weeks and was a terrible experience, but it's worse when you get to Algeria. The Algerian police took our passports, all our documents, and then beat us and took us to the police station. They do that to everyone who arrives.

"From Algeria I had to get to Morocco, and that journey was full of problems too. It takes twelve days from the Mali-Algerian border to the Morocco border - twelve days of desert without much to eat or drink."Finally I got to Spain by crossing the sea, but I only got to spend three weeks there because they sent me home. Some 280 migrants were expelled with me, but I'm going back. I'm trying again. I just need to find enough money."There are people-smugglers or "cozers" here and in Bamako who are in touch with the people in Spain. There are literally hundreds of them in Gao and Bamako and hundreds of people arrive in Gao every week trying to get to the border. Mali is a crossroads for people from Benin, Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina Faso and all over West Africa.If you can get to Gao a cozer will take you as far as Inhalit on the Algerian border, which costs about US\$59. Then you can get someone else to take you to the Moroccan border, which costs about US\$468."It's expensive I know, but we have no choice. If you want the opportunities available in Europe and Spain then you are obliged to pay that kind of money."There is nothing to do in Africa and we are suffering. Young men get married and have kids but they cannot provide for them. There are no jobs. Even after my disappointing experience of travelling to Spain I am happy to try again because there is nothing here. I'm not discouraged."

86. NEWS COMMENTARIES

NORTH AFRICA

- **North Africa: Mediterranean Union Or Neutered Talking Shop? :Fahamu (Oxford): ANALYSIS: 7 August 2008.**

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi has repeated his rejection of the 'Union for the Mediterranean', launched last month in Paris on the initiative of French President Nicolas Sarkozy.Speaking on a visit to Tunis, Gaddafi, - the only leader to stay away of the 44 invited - claimed the project would separate North Saharan countries from the rest of Africa. "I do not agree to cutting up Africa for hypothetical prospects with Europe" he added, and went on to characterise the Union as a violation of AU resolutions, a threat to Arab unity, and a return to colonialism.Ironically however, his fears of 'division' had

already been mirrored by many of France's EU partners. As a result the original ambitious French plan for a 'Mediterranean Union' has been watered down to the point where it is unlikely to be more than a talking shop, equally incapable of fulfilling either Sarkozy's dreams or Gaddafi's fears. The French president first launched his plan in his 2007 election victory speech, proposing a union limited to countries bordering the sea, and invoking grand ambitions "to end all hatreds, to make way for a great dream of peace and a great dream of civilisation." But almost at once other European nations lined up to voice their various objections to the idea. In particular German Chancellor Angela Merkel objected to a scheme that would call on EU support and funding while locking out Germany, the EU's biggest funder. Not surprisingly, other Northern EU member states joined the objectors. So did the newer EU member states, fearful that available assistance funding would be redirected southwards. Spain feared that the proposed new union would divert attention from the already-existing Barcelona process in which it saw itself as crucial, and which had been set up in 1995 with a very similar remit. And Turkey saw the initiative as an attempt to fob it off with an alternative arrangement to full EU membership. As a result, when the European Council met in May it effectively diluted the French plan and brought it within the existing EU structures. Renamed 'Barcelona Process - Union for the Mediterranean', it would now include all the 27 EU member states as well as Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Turkey, Israel, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Monaco and Mauritania. Instead of an ambitious new and free-standing structure, it was clearly labelled as a relaunch of the existing Barcelona initiative. Originally floated in the days of optimism about the Oslo 'peace process', the initiative was generally conceded to have lost impetus along with Oslo, proving unable, for example, to agree on a joint definition of 'terrorism'. Nonetheless as talking shops go, 'Barcelona' is well established and substantial by comparison with its new adopted offspring. It has its own structures and officials, a budget to which the EU has contributed €16bn since 1995, and a €2bn annual line of credit from the European Investment Bank. The new structure by contrast has no source of funding yet identified - a problem already highlighted by Algeria's President Bouteflika, who was one of a number of Arab leaders in any case hesitant about any involvement in the plan because of the fear that it would imply normalisation of relations with Israel. "Difficulties will begin with funding," he told APS, the official Algerian news agency. He was "not clear" what resources would be available to fund the new projects because the European Union does not plan any "important financial commitment" for several years. "This attitude raises questions about whether the EU really wants to contribute to bringing southern Mediterranean countries up to speed," he said. A French diplomat was quoted by Der Spiegel as dismissing these fears. 'It's not a problem - the money is there when you go looking for it'. The EU, the World Bank and the Gulf States were airily suggested as possible sources of funding. Nor are the structures of the new 'Union' any clearer than its finances. There will be a 'joint permanent committee' based in Brussels to assist in preparing meetings of senior officials, and a 'Joint Secretariat' - whose political mandate, as well as the nationality of its Director, is still to be determined. So is its location, variously reported to be Malta, Morocco or Tunisia. The leaders did unanimously adopt a declaration deciding to work on six "concrete projects." These include:

- cleaning up Mediterranean pollution;
- development of maritime and land highways;
- setting up a joint civil protection programme on prevention and response to disasters.

The Secretariat will also aim to "explore the feasibility, development and creation of a Mediterranean Solar Plan," looking into solar power as an alternative source of energy.

A Euro-Mediterranean University, whose seat will be somewhere in Slovenia, hopes to "contribute to the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean Higher Education, Science and Research area." And a 'Mediterranean Business Development Initiative' will support small and medium-sized enterprises. All of which worthy initiatives, assuming that funding for them is to be found, could easily be organised through existing structures. And the most contentious issue - immigration - was not mentioned at all. But what of the diplomatic breakthroughs in the Middle East which were also trumpeted at the launch by the French spin machine? Israeli Premier Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas declared that they had "never been closer to agreement." And at the end of the conference President Sarkozy announced that in an 'historic' decision, Syria and Lebanon had agreed to establish diplomatic relations. The scepticism which greeted both 'achievements' at the time has only been confirmed since. The always feeble 'peace process' must now surely be on the verge of expiring, as Olmert has fallen in a corruption scandal with Netanyahu his most likely successor. And Syria's President Assad's own words as quoted at the time by French news agency AFP were significantly more cautious. "Our position is that there is no problem with the opening of embassies between Syria and Lebanon ... If Lebanon is willing to exchange embassies, we have no objections to doing it" But the two countries must "define the steps to take to arrive at this stage" before mutual recognition, he stressed.

None of this is to say that the initial scepticism of most North African leaders was not well founded. But grand plans for imaginative and even much-needed united continent-wide initiatives are often ship-wrecked by internal national rivalries and suspicions - as Africa itself well knows.

Stephen Marks is the co-ordinator of the Fahamu China in Africa project.

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: The Death of Illegal Immigrants: [Leadership](#) (Abuja):**
OPINION: 15 August 2008: [G.N. Chapp-Jumbo](#)

About 500,000 illegal migrants enter the EU each year. Most cross land or sea borders illegally. This implies that the inflow is gargantuan. A greater percentage of the migrants are from sub-Saharan Africa whose aim is to better their lives in Europe.

Net immigration continues as long as there is a wide gap in income per head between sending and receiving countries. Because the receiving countries of Europe have a higher income per head, immigrants from sub-Saharan countries are irresistibly lured to Europe. The EU countries of Spain, Italy and France all have coasts temptingly nearer poorer countries on the African continent. These countries have been battling to stamp out the influx of African migrants to no avail. America, with its robust immigration control measures, has been unable to stem the inflow of Mexican immigrants to the US. There is no border crossing in the world that has more sophisticated detection equipments than the American-Mexico border patrol at EL Paso. The border patrol team with the equipment at its disposal reckons that it catches six or seven out of every ten illegal migrants crossing.

The three European countries have pooled their resources together to fight the new wave of migration from the African continent. A flotilla of naval ships and coast guard vessels have been left on the prowl in the Mediterranean sea to track down would-be migrants. Squadrons of spotter aircrafts have equally been provided for aerial patrol and surveillance of the Mediterranean sky line, so that any boat ferrying illegal immigrants could be spotted and the information relayed to the naval ships for possible interception. High rise observation posts have equally been built at designated coastal points where watchmen with high powered binoculars will be on the look out for infiltrators. With the traditional horrendous and perilous Morocco-Spain migration corridor being blocked by Spain in the aftermath of the frontal attack on the perimeter fences at Spain's maritime outpost at Ceuta and Melilla, sub-Saharan African migrants have been forced to look for other points. Of recent, human smugglers discovered the port city of Nouclhibou in Mauritania and the coastal area of Western Sahara as departure points for journeys to the Canary Islands. It is a pity that despite all the measures put in place by the three European countries to stem the tide of illegal migration into Europe, sub-Saharan African immigrants still leave the African continent in their droves on the perilous and hazardous trip to Europe. In June last year, two Nigerian stowaways were apprehended on board a merchant vessel by South African custom officials at the port of Durban. They had boarded the vessel at the Ivorian port city of Abidjan, where they hid in the anchor compartment of the ship for the 1,400 nautical miles journey. The two stowaways were almost freezing to death when they were apprehended. Cases of dug-out boats ferrying African immigrants capsizing in the Mediterranean sea off the Canary Islands are regular occurrences these days. It is unfortunate that would-be immigrants have not learnt from these experiences. Our youths should endeavour to stay-put and think of how to move the continent forward instead of risking their lives on the hazardous trans-Atlantic trip to Europe. In September, 2007, a handful of African illegal immigrants on board an open dug out boat that was ten nautical miles off the Canary Islands coast in desperation, fired a molotov-cocktail at a Spanish coast guard patrol boat that was about to intercept them. This goes to show that the migrants have developed thick skin and have become hardened. The one million dollar question is: how do we check these loose cannons on the prowl?

The recent drowning of some Nigerian illegal migrants off the coast of the Canary Islands is a sad reminder of the desperation of many Nigerians to leave the country through the back door. Those that drowned on the ill-fated trip include pregnant women, men and

children. The dug-out boat ferrying them to the Canary Islands ran into stormy and turbulent waves and capsized. The boat was said to be carrying 100 Nigerian migrants when it was overturned by the turbulent waves of the ocean. At the last count, twenty-three migrants were rescued by Spanish coast guards, while the search for the bodies of the dead victims has been intensified. The boat that ferried the migrants on the ill-fated trip was rickety and with no navigational aid. It was equally not having life saving devices. These Nigerians paid outrageous fees to human smugglers who promised them safe passage into Europe. It is now evident that Nigerians have joined the bandwagon of Africans eager to reach Europe through the Canary Islands. These desperate Nigerians who met their Waterloo had been told all manner of lies about how stress-free it is to enter Europe. They had been told of how the streets of Europe are paved with gold and how they will amass wealth within a short spell. Stories of those who went through the same tortuous route to Europe and came back to the country worse off abound. It is a pity that they failed to learn from the mistakes of those returnees. There are other better and legal avenues of travelling overseas on greener pasture. Rather than going through this perilous and hazardous route, they should remain within the confines of the country and think on how to contribute to national development. Nigerians should be made to understand that all the good things of life being painted of foreign lands on foreign TV channels is only make-believe and not as rosy as they are made to look. Nigerians should not swallow those TV advertorials lock, stock and barrel.

Ministers of foreign affairs and the interior from African and European countries rose from their two-day summit in Rabat-Morocco in August 2006, with a resolve to give more aid to sub-Saharan Africa. The aid will come in form of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) aimed at helping to develop the poorer countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The ministers recognised that "illegal migratory flows" cannot be curbed through immigration control measures only, but also through concerted action on the root causes of migration in particular through the implementation of development projects in Africa. It is believed that more aid being given to African countries will create employment opportunities for the teeming unemployed youths. The high point of the Rabat summit included joint monitoring of sea and border routes. Countries will also be required to jointly target human trafficking networks through coordinated police and judicial efforts. Repatriation of illegal immigrants will now be done according to the rules and the process will be made easier and the immigrants' dignity and rights will be preserved. The then French President, Jacques Chirac remarked that: "so long as Africa has teeming millions of young men and women in their prime who are desirous to embark on the hazardous and perilous journeys in the hope of a better life, we will not resolve this long standing problem."

To stem the growing tide of illegal migration to Europe, the federal government should make the local economic environment conducive, favourable and attractive for the youths to embark on private entrepreneurship. In doing this, the enabling environment for the youths to stay behind and do business will be in place. The federal government can through the National Orientation Agency, re-orientate Nigerians that it will do them a world of good if they stay back and contribute their quota to national development, instead of risking their lives on the hazardous and perilous journeys to Europe.

Chapp-Jumbo G.N (MFR), assistant-comptroller of immigration, writes from Abuja

- **Nigeria: Our Oil...No Benefit: Leadership (Abuja):** OPINION
7 August 2008. Sa'adatu Albashir

In 1958, the once docile state of Nigeria, known for its groundnut pyramid in the North and Palm oil in the South, joined the ranks of oil producers after the discovery of the 'gem' in Oloibiri in the Niger Delta, in 1956, of course, after half a century of exploration.

At the end of the Biafran war in 1970, which coincided with the rise in the world oil price, Nigeria reaped instant riches from its oil production. Although production figures dropped in the eighties due to economic slump, 2004 saw a total rejuvenation of oil production to a record level of 2.5 million barrels per day. According to Oil and Gas Journal Nigeria had 36.2 billion barrels of proven oil reserves as of January 2007. The federal government plans to expand its proven reserves to 40 billion barrels by 2010. Since December 2005, Nigeria has experienced increased pipeline vandalism, kidnappings, and militant takeover of oil facilities in the Niger Delta. Militant attacks on oil infrastructure have also crippled Nigeria's domestic refining capabilities. In February 2006, militant attacks in the western delta region forced the Warri (125,000 bbl/d) and Kaduna (110,000 bbl/d) refineries to shutdown due to a lack of feedstock's. In December 2006, operators shutdown Nigeria's two Port Harcourt refineries for two months due to technical problems.

In all these developments, Nigerians still ask the question, who benefits in these circumstances, is the sacrifice warranted to achieve the desired result, or is it an effort to a lost course? One can only wonder the hardship that will emanate if these actions continue to prevail without finding a lasting solution to the problem, but in as much as the emancipation has reached this crescendo, what can the government do to revert to the status quo before the movement began moving. Nigerians will suffer and will continue to suffer, with no hope of respite, because the situation is no longer about fighting for rights or lefts

Politicians have surely found an avenue to use in achieving their political gangstarism. And of course, the multinational companies involved in oil persistently reject policies concerning natural resource exploration. These companies continue to demand for relaxed regulatory policies which usually prove detrimental to our social and environmental conditions. Then comes the government, which scales these companies, with little or no regard to the health of the citizens, of course, since oil is now somewhat our only source of revenue, and the country does not have the means and the will power to venture into oil exploration; it would have no choice but to give in to the demand. It will be farfetched to reiterate the importance of oil revenue to the continuous existence of the Nigerian government and its cohort, given that the country derives about 90% of its revenue earnings, but now, the multinational oil companies are claiming that technologies needed to mitigate gas flaring is presently beyond their reach, which also bids the question, what has happened to the technology, which has been used in the past decade?

With more questions, only brings more questions. It is sad that as the rest of the world is planning vacations in the moon, Nigeria is still battling to fetch water in wells, in capital cities of the biggest oil producer in Africa and the 11th in the World. The black Gold that was to liberate us is surely going to be our down fall. The government is complaining of its inability to revamp the countries refineries, the militants are crying oppression, others in parts of the nation are crying marginalization and the multinational companies are complaining of unavailability of relevant technology. OK...more questions..who does the oil money goes to, since everyone is claiming and counter claiming that they do not benefit from it. As time flies and our fathers die, and our daughters gives birth, it may be safe to say that our children's children will have no legacy to work with, we will have no lessons to leave for them to learn from and the country may very well remain in the 11th century.

To digress a little, it is known that the Nigerian power sector operates well below its estimated capacity, with power outages being a frequent occurrence. To compensate for the power outages, the commercial and industrial sectors are increasingly using privately operated diesel generators to supply electricity. In 2004, total installed electricity capacity was 5.9 gigawatts (GW). Total electricity generation during 2004 was 19 billion kilowatt/hours (Bkwh). In the century of the Millennium Development Goals, it is embarrassing that only 40 percent of Nigerians have access to electricity, the majority of whom are in urban areas. No electricity means no jobs, but.....Yet, oil was suppose to be the remedy. So, again, who benefits

- **Africa: The Destruction of African Agriculture: [Fahamu](#) (Oxford): OPINION: 5 August 2008. Walden Bello**

Biofuel production is certainly one of the culprits in the current global food crisis. But while the diversion of corn from food to biofuel feedstock has been a factor in food prices shooting up, the more primordial problem has been the conversion of economies that are largely food-self-sufficient into chronic food importers. Here the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) figure as much more important villains.

Whether in Latin America, Asia, or Africa, the story has been the same: the destabilization of peasant producers by a one-two punch of IMF-World Bank structural adjustment programs that gutted government investment in the countryside followed by the massive influx of subsidized U.S. and European Union agricultural imports after the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture pried open markets. African agriculture is a case study of how doctrinaire economics serving corporate interests can destroy a whole continent's productive base.

FROM EXPORTER TO IMPORTER

At the time of decolonization in the 1960s, Africa was not just self-sufficient in food but was actually a net food exporter, its exports averaging 1.3 million tons a year between 1966-70. Today, the continent imports 25% of its food, with almost every country being a

net food importer. Hunger and famine have become recurrent phenomena, with the last three years alone seeing food emergencies break out in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, Southern Africa, and Central Africa.

Agriculture is in deep crisis, and the causes are many, including civil wars and the spread of HIV-AIDS. However, a very important part of the explanation was the phasing out of government controls and support mechanisms under the structural adjustment programs to which most African countries were subjected as the price for getting IMF and World Bank assistance to service their external debt. Instead of triggering a virtuous spiral of growth and prosperity, structural adjustment saddled Africa with low investment, increased unemployment, reduced social spending, reduced consumption, and low output, all combining to create a vicious cycle of stagnation and decline.

Lifting price controls on fertilizers while simultaneously cutting back on agricultural credit systems simply led to reduced applications, lower yields, and lower investment. One would have expected the non-economist to predict this outcome, which was screened out by the Bank and Fund's free-market paradigm. Moreover, reality refused to conform to the doctrinal expectation that the withdrawal of the state would pave the way for the market and private sector to dynamize agriculture. Instead, the private sector believed that reducing state expenditures created more risk and failed to step into the breach. In country after country, the predictions of neoliberal doctrine yielded precisely the opposite: the departure of the state "crowded out" rather than "crowded in" private investment. In those instances where private traders did come in to replace the state, an Oxfam report noted, "they have sometimes done so on highly unfavorable terms for poor farmers," leaving "farmers more food insecure, and governments reliant on unpredictable aid flows." The usually pro-private sector Economist agreed, admitting that "many of the private firms brought in to replace state researchers turned out to be rent-seeking monopolists." What support the government was allowed to muster was channeled by the Bank to export agriculture - to generate the foreign exchange earnings that the state needed to service its debt to the Bank and the Fund. But, as in Ethiopia during the famine of the early 1980s, this led to the dedication of good land to export crops, with food crops forced into more and more unsuitable soil, thus exacerbating food insecurity. Moreover, the Bank's encouraging several economies undergoing adjustment to focus on export production of the same crops simultaneously often led to overproduction that then triggered a price collapse in international markets. For instance, the very success of Ghana's program to expand cocoa production triggered a 48% drop in the international price of cocoa between 1986 and 1989, threatening, as one account put it, "to increase the vulnerability of the entire economy to the vagaries of the cocoa market [1]." In 2002-2003, a collapse in coffee prices contributed to another food emergency in Ethiopia.

As in many other regions, structural adjustment in Africa was not simply underinvestment but state divestment. But there was one major difference. In Latin America and Asia, the Bank and Fund confined themselves for the most part to macromanagement, or supervising the dismantling of the state's economic role from above. These institutions left the dirty details of implementation to the state bureaucracies. In Africa, where they dealt with much weaker governments, the Bank and

Fund micromanaged such decisions as how fast subsidies should be phased out, how many civil servants had to be fired, or even, as in the case of Malawi, how much of the country's grain reserve should be sold and to whom. In other words, Bank and IMF resident proconsuls reached into the very innards of the state's involvement in the agricultural economy to rip it up.

THE ROLE OF TRADE

Compounding the negative impact of adjustment were unfair trade practices on the part of the EU and the United States. Trade liberalization allowed low-priced subsidized EU beef to enter and drive many West African and South African cattle raisers to ruin. With their subsidies legitimized by the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture, U.S. cotton growers offloaded their cotton on world markets at 20-55% of the cost of production, bankrupting West African and Central African cotton farmers in the process [2]. These dismal outcomes were not accidental. As then-U.S. Agriculture Secretary John Block put it at the start of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations in 1986, "the idea that developing countries should feed themselves is an anachronism from a bygone era. They could better ensure their food security by relying on U.S. agricultural products, which are available, in most cases at lower cost [3]." What Block did not say was that the lower cost of U.S. products stemmed from subsidies that were becoming more massive each year, despite the fact that the WTO was supposed to phase out all forms of subsidy. From \$367 billion in 1995, the first year of the WTO, the total amount of agricultural subsidies provided by developed country governments rose to \$388 billion in 2004. Subsidies now account for 40% of the value of agricultural production in the European Union (EU) and 25% in the United States.

The social consequences of structural adjustment cum agricultural dumping were predictable. According to Oxfam, the number of Africans living on less than a dollar a day more than doubled to 313 million people between 1981 and 2001 - or 46% of the whole continent. The role of structural adjustment in creating poverty, as well as severely weakening the continent's agricultural base and consolidating import dependency, was hard to deny. As the World Bank's chief economist for Africa admitted, "We did not think that the human costs of these programs could be so great, and the economic gains would be so slow in coming [4]." That was, however, a rare moment of candor. What was especially disturbing was that, as Oxford University political economist Ngaire Woods pointed out, the "seeming blindness of the Fund and Bank to the failure of their approach to sub-Saharan Africa persisted even as the studies of the IMF and the World Bank themselves failed to elicit positive investment effects [5]."

THE CASE OF MALAWI

This stubbornness led to tragedy in Malawi.

It was a tragedy preceded by success. In 1998 and 1999, the government initiated a program to give each smallholder family a "starter pack" of free fertilizers and seeds. This followed several years of successful experimentation in which the packs were provided only to the poorest families. The result was a national surplus of corn. What came after, however, is a story that will be enshrined as a classic case study in a future book on the 10 greatest blunders of neoliberal economics. The World Bank and other aid donors forced the drastic scaling down and eventual scrapping of the program, arguing that the subsidy distorted trade. Without the free packs, food output plummeted. In the meantime, the IMF insisted that the government sell off a large portion of its strategic grain reserves to enable the food reserve agency to settle its commercial debts. The government complied. When the crisis in food production turned into a famine in 2001-2002, there were hardly any reserves left to rush to the countryside. About 1,500 people perished. The IMF, however, was unrepentant; in fact, it suspended its disbursements on an adjustment program with the government on the grounds that "the parastatal sector will continue to pose risks to the successful implementation of the 2002/03 budget. Government interventions in the food and other agricultural markets...crowd out more productive spending."

When an even worse food crisis developed in 2005, the government finally had enough of the Bank and IMF's institutionalized stupidity. A new president reintroduced the fertilizer subsidy program, enabling two million households to buy fertilizer at a third of the retail price and seeds at a discount. The results: bumper harvests for two years in a row, a surplus of one million tons of maize, and the country transformed into a supplier of corn to other countries in Southern Africa.

But the World Bank, like its sister agency, still stubbornly clung to the discredited doctrine. As the Bank's country director told the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, "All those farmers who begged, borrowed, and stole to buy extra fertilizer last year are now looking at that decision and rethinking it. The lower the maize price, the better for food security but worse for market development."

FLEEING FAILURE

Malawi's defiance of the World Bank would probably have been an act of heroic but futile resistance a decade ago. The environment is different today. Owing to the absence of any clear case of success, structural adjustment has been widely discredited throughout Africa. Even some donor governments that once subscribed to it have distanced themselves from the Bank, the most prominent case being the official British aid agency that co-funded the latest subsidized fertilizer program in Malawi. Perhaps the motivation of these institutions is to prevent the further erosion of their diminishing influence in the continent through association with a failed approach and unpopular institutions. At the same time, they are certainly aware that Chinese aid is emerging as an alternative to the conditionalities of the World Bank, IMF, and Western government aid programs.

Beyond Africa, even former supporters of adjustment, like the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington and the rabidly neoliberal Economist

cknowledged that the state's abdication from agriculture was a mistake. In a recent commentary on the rise of food prices, for instance, IFPRI asserted that "rural investments have been sorely neglected in recent decades," and says that it is time for "developing country governments [to] increase their medium- and long-term investments in agricultural research and extension, rural infrastructure, and market access for small farmers." At the same time, the Bank and IMF's espousal of free trade came under attack from the heart of the economics establishment itself, with a panel of luminaries headed by Princeton's Angus Deaton accusing the Bank's research department of being biased and "selective" in its research and presentation of data. As the old saying goes, success has a thousand parents and failure is an orphan. Unable to deny the obvious, the Bank has finally acknowledged that the whole structural adjustment enterprise was a mistake, though it smuggled this concession into the middle of the 2008 World Development Report, perhaps in the hope that it would not attract too much attention. Nevertheless, it was a damning admission:

Structural adjustment in the 1980's dismantled the elaborate system of public agencies that provided farmers with access to land, credit, insurance inputs, and cooperative organization. The expectation was that removing the state would free the market for private actors to take over these functions--reducing their costs, improving their quality, and eliminating their regressive bias. Too often, that didn't happen. In some places, the state's withdrawal was tentative at best, limiting private entry. Elsewhere, the private sector emerged only slowly and partially--mainly serving commercial farmers but leaving smallholders exposed to extensive market failures, high transaction costs and risks, and service gaps. Incomplete markets and institutional gaps impose huge costs in forgone growth and welfare losses for smallholders, threatening their competitiveness and, in many cases, their survival.

In sum, biofuel production did not create but only exacerbated the global food crisis. The crisis had been building up for years, as policies promoted by the World Bank, IMF, and WTO systematically discouraged food self-sufficiency and encouraged food importation by destroying the local productive base of smallholder agriculture. Throughout Africa and the global South, these institutions and the policies they promoted are today thoroughly discredited. But whether the damage they have caused can be undone in time to avert more catastrophic consequences than we are now experiencing remains to be seen.

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****Please send comments to editor@pambazuka.org or comment online at <http://www.pambazuka.org/>***

Notes:

1. Charles Abugre, *"Behind Crowded Shelves: as Assessment of Ghana's Structural Adjustment Experiences, 1983-1991,"* (San Francisco: food First, 1993), p. 87.
2. "Trade Talks Round Going Nowhere sans Progress in Farm Reform," *Business World (Phil)*, Sept. 8, 2003, p. 15
3. Quoted in *"Cakes and Caviar: the Dunkel Draft and Third World Agriculture," Ecologist*, Vol. 23, No. 6 (Nov-Dec 1993), p. 220
4. Morris Miller, *Debt and the Environment: Converging Crisis* (New York: UN, 1991), p. 70.
5. Ngaire Woods, *The Globalizers: the IMF, the World Bank, and their Borrowers* (Thaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 158.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Civil Society, Principles and Per Diems: South African Institute of International Affairs (Johannesburg): 11 August 2008. Terence Corrigan**

Across Africa, dedicated activists are beaver away at a variety of causes – environmental degradation, gender violence, human rights abuses, corruption. They are the members of churches, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social movements and trade unions known collectively as “civil society”. They are animated by the noble ideal of making life better for all. Well, sort of...

At a recent workshop on governance that my organisation co-hosted with local partners in Southern Africa, a certain uninvited gentleman I’ll call “Merlin” arrived. He purportedly heads a governance activism outfit which seems to consist of a Yahoo email address and a cellphone number. Apparently, he regularly gets wind of workshops, makes his way over, and promptly requests his “transport reimbursement”.

Now Merlin seemed an intelligent, educated fellow, and may be genuinely passionate in his activism. But he is also motivated by the “per diem”, the stipend handed out at conferences, sometimes called a “seating allowance”, “transport reimbursement” or “daily subsistence allowance”. It is commonly paid at meetings in Zambia, Malawi, Kenya and many places besides. And it’s symptomatic of the problem affecting civil society in Africa. Providing a small stipend to conference goers is not unusual, for transport costs can be considerable. To some in the developed world, the stipend may be a token amount that makes the stay comfortable, but to many it might literally be the source of the next meal. So for some, becoming a recognised civil society activist is a paying proposition. Contemporary thinking accepts the need for a country’s development processes to be “owned” and supported by society as a whole, not just by its government. And where governments are inefficient, incapacitated or corrupt, civil society provides an

important counterweight. So donors – embassies, philanthropic foundations, multilateral institutions – pour millions into programmes to boost capacity in African civil society.

For the activist, these amounts – a few thousand Euros for a community project or \$5 or \$10 a day at a workshop – are attractive, especially against the alternative. Landing a steady white collar job is difficult: there are few of them around and getting one often depends on who you know. Attending conferences not only pays something and is intellectually stimulating, but it could provide a springboard to more lucrative jobs working for a donor agency or embassy, or even beyond to London, Paris or New York. Activism, therefore, becomes a rational economic and lifestyle choice. African civil society has a tendency to see itself as left-wing and “mass-based”. This engenders frequent hostility to business, capitalism, profits, “neo-liberalism” or “the corporate sector”. And it encourages posturing, as groups jostle to demonstrate the breadth and influence of their representation. This in turn opens the door to a strange menagerie: legitimate NGOs share the floor with Bringos (briefcase NGOs), Mongos (My own NGOs), Pongos (Politicians’ NGOs), Mangos (Mafia NGOs), and Congos (Commercial NGOs). Each markets itself as a credible voice of “the people”, while harbouring some unspoken interest, not least the chasing of funds. Sadly, for many in civil society immersed in this perverse system, their personal futures depend on *not* resolving their issues. Aid can function as a resource like oil or diamonds. And it’s the one resource accessible to civil society. Whatever its problems, though, civil society needs support, as no free society can exist without it. Committed groups such as the All Africa Conference of Churches, the South African Institute of Race Relations and Institute for Democracy in South Africa, the Foundation for Democratic Process in Zambia, the Media Institute of Southern Africa and the Centre for Democratic Development in Ghana are but a few of the diverse thousands around the continent doing commendable work in stimulating discussion about common problems, and advocating measures to resolve them. Their work would be nigh impossible without the support of donors and partners. And the charge that receiving money makes them agents of “foreign interests” is ludicrous, given that the governments making those charges rake in far larger sums in foreign aid. Until Africa has developed an economy that provides the tax revenues and financial backbone to dispense with outside help, both governments and activists will have to rely on it.

Civil society has to change its mindset. Firstly, it should reconsider what its activism aims to achieve. Is it really about principle or policy, or the per diem? Activists must recognise that they too are capable of greed, malgovernance and poor judgement. Secondly, activist bodies should drop their posturing and numbers games. A large following may be important, but it is not the be-all and end-all of credibility. Merlin should represent himself, rather than his Mongo, and stand or fall by the quality of his thinking, not by his putative constituency which is only meaningful if it truly exists. Thirdly, civil society should curtail its antipathy to business. Africans need the career choices and opportunities for prosperity that only a healthy market economy can provide, which in turn will allow only the truly committed to choose activism.

But back to Merlin. He made an impassioned plea for the redistribution of land. Fair enough. He also vowed to expel all investors instantly when he became president. While

that might not eliminate poverty, it would probably generate a lot more workshops. By the final day of our workshop, he had moved on – to attend another conference that paid a better per diem than ours.

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EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **To Qualify for More Aid, Poor African States Must Swarm With Terrorists: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): ANALYSIS: 7 August 2008. [Patrick Mutahi](#) and [Peter Kagwanja](#).**

As Africa marks 10 years since the bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es Salaam on August 7, 1998, security concerns relating to counter-terrorism define the context of foreign aid, nearly eclipsing previous priorities of good governance and human rights.

This is damaging for both global poverty reduction and worldwide security as aid to poor countries becomes inextricably tied to the military imperatives of the war on terrorism.

Donor countries need to rethink the trend of tying aid to the counter-terrorism and instead focus on poverty alleviation programs as an integral process of draining the swamps of terrorism. Historically, humanitarian assistance has been impartial and should remain so. Western powers should opt for the easier and cost-friendly route of assisting African countries to beef up existing legal and surveillance capacity to detect, deter and destroy terrorist networks before they launch attacks. This incorporation of security concerns in development thinking is not new and dates back at least to the Cold War era. Although the security-development nexus can be construed positively, the linkage has taken new forms and dynamics. It is the perceived or actual role of a recipient state in the war on terror that progressively determines the type and the size of aid disbursed. As a strategy in the "long war," America and the West have altered their approach to foreign aid to Africa, subordinating it to the new security criteria. So too have some multilateral aid/donor organisations, along with bilateral donors that in the past have been associated with a less politically-determined programme of development cooperation.

At present, America's economic and development assistance remains very important to many African countries. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, President George Bush has "dramatically increased US aid to Africa," from \$1.4 billion (Sh92 billion) annually in 2001 to more than \$4 billion (Sh270 billion) in 2007. In raw terms, the aid has reached Cold War levels in the mid-1980s only that this time it is geared to anti-terrorism. Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda are among the world's top 10 recipients of aid from the US. Moreover, its humanitarian and development aid is projected to reach almost \$9 billion (Sh550 billion) by 2010. Under the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI), Pentagon has provided over \$500 million (Sh310 billion) to increase border security and counter-terrorism capacity to

Mali, Chad, Niger and Mauritania. The Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA) has provided small arms and training for peacekeeping operations to Benin, Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.

The Gulf of Guinea now features nearly continuous US naval patrols all the way to Angola, up from almost no activity in 2004. The Defense Department has also gained access to air bases and ports in Africa and "bare-bone" facilities maintained by local security forces in various African countries. The green buck thus renders many African countries vulnerable to manipulations by the world's only super power, which is able to either reward or chastise them with respect to its interests. The US is not the only country dealing with these new strategic priorities. In its National Security Strategy published in March 2008, Britain calls for long term support to failing states, stabilising areas recovering from conflict, and tackling violent extremism. This includes establishing approximately £600 million (Sh78 billion) of cross-government funding for conflict prevention, resolution and stabilisation around the world over the next three years. The package includes an immediate commitment to fund 750 Burundian troops as part of the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia, and more help to train, equip and deploy troops for the joint UN-AU peacekeeping operation in Darfur. The strategy also confirms the shift in Foreign Office focus from Europe to key regions, for example the Middle East, with embassies which used to do mainly consular work now handling political engagement and security support.

From Asia, Japan has also adopted a more security-oriented approach to aid posed by the official Development Assistance Charter as "consolidation of peace concept." The Charter says that "since [9/11] there has been a greater international awareness of the possibility of poverty [zones] becoming hotbeds of terrorism, and the role of ODA is being re-considered."

Nevertheless, Tokyo has not established direct linkage between poverty and terrorism in terms of projects orientation. Hence, it is clear that the review process has targeted peace and security issues instead of core poverty reduction programs. The terrain of development assistance has become more complex with European Union member states tying aid to counter-terrorism. For instance, Denmark's development policy has undergone substantial change since the declaration of the war on terror. The early stages of this change began in 2004 when a policy shift occurred in the underlying principles of Danish development assistance and the government adopted its Principles Governing Danish Development Assistance for the Fight against the New Terrorism. Combating and preventing terrorism became a new priority for the disbursement of Danish development aid as opposed to the traditional priorities of education, health and water supply and sanitation. As a result the amount of aid allocated to countries has now become dependant on their relevance in the anti terrorism crusade, and security became its second most important criteria for deciding aid allocations for the period 2004 to 2008. Indeed, Denmark allocated approximately \$30 million (Sh200 billion) over the period 2004-2006 for multilateral efforts and for a series of special bilateral initiatives in terror priority countries like Yemen, Iran, Indonesia, Kenya and Niger. The charity Christian Aid

laments in its report, The politics of poverty, that almost \$49 million (Sh3 billion) Danish aid and reconstruction package to Iraq has been allocated at the expense of the Africa budget. Continentally, counter-terrorism is now elevated to a key condition for receiving foreign aid by Africa's poor countries as security considerations overtake the moral drive to lift the poor out of poverty.

The Cotonou Agreement between the EU and Africa, Caribbean and Pacific states was amended to require cooperation on counter-terrorism as part of the conditionality for receiving EU development aid.

This trend is tragic for poor countries that depend on foreign assistance and Africa is paying dearly as external assistance programmes are re-designed, budgets reallocated and donor priorities changed to suit the war on terror. Similarly, in efforts to address the needs of 'global security,' core poverty reduction programs have been the main casualty.

As Judy Howell, co-author of the report Aid, Civil Society and the State in Kenya since 9/11, aptly remarks: "Generally, indications are that there is a refocusing of development aid to communities that are perceived as a security risk, including the Somali population inhabiting a large swath of eastern Kenya and the Swahili Muslims living along the coast, who have historical linkages with Yemen and Oman." Also, the divide between aid and geo-politics has become increasingly blurry with US policy on Africa getting increasingly militarised and its economic agenda and energy concerns following close behind. Notably, Africa has gained strategic importance for the American war on terror partly because of its oil reserves and partly because of its large Muslim population and proximity to, and historical linkages with the Middle East. According to the State Department and USAID "Strategic Plan" (2004-2009), development assistance "must be fully aligned with US foreign policy". This policy rewards friends and allies of the US while other states have to cope with less and less financial support. Thus, a sober conflict analysis quickly shifts to the background when short-term "national interests" dominate the decision-making process. However, the emergence of China as a new strategic player in Africa has given a new impetus to America's aid policy and allocations. As a direct competitor to the West for Africa's resources with little conditions of democracy and good governance attached to its aid packages, Beijing has not only redefined its relationship with Africa, but also, more importantly with strategic countries rich in oil, timber and energy resources.

China's entry into Africa is characterised by a dependence on an aid-for-oil strategy. As a result, it is receiving increasing supplies of oil from African countries, while at the same time offering them trade deals combined with aid.

However, unlike the US, China is not building a military power base in Africa. Rather, it is stepping up its ability to pursue a more confident and independent security policy in the continent by resorting to collective action of cooperative security policy with African states which is bearing quick fruits. The People's Republic has no military bases in Africa like the United States or France. Likewise, it does not train African soldiers to deal with hostility perceived by Beijing as a threat to its national interests. In Sudan, Zimbabwe,

Cameroon and Gabon, Beijing has dispatched teams to assist in the maintenance of equipment, rather than providing training for specific warfare activities. In Zambia and Algeria, the collaboration is limited to medical aid. In line with its security concerns, America increased the number of its troops in Africa from 220 to nearly 1,000, between 2000 and 2006. This is alongside the establishment of the Africa Command (AFRICOM), now resisted by African regional powers like South Africa. While AFRICOM signifies Africa's emerging strategic importance in the superpower's economic and security calculus in order to contain terrorism and secure global oil wealth, this military structure is viewed as a vehicle to counter the Chinese juggernaut in Africa. China has not shied away from giving military aid to states that America and its allies have shunned in the past. The Nethercutt Provision in the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill tied US foreign assistance to host countries' support of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by pushing them to sign the Bilateral Immunity Agreement (BIA). These agreements require ICC member countries to exempt all US nationals and non-national contractors from accountability before The Hague-based court for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

In 2002/2003 Kenya lost an estimated \$8 million (Sh536 million) in military financing and training aid after refusing to sign the BIA. This shortage in funding for Kenya's military was quickly addressed by China. Ultimately, Washington reversed its position in the summer of 2006 to permit the resumption of security and military training aid to Kenya despite it not signing the BIA. Development aid is increasingly being viewed by international actors as a means of addressing looming threats emanating from the global South towards the North. The assumption is that what the right wing sees as a "clash of civilisations" between the West and Muslims mainly in the developing world must be won through economic rehabilitation. But there is no evidence that aid for counter-terrorism is reversing underdevelopment in Africa significantly.

The focus of the aid-for-counter-terrorism strategy is not necessarily on underdevelopment per se, but on "radicalised" regions and social formations that can be exploited by terrorists. In Kenya, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has an initiative on pastoralist livelihoods and peace-building in the Mandera Triangle, a development term referring to the region inhabited by Somali pastoralists where the Kenyan, Ethiopian and Somali borders intersect. The US is also scaling back significantly on its conflict reduction and peace-building initiatives in the 'Karamoja Cluster' covering the 'non-Islamic' pastoralist-inhabited triangle bordering Uganda, Kenya and Sudan. Donor agencies have developed new programming for NGOs, and created new funding pools, to support initiatives on development-security linkages. This is geared towards addressing, explicitly, the presumed causes of terrorism and radicalisation including underdevelopment, poverty and high levels of youth unemployment. These engagements have been tailor made mostly for the Muslim community. The nature and objectives of aid-givers, however, seems to be an issue for many leaders and activists within 'suspect' communities, who, understandably question new attention and resources from western donors.

The US Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) based in Djibouti has routinely carried out activities in communities in Kenya's Coast and North Eastern Provinces such as building schools and operating mobile veterinary clinics. It is also developing liaison positions and coordination mechanisms with civilian agencies and departments such as USAID to institutionalise its efforts on development, which depend on input from American diplomatic corps in each of the countries where CJTF operates.

- **Uganda: African Union, USA - When is a Coup d'Etat Not a Coup?:**
The Monitor (Kampala): OPINION: 16 August 2008.

During the 1960s and 1970s, hardly a month went by without a spectacular and almost always grisly unconstitutional change of government somewhere in Africa. The cold war had reached its zenith, with the ideological power blocks jostling for supremacy and global domination. Perceived to be exceptionally vulnerable to communist seduction, Africa in particular, was under constant surveillance.

Without the benefit of prior colonial influence, the Soviet bloc was quick to pounce on some African despots mouthing half-cooked Marxist slogans, persuading the good man to allow them open military bases in exchange for military hardware. The West on the other hand was loathe to see its spheres of influence, nurtured for over a century as colonies, protectorates or "overseas dominions," sliding to the other side. The slightest hint of intransigence was dealt with swiftly and ruthlessly. The demise of the Cold War and the failure of Communism to take root in a serious manner anywhere in Africa eased the stranglehold and spelt the end of military coups. Unconstitutional changes of governments continued, of course, but via civil wars, rebellions and self-styled liberation struggles. That phase, too, is beginning to fade away. These bush wars, some of them lasting as long as 30 years, are costly in terms of lives - military as well as civilian - and in terms of wasteful expenditure and the wanton destruction of valuable infrastructure. So Africa has had to move on. The new type of coup is characterised by massive rigging of the elections by whoever happens to be in control as the incumbent.

In the rare case that the competitors successfully mobilise against electoral theft, the modern African potentate either arm-twists the electoral commission to release fraudulent results, or, failing that, simply refuses to concede defeat, declares himself victor and gets himself sworn in for a fresh term. But Africans have had enough of these charades. The electoral thief will, of course, send out his crack troops to smash a few skulls with police batons. In the event of that not working, the president will order his troops to shoot to kill. When even that fails to quell popular outrage, the president will invite his, "defeated" opponent to discuss how to share power. It is a coup d'etat, elaborate perhaps, but a coup nevertheless, more bloody and more frightening than its ancestor of the 60s and 70s.

That is the route that Kenya and Zimbabwe have chosen to pursue, though in the case of the latter, it is not yet a done deal. Which is perhaps why the military chiefs in the Republic of Mauritania have reverted back to the old - fashioned and swifter way. President Sidi Cheikh Ould Abdallah was elected to the presidency of Mauritania 15

months ago, ending decades of military rule. Ten days ago, he was shown the exist when he committed the unpardonable folly of dismissing some of the army chiefs. Hasn't this man heard of ex- president Godfrey Lukongwa Binaisa of Uganda? Doesn't he know the elementary axiom that you don't touch the military when you have no military bastion of your own? The Generals have also accused him of failing to rein in the skyrocketing food prices. Moreover, the fallen president is said to have exhibited unacceptable levels of corruption by allowing his wife to loot the state. He is also said to have given his daughter a position of power not commensurate with first daughters. Perhaps he also promoted his son to the rank of Lt. Colonel, but I can't testify to the veracity of this assertion.

So, why have the African Union (AU), the European Union and the US government refused to recognise the new rulers? Why is everybody threatening to withdraw financial support? Why were Mwai Kibaki and Robert Mugabe allowed to attend the AU summits in Ethiopia and Cairo after the two had clearly carried out coups d'etat in their respective countries? When is a coup not a coup?

- **Obama And the Continent: [Fahamu](#) (Oxford): OPINION: 14 August 2008. Achille Mbembe**

Barack Obama might become the next United States president. Because of his African roots, this possibility has been met with euphoria and enthusiasm in the continent. In some instances, African expectations are the expression of racial pride. In others, they are simply irrational, unrealistic and misguided. Centuries of slave trade and systematic degradation of people of African descent notwithstanding, there might be an American legacy of compassion towards the continent.

Africa's importance to US national interests might even be growing. The continent now supplies the US with 15 percent of its oil imports. Since the end of the Cold War, the US has diversified its initiatives in Africa. Several valuable assistance programmes with strong bipartisan support in the US congress now range from major trade agreements to the fight against HIV/Aids, malaria, tuberculosis and terrorism. Still, the US has neither a strategic approach, nor a comprehensive policy towards the continent. Knowledge and documentation produced by the best US universities about Africa is unparalleled. Yet, the official American imagination still represents the continent as a hopeless place with no internal dynamism, littered with failed or "rogue" states and racked by poverty, atrocities, disease and pestilence - a distant threat to global health and security. Washington either views Africa through the prism of the continent's natural resources and the competition to reap the benefits of their exploitation or, more often than not, as an object of humanitarian and, since September 11 2001, military concerns.

Obama has said little about Africa since the start of the campaign. He might not endorse this cynicism, but nor has he indicated a willingness to significantly depart from the outdated view of the continent that has underpinned US policy since the end of the Cold War. In fact, with the help of his Africa specialists (Susan Rice and Samantha Power, before her resignation), he has embraced a paradigm of engagement with the continent that is too heavily shrouded in ideology and dependent on too narrow a definition of US

national security interests. Africa is undergoing a complex, if at times painful, process of transformation and multiple transitions at the same time. New social actors are emerging. A hybrid urban culture is in the making. Different forms of social and political mobilisations too. As the playing field changes and Western interests are challenged notably by a strongly competitive and pragmatic China, the urgency of a new US Africa policy cannot be overemphasised.

Military or humanitarian concerns alone will serve neither the US's, nor Africa's long-term interests.

The belief that what is best for the US is necessarily best for Africa should be discarded and replaced by a deeper understanding of their shared interests in the continent and beyond. For instance, it is not evident that a largely ideological pursuit of democracy and a blind embrace of free market evangelism is the best way to respond to the increasing appeal of a Chinese development model based on significant economic growth overseen by a disciplined, if authoritarian, state. In theory, strengthening democratic institutions is a major objective of US policy in Africa. In reality, there are very limited funds for Africa within US worldwide democracy programmes and no articulated strategy to address the major challenges constitutional rule faces in the continent. The external stock of capital held by Africans overseas is estimated at \$700 billion to \$800 billion (about R5 trillion to R6 trillion) - more than the total foreign aid assistance to the continent since independence. Most of this stock comes from illegal dealings. Democracy and accountability could be more effectively enhanced if, instead of pious sermons on good governance, the US led a systematic and co-ordinated multinational effort to recover looted and illegally obtained African assets.

Between 2000 and 2004, US multilateral aid to Africa has doubled from \$2,05 billion to \$4,3 billion. Bilateral aid has tripled from \$1,139 billion to \$3,195 billion. But nearly half of this money is for emergency assistance. Geared towards short-term priorities, US aid assistance is so fragmented as to be almost entirely ineffective. For the past 10 years, long-term investment for growth has remained static. Meanwhile, China's trade with Africa has diversified beyond state-directed enterprises. As Beijing offers African countries relatively beneficial trade deals combined with aid, US trade policies still constitute a major obstacle to Africa's integration into the world economy.

China has placed a high priority on maintaining strong ties with its African energy suppliers. It has heavily invested in infrastructure, treating infectious diseases and expanding training and exchange programmes. Regular high-level visits and a strict policy of "non-interference in internal affairs" are the rule. African dictators find this comforting. The most intelligent response to this challenge is neither to try to reform Africa with economic sanctions, nor to privilege a diplomacy that heckles more than it listens. A deeper understanding of US interests in Africa would require supporting Africa's overall desire to lead herself and enhancing African institutions that promote democracy, accountability and human rights. A new US Africa policy should aim to trigger fundamental internal changes in the modes of rule in the continent. By enabling

the continent to build its export capacity and soundly use its immense human and natural resources, it should hasten Africa's integration into the global economy.

If elected, Obama has pledged to double US foreign assistance to \$50 billion by 2012 and use it to support "failing states" and sustainable growth in Africa, roll back disease and halve global poverty. But, development assistance is not the answer to the continent's predicament. Since 1960, the region has absorbed the adjusted inflation equivalent of more than six Marshall Plans. Yet, economic and social conditions continue to stagnate or worsen. Africa would benefit from an Obama presidency if more resources were invested in long-term projects in rural and inland infrastructure, agriculture and health, basic and higher education, trade facilitation and enhancement, the elimination of obstacles to private investment, the development of credit facilities, support to African civil society organisations, leadership, institutions and expertise and the sound management of Africa's natural resources and open its markets to Africa's exports).

The US will not alone provide the full array of investments that are needed to overcome the continent's economic problems. But Obama could significantly strengthen and revitalise important public constituencies for Africa in the US and broaden the basis for US engagement in the continent.

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- **Uganda: Avoid to Spill Blood Before the First Barrel of Oil is Raised: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): ANALYSIS: 12 August 2008. [Mbatawa Wa Ngai](#)**

The continued rise in the global price of a barrel of crude oil to over \$120 coupled with Uganda's increasing petroleum potential gives the country hope that it will soon escape the club of developing countries and join the middle-income nations of South-East Asia and beyond. But before uncorking the champagne bottles, the country's leadership will do well to learn, and avoid, making the mistakes common in the club of African oil producers, led by Nigeria, to whom the precious commodity has been more of a curse than a blessing. In Nigeria, as in Darfur, Chad, Congo and, to a certain extent, Angola, the oil discoveries and production led to the economic marginalisation of indigenous people living in those oil producing regions.

The result has been widespread civil strife that has dislocated millions of people and killed hundreds of thousands more. Analysts agree that this could be the fate of people in Bunyoro, in North-Western Uganda despite public assurances from top government officials. Last month, for example, the Second Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Henry Muganwa Kajura, downplayed fears that the discovery of oil is likely to be a curse. Mr Kajura, who is also minister for Public Service, said the government would ensure that oil

discovery in Uganda benefits every Ugandan as opposed to a few as is the case in Nigeria.

But many Uganda observers take these assurances, whether they come from President Yoweri Museveni himself or his ministers, with a pinch of salt because to-date there is no comprehensive oil policy that has been taken to the public for discussion and adoption. Yet, the first oil wells are expected to begin production in less than a year from now. This, according to local and international observers, creates a climate of suspicion that neither the nation, at large, nor the local people in the oil producing areas, in particular, will get a fair deal. Instead, the bulk of the new revenue, it is feared, are likely to be shared among a small local and international elite. Analysts argue that this could fuel rebellion in that part of the country similar to the one going on in Nigeria's Nile Delta led by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Nile Delta (MEND) which, only last week, attacked two oil pipelines leading to a cut in production and a rise in the global oil prices.

A series of Mend's violent attacks in recent years has led to a 20 per cent cut in Nigeria's output. There is no immediate end in sight for the Nigerian rebellion and disruption of its oil output which has a bearing on international prices. Only recently, Mend ended a unilaterally announced ceasefire after British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said the UK would help train the Nigerian military amid efforts to tackle violence in the Delta.

This, analysts argue, is an indication that the crisis cannot be solved by military means no matter how well trained and suggest Uganda can avoid going the Nigerian route by ensuring that the interests of the local communities in the oil producing regions, in particular, and in the whole country, in general, are taken on board even before the first barrel is lifted from the ground. Analysts also argue that it is in the best interests of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to agree on a comprehensive plan to develop the oil riches of Lake Albert on the border of the two neighboring countries to avoid the possibility of a shooting war between their two armies. It is especially urgent to have such an agreement now because the joint boundary commission appointed by the two countries to demarcate boundaries within the lake is still to complete its work.

Although Congo is yet to roll out a coherent plan of its own on how it intends to exploit the oil resources in the parts of the lake in its territory, observers suggest the onus is on Uganda to show leadership in this area because it stands to gain more if an agreement is reached or lose more in the absence of such an agreement with DRC.

- **East Africa: Judiciaries in Africa Are Active Participants in Fraud: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): COLUMN: 14 August 2008. Jerry Okungu**

An East African perspective

IT is a conspiracy theory that may shed light on the people who plotted to rob Kenya, Zimbabwe and Nigeria of fair elections. Between 2006 and 2008, Africa has witnessed three of the most controversial elections on the continent. First, then Nigerian sitting

President, Olusegun Obasanjo threw caution to the wind and ensured his preferred successor won the presidency by any means necessary. The then unknown Ya' Adua, a former state governor beat all favourites including Obasanjo's deputy president to clinch the coveted crown.

Despite all the glaring irregularities and outright theft of ballot papers, the Chief Justice of the Federal Government of Nigeria went ahead and swore in the new president legitimising him as duly elected and duly sworn in. However, in the Nigerian case, there was a semblance of decorum. The swearing in took its due process without being rushed. There was a window for lodging complaints and objections. Those who needed to go to court were afforded an opportunity for lodging a complaint before the swearing in.

Then the Kenyan case followed a year later. With all the international and local observer reports returning a "no fair and free elections", with the main opposition party crying foul that it had been robbed of victory, the Electoral Commission went ahead and announced the results without tallying all the votes. And within minutes of the election results, the President was declared duly elected and duly sworn in. What followed is in the public domain. Three months later, Zimbabwe held its general elections in which the opposition beat the ruling party with a narrow margin even though the results were not made public. Three months later, there was a presidential re-run in which the ruling party literally ran the opposition out of town through naked brutality. Some died while others remained maimed. people who were light of feet, took to their heels to look for safe havens across their borders. In all the three cases, the judiciary, through the Chief Justice actively participated in the rigging of the elections by knowingly accepting the results of the flawed elections!

By doing so, they became party to the crimes that had been committed through a flawed electoral process and the violence, as in the case of Kenya, that was sure to follow. Under the present circumstances and based on this widespread behaviour of our judicial systems, can African governance systems claim to have three independent arms of the state keeping watch over one another's excesses?

In the Kenyan situation; a day before the President was sworn in as duly elected, the Electoral Commission chairman had publicly acknowledged that he had lost contact with some of his presiding officers in the field. He could not trace them because they had switched off their mobile phones! Faced with more heightened tension in the counting hall, Chairman Kivuitu threatened to announce the results, if necessary, aboard a battleship without waiting for the lost presiding officers because he believed they had disappeared to have more time to 'cook' the results from their respective polling stations. His threat to announce the results aboard a battleship was informed by the fact that there would be chaos after the results. The nation was therefore shocked to learn that in the late afternoon of Sunday December 30, 2008, he dramatically summoned the police to clear the Presidential vote tallying centre before announcing the results through the government broadcaster.

The time the results were announced and the President was sworn in by the Chief Justice was less than half an hour! The principle of natural justice according to one sitting judge requires a period within which any aggrieved party can raise preliminary objections to the results. In this case, the ceremony did not even wait for the main contender to concede defeat! If the ceremony took place without tallying and verifying votes, why did the Chief Justice accept to participate before directing that the due process of the law be followed? All along, we have blamed the Electoral Commissions in Africa for the mess. However, why have we overlooked the role played by heads of our judiciaries? Perhaps it is time our civil rights movements started paying more attention to our judiciaries as we struggle to strengthen our governance institutions.

Without paying attention to this area, we may never achieve much in our good governance department

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Weekly Presentation: August 29, 2008

Sub-Saharan Africa

Abbas S Lamptey

Period: From August 17 to August 23 2008

87. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Argentina Claim Gold in Beijing: [Kickoff](#) (Cape Town): 23 August 2008.
- Sierra Leone: Country Gets New Chinese Ambassador: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 21 August 2008.
- Gambia: Taiwan Welcomes Allies Developing Relations with China – President: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 18 August 2008.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Zimbabwe: Country's Beijing Swim Success: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.
- Botswana: Work Permit Process Frustrates Chinese Envoy; [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 15 August 2008.
- Angola: Chinese Official Guarantees Railways Works Conclusion: [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 17 August 2008.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- Kenya: China Strikes Wells of Hope in Kenya: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 16 August 2008.
- Uganda: China to Build Four Hospitals in City: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 20 August 2008.

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- Rwanda: Government, China Sign Cooperation Pact: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 19 August 2008.

88. PAN AFRICA

WEST AFRICA

- Greenpeace Raises Alarm Over Rising E-Waste in Continent: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- World Bank Asks Govts to Invest in Agriculture: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.

89. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Minority Affairs International Promotes Citizens' Rights Abroad: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 22 August 2008.
- Gambia: New Islamic Council President Urges Unity: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 19 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Imam Wants Religious Laws in Constitution: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 18 August 2008.
- Nigeria: 16 Sex Workers Back Out: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 20 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Integrates Western, Islamic Education: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 22 August 2008.
- Ghana: Fight for Your Rights: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 21 August 2008.
- Côte d'Ivoire: Anti-Xenophobia Law Gets Lukewarm Reception: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 21 August 2008.

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- Zimbabwe: Rights Groups Claim Violence Persists: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 22 August 2008.

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- Kenya: Media Accused of Fanning Election Chaos: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 21 August 2008.
- Tanzania: Religious Harmony Should Prevail: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): EDITORIAL: 19 August 2008.

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- Congo-Kinshasa: UN Mission Trains Police On Sexual Violence: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 21 August 2008.
- Rwanda: Trial of Rwandan Army Officers Accused of Murdering Bishops in 1994 Begins: [Hirondelle News Agency](#) (Lausanne): 20 August 2008.

90. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- Sierra Leone: GTZ to Repatriate 3,000 From Freetown: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 21 August 2008.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Zambia: Making a Home for Themselves: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 19 August 2008.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- Sudan: Five Killed in Darfur Camp Floods, UN Peacekeeping Mission Reports: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 19 August 2008.
- Uganda: Scuffle As Congolese Refugees Are Relocated to Nakivale Camp: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 22 August 2008.

91. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB)

WEST AFRICA

- Sierra Leone: Country Qualifies for Health Sector Fund: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 22 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Sickle-Cell Disorder Killing 100,000 Infants a Year: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 21 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Government Earmarks N6 Billion for Free Medicare: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 21 August 2008.

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- Botswana: Aids Ravages Quarter of Country's Labour Potential: [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 20 August 2008.
- Namibia: Government Supports Circumcision as Anti-HIV Tool: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 21 August 2008.
- Namibia: Foot-And-Mouth Disease Costs Communal Farmers: [New Era](#) (Windhoek): 22 August 2008.

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- Uganda: Scientists Plan New HIV Protection for Females: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.
- Uganda: Clay Pots to Store Children's Aids Drugs: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 22 August 2008.
- Uganda: 'Gay Activities Rife in Schools': [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.

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- Congo-Kinshasa: Health Crisis Looms As Doctors' Strike Continues: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 22 August 2008.

92. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- West Africa: Flooding in Region Puts Lives at Risk, Says UN Health Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 19 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Flood Submerges 150 Houses in Sokoto: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 19 August 2008.

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- South Africa: Dirty Water Used on Fruit, Vegetables: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.

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- Mauritius: The Butterfly Effect: [L'Express](#) (Port Louis): 19 August 2008.
- Tanzania: Dar to Spend \$2 Million On New Weather Radar This Year: [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.
- East Africa: Help Pastoralists Adapt to Climate Change – Oxfam: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 19 August 2008.

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- Cameroon: Operation Green Sahel Resumes: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 16 August 2008.
- Cameroon: Heavy Rains Paralyse Buea: [The Post](#) (Buea): 18 August 2008.

93. ENERGY

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Country, Germany Partner On 6,500 Megawatts: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Militants Warn FG on Moves to Alter Gas Master Plan: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.

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- Mozambique: Biofuels Must Not Damage Food Production: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 18 August 2008.

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- Tanzania: Country Starts World's First Sisal-Based Power Plant: [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.
- Ethiopia: Government, Yemen Agree On Oil, Gas Exploration: [The Daily Monitor](#) (Addis Ababa): 21 August 2008.
- Uganda: Power Losses Amount to Sh104 Billion: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.

94. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Microfinance - Citizens Set to Learn From 2006 Nobel Laureate: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 21 August 2008.
- Nigeria: North to De-Emphasise Reliance On Oil: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Niger Delta Killings - Chevron's Trial Begins Sept in U.S.: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 19 August 2008.
- Ghana: Country Prepares for Oil Exploitation: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 20 August 2008.
- Ghana: \$200 Million Offered for Valco Stake – JAK: [Accra Mail](#) (Accra): 20 August 2008.

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- Southern Africa: SADC Attains Free Trade Milestone: [Southern African News Features](#) (Harare): 19 August 2008.
- Zimbabwe: Doctors On Strike And Teachers to Follow: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 20 August 2008.
- Zambia: Sharing the Copper Windfall: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 19 August 2008.
- Namibia: Government Bans Ekipa (carved ivory products) Sales: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 21 August 2008.

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- Kenya: Workers' Retirement Age May Rise: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.
- Kenya: Researchers Breed Weed-Resistant Cereal: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.
- Eritrea: President Isaias Inaugurates Banana And Tomato Processing Factory in Haikota Sub-Zone: [Shabait.com](#) (Asmara): 20 August 2008.

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- Central Africa: Swiss Logger 'Conned Congos Out of \$12 Million in Tax': [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.
- Gateway Communications Expands to Central Africa: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 18 August 2008.
- Equatorial Guinea: Human Rights Drowning in Oil : [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.
- Cameroon: FCFA 4.5 Billion Rural Electrification Project Launched: [The Post](#) (Buea): 15 August 2008.
- Rwanda: Government Ends Quarter With Surplus Money: [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information](#) (Kigali): 20 August 2008.

95. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

WEST AFRICA

- Nigeria: Yar'Adua Drops Service Chiefs in Military Shake-Up: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 21 August 2008.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Zimbabwe: Talks Hang in Balance As Mugabe Outflanks Rivals: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 21 August 2008.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- Kenya: Give Amnesty to End Graft Cases – Githongo: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.

96. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- Niger: Tuaregs 'To Lay Down Arms': [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 19 August 2008.
- Nigeria: Warring Ebonyi Communities Lay Down Arms: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.
- Liberia: Country Still Needs Help to Protect Unsteady Peace, Warns Ban: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 18 August 2008.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Zimbabwe: SADC Presses Tsvangirai to Sign Deal: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 19 August 2008.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- Somalia: Rivals Sign Peace Deal in Djibouti: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 19 August 2008.
- Uganda: World Bank Offers Over Sh3 Billion to Resettle Former ADF, LRA Rebels: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.
- Uganda: Ex-Rebels Receive Packages: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 20 August 2008.
- Uganda: Kenyan Minister Accuses UPDF of Killing Pastoralists: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.
- Somalia: Alshabab Snubs Djibouti Peace Deal: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 21 August 2008.
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- Africa: The New Nauseating Trend of Power-Sharing in Politics: Concord Times (Freetown): OPINION: 22 August 2008. [Abdulai Bayraytay](#)

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- Africa: Proving Ground for International Criminal Court?: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 20 August 2008: [Miriam Mannak](#)
- Zimbabwe: Just Whose Tune is Tsvangirai Singing? : [The Herald](#) (Harare): OPINION: 19 August 2008.

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- Africa: Education - The Source of African Disempowerment: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): OPINION: 20 August 2008: [Morris D. C. Komakech](#)
- Africa: Internal Refugees Deserve Same Rights As the Fleeing People From Across the Border: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): ANALYSIS: 21 August 2008. [Patrick Mutahi](#)

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- Rwanda: France Drew Up Tutsi 'Kill List': [The East African](#) (Nairobi): OPINION: 9 August 2008: [Oscar Kimanuka](#)
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SUMMARY

- Despite a brave performance from the Dream Team IV, Argentina have claimed Gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics with a 1-0 victory in the Birds' Nest on Saturday. Played in blistering heat, the only goal of the game was scored on 57 minutes through Angel di Maria as the Argentines retained the Olympic title they won in Athens four years ago. It was an even contest, with neither goalkeeper overly busy, but Nigeria did have their chances to score, while Argentina took one of their rare clear-cut chances.

- President Ma Ying-jeou said Friday that Taiwan will be pleased to see Taiwan's allies developing substantive relations with China, just as Taiwan would like to do the same with China's allies, according to reports monitored by the Daily Observer. Ma made the remarks during a meeting with Honduras President Manuel Zelaya aboard a charter flight they took along with Guatemalan Vice President Rafael Espada from Paraguay to the Dominican Republic after attending the inauguration of Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo. In response to a question from Zelaya on how Taiwan's solid allies should react to the fact that relations between Taiwan and China have significantly improved, Ma vowed that nothing will change these longstanding friendships.
- China has spent Sh3.7 billion in an aggressive search for oil in Eastern Province OF Kenya and says initial tests show "positive results", the Sunday Nation can reveal.
- As e-waste continue to pose health problem to the international communities, especially the third world countries, Greenpeace has called on the world's electronics companies to eliminate hazardous chemicals from their products, saying toxic waste from wealthy nations' gadgets ends up being dumped in poor countries despite laws prohibiting it. The environmental watchdog made the appeal in a new report on the electronic waste trade, which it said was spreading from Asia to West Africa - particularly Ghana, where discarded TVs and computers that contain toxic materials are being dismantled by children as young as 5.
- The World Bank has advised African governments to make fiscal policy adjustments to save millions of their citizens threatened by the rising food prices. It is estimated that about 30 million people mainly in Africa could easily slip back into poverty as a result of high food prices.
- A Non-Governmental Organisation, Minority Affairs International, saddled with the burden of ensuring the rights of Nigerian immigrants has forwarded a proposal titled "National Migration Commission" to the Federal Government to serve as a watchdog for Nigerians residing outside the country.
- Imam Momodou Lamin Touray, the newly elected president of the Gambia Supreme Islamic Council (GSIC) has called on Muslims in the country to bury their differences and unite for a common purpose. Imam Touray said Islam harbours no disunity and Muslims should unite for the good of Islam and the Ummah.
- The Chairman of the Senate Committee of FCT Imams, Sheikh Tajuddeen Adigun, has suggested that the laws governing Islam and Christianity be incorporated into the country's constitution. Adigun made the suggestion yesterday in Abuja at a one-day seminar on "**Nigerian Constitutional Review: Imams' Perspective**". The Seminar was organised by the Committee of FCT Imams.
- No fewer than 16 call girls publicly disowned their old ways during a preaching session organised by the daawah unit of the Kano State Hisbah Board at Daka Tsalle town of Bebeji local government of the state. In a dramatic scene, the repented whores came weeping to the venue where the preaching took place saying that they took up the profession by fate but were now set to quit the bad way.

- Niger State Government has concluded arrangements to integrate Western and Islamic Education to further encourage all round and robust education for children in the state, Governor Babangida Aliyu who disclosed this in Minna yesterday, said under the new arrangement, operators of Islamic schools would be encouraged to integrate western education curriculum in their schools while teachers in such schools would be placed on monthly salary.
- The Greater Accra Regional Director of the Electoral Commission (EC), Mohammed Addo-Quaye, has called on people living with disabilities in the country, to constitute themselves properly, and demand for their rights. According to him, people living with disabilities should not allow other people to organize events or programmes for them, but rather come up with programmes that would serve their best interests. "I want to urge you to organize yourselves properly, draw up your own programmes, take the initiatives sometimes, assert yourselves, and do not always wait for others to draw up programmes for you," he pointed out. Speaking at a two-day workshop, organized by the EC, to sensitize persons with disabilities on the country's electoral process at Dodowa on Wednesday.
- AN international human rights organisation has claimed that Zanu PF and state security organs are still perpetrating violence, undermining the party's credibility in the ongoing talks with the two formations of the MDC for a negotiated settlement to the country's decade-long crisis. In a 19-page report Human Rights Watch (HRW) said thousands of MDC activists who fled violence before the June 27 presidential election run-off were still in hiding, while armed Zanu PF supporters and government-backed "war veterans" and "youth militia" continued to terrorise villagers in the rural areas.
- The media contributed actively to the violence that rocked the country early this year, the Information and Communications permanent secretary has said. Dr Bitange Ndemo, who took to the stand on Thursday, told the Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence that the run-up to last year's General Election saw media houses take partisan positions and engage in unbalanced reporting, adding that Kenyans in the diaspora also played a role.
- At least five people have been killed and some 1,500 homes destroyed in floods at camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan's strife-torn Darfur region, the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported today.
- At least 100,000 infants die from the sickle-cell genetic disorder in Nigeria every year, and the country still has the highest incidence of the illness in Africa. "From available statistics, 100,000 infants die from sickle-cell disease in Nigeria annually, making it the number one sickle-cell endemic country in Africa," Sadiq Wali, president of the Nigeria Sickle-cell Foundation, told IRIN.
- HIV/AIDS is the foremost cause of maternal, newborn and child death in southern Africa whilst in Botswana, one in four people in the 15 to 49 years age bracket is HIV/AIDS infected, the 2008 State of The World's Children Report says. According to the report, the risk to children starts well before birth, owing to the fact that one third of pregnant women aged between 15 and 24 are HIV positive.
- MALE circumcision should be regarded as part of a comprehensive package of HIV prevention interventions, says Health and Social Services Minister Richard

Kamwi.He made the call at the opening of a two-day meeting on male circumcision in Windhoek-Namibia on Tuesday.Kamwi said circumcision provided partial protection against HIV infection.

- **SCIENTISTS are designing a new way of protecting women from getting infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, the Uganda Aids Commission chief said yesterday.Dr. Kihumuro Apuuli said studies were ongoing to combine anti-retroviral drugs with pessaries for vaginal insertion to kill HIV before it gets into body cells.**
- International aid is urgently needed to reduce the risk to millions of lives in danger across West Africa due to the effects of flooding, the United Nations health agency warned today.
- The National Environment Management Council (Nemc) has called for suspension of ongoing construction of telecommunication towers which lack in-depth research on health risks they pose to people and the environment.The mobile phone companies should also draw defensive mechanisms in case of accidents as the law requires.
- The Tanzania Meteorology Agency will spend \$2 million to purchase a new weather radar to improve forecasting, monitor changes and impending disasters such as drought and floods.
- **MOVEMENT for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), yesterday, warned that it will sabotage any plan by the Federal Government to change the National Gas Master plan to suit the whims and caprices of those that want to pipe gas from the producing States of Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States to Lagos State and Northern parts of the country, instead of developing the gas plants in the Niger-Delta to boost the economy of the region and create employment for the jobless youths.**
- **Northern Nigeria is planning a new economic drive that will de-emphasise reliance on oil revenue. Towards this end, a pan-Northern economic summit tagged, "The Northern Economic and Investment Summit (NEIS 2008)," has been scheduled for Abuja between October 6 and 8. Organised by the Conference of the Northern States Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (CONSCIMA), the summit has as its theme, "Transforming Potentials to Wealth."**
- Ghana has taken a bold initiative towards a systematic establishment of economic, technical and legal framework to manage its oil extraction, whilst maximizing its benefits to improve living standards. To this effect, the government has assigned a team of experts in the oil industry to develop a master plan for the petroleum sector. The team of experts has been subdivided into six working groups and each is supposed to produce a policy document which would become part of the master plan to guide the development and management of Ghana's emerging oil industry and how it interfaces with the rest of the economy.
- **The launch of the SADC Free Trade Area by southern African leaders this week marks the attainment of a major milestone in the regional body's 28-year history. Formed in 1980 and transformed in 1992 to the present Southern African Development Community (SADC), the regional organisation has embarked on several ambitious regional integration**

projects, covering areas such as trade, infrastructure, food security, human and social development, as well as politics, defence and security, all intended to bring about economic prosperity, peace and security to its 250 million citizens.

- Scientists have made a major breakthrough in the search for a solution to a weed that has hampered cereal production in Africa for years. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (Icrisat) on Wednesday announced that it was on the verge of developing strains of sorghum resistant to striga weed. The weed causes losses estimated at Sh462 billion in Africa, according to the Consultative Group for International Research. Using a novel marker-assisted breeding technique, the researchers have found a way of conferring resistance to sorghum, millet, maize and rice.
- **Zimbabwe's power-sharing talks are hanging in the balance, with the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) saying Zanu (PF)'s intention to convene parliament on Tuesday would be a "clear repudiation" of the framework for dialogue. The move to assemble parliament has left relations between Zanu (PF) and the two MDC factions in disarray. It also threatens to sabotage talks that were said to be in their final stages.**
- Somalia's interim government and some opposition figures signed a peace deal on Monday that called for the rapid deployment of a robust United Nations force. It was the latest in a series of such agreements. Some Opposition members in exile and insurgents in Somalia had dismissed the United Nations-led talks here in Djibouti, so it was unclear what effect it might have on the ground. United Nations envoy for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, told Shabelle that the two sides had agreed to end all acts of armed confrontation.
- In a teleconference he held for the local media on Wednesday night Sheikh Moqtar Robow Abu Mansur has avowed that the Djibouti peace deal jointly signed by Somali government and the major opposition group, Alliance for the re-liberation of Somalia was "futile" "The Jihad will keep on, there is no peace agreement, the martyrs will move ahead to the Jihad bath even if Ethiopians pull out" Robow said.' there were no representatives from the Mujahidin at what called "peace deal" He added that the end of hostilities hinges on the re-establishing of Islamic sharia in Somalia.
- *BBC correspondent in Cameroon, **Randy Joe Sa'ah**, who witnessed the hoisting of the Cameroon flag in Bakassi on August 14, has revealed that in spite of the handing over of the peninsula to Cameroon, the indigenes of the area still nurse fears about their future and have big expectations from the government of Cameroon. Just back from Bakassi, Randy, in this exclusive interview, talks about the August 14 ceremony, the challenges of the people and his alleged capture.*
The Post: You were in Bakassi on August 14, while the handover ceremony of Bakassi to Cameroon took place in Calabar, Nigeria, what happened in Bakassi?My interest was to find out what was happening on Bakassi land itself, considering that the official ceremony was taking place in Nigeria. In the late afternoon, there was the hoisting of the Cameroon flag in Bakassi by the military. A Lieutenant Colonel was in charge of that. Cameroonian soldiers were looking so garland and so anxious to put up that flag. There was a small gathering of

Cameroonians with a Cameroon flag; they sang the National Anthem, beat the drums and danced. That, happening in Bakassi for the first time, I think it was a very great moment for Cameroonians. The flag was hoisted in a place called Atabong; the Nigerians call it Atabong, but I think it is called Idabato. Interestingly too, there was a group of Nigerian youths, who despite anxiety, burst into a joyous song. **What are some of the worries and expectations of the Bakassi indigenes?** For the people themselves on the Bakassi land, they have great worries and big expectations. The people do not seem to have a good impression about Cameroonian gendarmes. They recounted how some uniformed officers from Cameroon would stop their boats, take off the engines and leave them rudderless in the sea. They have worries of them being harassed for money and they also have fears that the Cameroon government will sooner or later impose taxes on them. They said they have been fishing and doing their commercial activities on that part of the land without paying taxes, and their worry now is what they hear about the tax situation in Cameroon, especially on Nigerians. They think it might be a bit too difficult for them. The youths particularly are interested in seeing schools being improved upon. They said they want more schools. There was a pregnant woman who told me her greatest wish would be to have a good hospital. I spoke to some chiefs who told me that their greatest wish would be that the Cameroon government should build an embankment to stop the sea water that is perpetually creeping into their settlements.

- Armed Somali pirates with two speed boats were reported to have kidnapped an Iranian and Japanese commercial vessels on Thursday officials said.
- The United States has proposed that Kenya merges its security agencies to deal effectively with terror threats. The proposal would see the National Security Intelligence Service, Criminal Intelligence Department, the military and other agencies fall under one body for easier sharing of information and coordination. The idea was mooted at a meeting between US Congressmen and Internal Security minister George Saitoti on Wednesday.
- **Nairobi: Countries in the war-ridden great lakes and horn of Africa are to put marks (brand) on all their weapons as a measure to control proliferation of illicit arms, the governing body says. Officials from the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) announced on Monday in Nairobi-Kenya that by the end of this year, all these countries should have complied with program. The countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Djibouti, DR Congo, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda are already signatories to the Nairobi Protocol on small arms, and that obliges them to mark up the weapons, said Dr. Francis Sang - the Executive Secretary of RECSA. RECSA is an institutional framework arising from the Nairobi Declaration to coordinate the joint effort by the 12-member block to prevent, combat and eradicate stockpiling and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa.**
- The Sudanese government for the first time unveiled disagreements with the Arab League on a plan it formulated to counter a move by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to indict Sudan's president Omar Hassan al-Bashir. In mid-July, the

ICC's prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo announced that he will seek an arrest warrant against Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes in Darfur. Following the move, Sudan has been looking into ways that would allow it to avoid confrontation with the international community over the ICC. Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa carried a number of proposals to President al-Bashir last month which included conducting internal trials for Darfur war crimes suspects.

NEWS COMMENTARIES

- For a continent battling to catch up with the rest of the developed world, the news of yet another coup d'etat in Mauritania was indeed a bad one. So bad was it that it did not take the African Union (AU), the umbrella body of the African nations, more than 72 hours to suspend the arid nation from the Union. The coup which has attracted global umbrage and widespread condemnation came barely one year after the same Mauritanian military authorities organised a presidential election that produced the now ousted President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi. Only three years ago, there was a coup in this same country.
- There is a scaring political trend unfolding in the recent post-colonial history of sub-Saharan Africa that if left unchecked will replace the heinous trend of social movements of rebel wars and guerilla warfare resorted to by losing politicians after they would have lost elections. And this drift is the scandalously nauseating power sharing gimmick of giving some concessions to the opposition, banking on the false premise that this would serve as a quick panacea to negotiate post-election disagreements.
- 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."
- I intend to illustrate that Eurocentric education is the main source of disempowerment of the colonised lot. With the devouring powers of globalisation, I envisage that most prudent means left for Africans to compete favourably in the global arena is by producing and promoting Afrocentric knowledge. I will explore the critical perspectives that cast a gloomy prospect for Afrocentrism. A lot of exploration of the concept of Afrocentrism in North American continent has flourished in the area of education. Influential works have been chronicled by Pollard, S. Dian et al, Keita Maghan, Freeman Kassie, S'Thembile West, Verharen, C. Charles, Hoschild, L. Jennifer, Molefi Asante and so on. They all

- indicate that Eurocentric systems are at the root of disempowerment for the Black man.
- The May xenophobic violence in South Africa, which left over 30,000 people displaced, posed a new challenge for the Africa Union (AU) in its quest to tackle the problem of refugees and Internally Displaced People in the continent. The carnage took place when the AU was revising the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969) and drafting an Internally Displaced Persons Convention. The revised AU refugees' convention is intended to assist the continental body to grapple with the huge numbers of displaced people who, according to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, remain "arguably the most significant humanitarian challenge that we face." To improve refugee security, the continental body needs to revive the spirit and letter of the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention by utilising the existing legal and institutional regional framework to act on human rights crises as they unfold.

THE REPORT IN DETAIL

100. CHINA -AFRICA RELATIONS WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Argentina Claim Gold in Beijing: Kickoff (Cape Town): 23 August 2008.**

Despite a brave performance from the Dream Team IV, Argentina have claimed Gold at the 2008 Beijing Olympics with a 1-0 victory in the Birds' Nest on Saturday. Played in blistering heat, the only goal of the game was scored on 57 minutes through Angel di Maria as the Argentines retained the Olympic title they won in Athens four years ago. It was an even contest, with neither goalkeeper overly busy, but Nigeria did have their chances to score, while Argentina took one of their rare clear-cut chances.

Blow-by-Blow Match Report:1 mins: And we're off!

6 mins: Argentina make the better start, with Messi and Aguero seeing plenty of the ball, but Odemwingie has the first shot on goal from a 40-yard free-kick, which is saved.

12 mins: A dangerous free-kick from 25-yards is wasted by Argentine as Riquelme shoots high and wide.

18 mins: Nigeria are struggling to see much of the ball, but are defending brilliantly to date. They need to try and get a foothold in midfield though.

25 mins: Despite some neat play from both sides, neither keeper has really been tested yet. Messi goes down in the area, but the referee waves play-on. Odemwingie sends a looping header over the bar and Nsofor shoots straight at the keeper as Nigeria press.

32 mins: Nigeria are now the side who look the most likely to score. Odemwingie just fails to set-up Nsofor for a shot as his back-heel is intercepted by the defender on the edge of the area.

39 mins: Odemwingie puts the ball across the six-yard box, but Isaac just misses the low ball. The Argentina struggle to clear and Isaac is presented with another opportunity from close-range, but his control lets him down and the Argentina keeper can gather.

HALFTIME: Agüero heads straight at Vanzekin, before the keeper makes a brilliant save to deny Di María from 25-yards. The first half closes with Argentina on the attack, but it has been an even 45 minutes in extreme heat in Beijing.

46 mins: The second half is underway!

53 mins: Agüero almost gets behind the Nigerian defence, but a timely interception clears the danger. Brilliance from Messi almost forces the opening goal. A lovely bit of skill sees him turn the defender 25-yards out, and his powerful drive is well saved by Vanzekin. YELLOW CARD for Nsofor for a clumsy challenge.

57 mins: GOAL! Argentina score with an incisive breakaway. Messi releases Di María on goal and he brilliantly chips the ball over the advancing Vanzekin.

65 mins: It has been all Argentina since the goal. Nigeria need to find a way back into this match. SUBSTITUTE Anichebe muscled the Argentine defence into conceding a corner, which is cleared.

72 mins: YELLOW CARD for Apam. SUBSTITUTE Ekpo on for Isaac. Nigeria are starting to commit more men forward now as they go in search of the equalizer. Messi and Co are looking to catch them on the break though. The players take a welcome water break in the steamy conditions.

76 mins: Ajilore almost pokes the ball home from the edge of the area, but his shot squirts wide of the post. YELLOW CARD for Di María. What a chance for Nigeria! The ball is played tantalizingly across the six-yard box and Odemwingie just fails to get a touch on the ball that would have sent it into an empty net. Was that the moment?

83 mins: Messi almost seals it for Argentina as he is clean through, but brilliant cover defence clears the danger. It is inevitable that there will be gaps at the back as Nigeria push forward. Kaita shoots over from the edge of the area. YELLOW CARD for Riquelme for time-wasting.

FULLTIME: Anichebe almost scores at the near post from a cross, but his touch is well saved by the keeper. Despite five minutes of injury time, a tired-looking Nigerian side struggle to trouble Nigeria in the closing stages.

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- **Sierra Leone: Country Gets New Chinese Ambassador: Concord Times (Freetown): 21 August 2008.**

President Hu Jintao of China has appointed a new ambassador to Sierra Leone. Qiu Shaofang replaced outgoing Cheng Wenju, who has now been deployed as Chinese ambassador to the Republic of Latvia. Shaofang's appointment and that of nine others, is in line with decisions adopted by China's top legislature, the standing committee of the National People's Congress. Ambassador Shaofang is a graduate of the Guangzhou Foreign Languages Institute and has had diplomatic career which has earned him experience in Mauritius, Chicago, San Francisco and New York. Qiu Shaofang most recent posting was to Sydney, Australia in 2004 where he took over the post of the consul-general of China. He was also a former deputy director-general at the Chinese foreign affairs ministry's consular affairs department. With so many years of service in the Chinese diplomatic core, it is believed that Qiu Shaofang would bring with him to Sierra Leone a deep understanding of the many political and economic aspects that revolve around the global inter-relationships China now has with Africa.

- **Gambia: Taiwan Welcomes Allies Developing Relations with China – President: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 18 August 2008.**

President Ma Ying-jeou said Friday that Taiwan will be pleased to see Taiwan's allies developing substantive relations with China, just as Taiwan would like to do the same with China's allies, according to reports monitored by the Daily Observer. Ma made the remarks during a meeting with Honduras President Manuel Zelaya aboard a charter flight they took along with Guatemalan Vice President Rafael Espada from Paraguay to the Dominican Republic after attending the inauguration of Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo. In response to a question from Zelaya on how Taiwan's solid allies should react to the fact that relations between Taiwan and China have significantly improved, Ma vowed that nothing will change these longstanding friendships. "The idea of 'diplomatic reconciliation and diplomatic truce' that I have proposed is aimed at improving cross-Taiwan Strait relations," Ma was quoted as saying by Presidential Office spokesman Wang Yu-chi. "As for our allies who have supported us all this time, we will only consolidate bilateral friendships even more," he said. "If our allies would like to develop substantive relations, such as economic or cultural relations, with China, Taiwan will be pleased to see that as well, just as Taiwan would like to do the same with China's allies," he added. The frosty relations between Taiwan and China have been thawing since Ma took office May 20, and his proposal of a "diplomatic truce" is aimed at terminating the longstanding diplomatic tug-of-war with China in which both countries try to lure each other's allies to switch diplomatic allegiance by offering large sums of money in foreign aid to developing countries. Ma also touted the strategy of "modus vivendi" or "pragmatic diplomacy," designed to leverage more international space for Taiwan. He said the improved cross-strait relations have been well-received by the United States, Taiwan's allies and other countries in the region. "Diplomatic truce is a strategy that serves multilateral interests, as not only relations between Taiwan and China are improved but relations between Taiwan and the U.S. are also improved," Ma stated. "Allies of both

Taiwan and China will all benefit from improved cross-strait relations," he added. Wang said Ma and Zelaya had a 20-minute discussion in which they also promised to strengthen bilateral cooperation. He told reporters that the arrangement for Zelaya and Espada to take the charter flight was made before Ma left Taiwan for his first state visit after assuming office. Ma is scheduled to attend the inauguration of President Leonel Fernandez to a new term in office Aug. 16. He will return to Taiwan Aug. 19.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Country's Beijing Swim Success: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.**

NO WONDER Robert Mugabe calls her his golden girl and a national treasure. Despite troubled political and economic times in her homeland, Kirsty Coventry has continued to serve her country with great distinction. Zimbabwe is lying 21st on the medals table at the Beijing Olympics with four medals - and Coventry has won every single one of them. Richer, bigger SA is lying nowhere and has no medals. The swimming dynamo from Harare has won gold in the women's 200m backstroke, silver in the women's 400m individual medley, silver in the 100m backstroke and silver in the 200m individual medley in Beijing. Coventry says she took up swimming because her parents and friends were all swimmers. She missed four months of training at the start of the 2005-06 season after injuring her knee at a World Cup meeting in Sydney, but has come back to improve on her three medals in Athens. After winning those three in Athens she returned to Zimbabwe to a huge celebration with beating drums and chanting, banner-waving fans. As a result of her achievements in Athens, many new babies in Zimbabwe were named Kirsty, with Coventry as a middle name. Other excited parents called their babies Gold-medal and even Three-medals. She was named Zimbabwe's sportswoman of the year in 2005 and 2006. The three medals she won in Athens were gold, silver and bronze.

- **Botswana: Work Permit Process Frustrates Chinese Envoy; [Mmegi/The Reporter](#) (Gaborone): 15 August 2008.**

Ambassador of China to Botswana, Ding Xiaowen, is a very frustrated man. His frustration comes from the slow speed of getting a work permit in Botswana. He said yesterday that though Chinese companies are currently working on major projects worth over P2 billion in Botswana, it still takes a long and complex procedure to get a work permit. "If you are lucky, it takes three months to get a work permit. But on the other hand, time for the projects is very limited. The taxpayer ends up paying a lot of money for delayed projects," he said. Xiaowen said that in addition, it is a hassle to find skilled labourer in Botswana. He said the few skilled workers available shy away from working long hours in construction sites. "Many people here don't want to work in construction sites," he said. The ambassador was responding to remarks made by MPs recently that unskilled Chinese labourers are seen in every corner of the country doing work that Botswana can do. He said that all Chinese working in Botswana are skilled and they impart their skills to the locals. He said that it is regrettable that specialised skills such as grader operators, tower crane operators, and even carpenters, are not easily found in

Botswana while the country requires that only foreign workers with degrees and higher qualifications can be imported. In some instances, he said, the contractors find themselves very limited on the ground and this causes delays that impact badly on projects. He cited the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport upgrading (P400 million), Francistown Stadium (P200 million) and Dikgatlong Dam (P1.4 billion) as projects that have been awarded to Chinese contractors, but are going through rough times because of delays in processing work permits. Media reports show that 43 Chinese nationals were arrested last week at Dikgatlong Dam construction site because they did not have work permits. "They had every legal document to be in Botswana, but they were waiting for the processing of their work permits. Which one was better - for them to wait in Beijing or to come here and wait at the site at the same time pushing the work?" Ding inquired. However, he was happy that the matter was resolved quickly and the workers were given temporary work permits. He said that he receives a lot of complaints from Chinese contractors in the country about shortage of skilled workers. The Good Hope Secondary School is another project that left him wondering whether this country will ever move forward. "We went around the village looking for labourers but there weren't enough skilled labour. We had to go to neighbouring and far away villages to get labourers, it was costly," he said. He stated that it is unreasonable for some people, especially MPs to think that Chinese contractors are importing unskilled labourers to Botswana. "It is expensive to bring a labourer here - skilled or not. But Botswana can learn a lot from our skilled people and later open their companies. Even China 20 years ago was flooded by Japanese electronics companies, but we learned their skills and today, we are able to produce quality goods that we sell to the world market," he said. He denied accusations that the Chinese have taken over small businesses in the country reserved for locals. He acknowledged that there are some Chinese doing business in rural areas, but said it is good for competition and consumers. "If there is competition, the locals will improve their service delivery to the customers and they will work hard to be at the same level as the Chinese," he said. Ding revealed that since last year, his office had assisted over 2,000 Botswana retailers to travel to China to buy goods. "Even ordinary people have told me that a few years ago, they could not afford clothes for their children, television sets and others, but since the arrival of the Chinese, they can afford all these," he stated. With the bad publicity that some Chinese companies have had in recent times, he said the local media is always biased towards foreigners. He said that trade disputes between Chinese companies and locals reach his office all the time and he carries out his own investigations. "What is reported in newspapers is most of the times different from what I hear," he said.

- **Angola: Chinese Official Guarantees Railways Works Conclusion:**
Angola Press Agency (Luanda): 17 August 2008.

The head of the rehabilitation brigades for Benguela's Railway (CFB), the Chinese Wang Xuanshang, guaranteed last Friday in Lobito District, in the central Benguela Province, that the fitting of the rail tracks from Benguela to the neighbouring Huambo Province will be concluded next December. The Chinese official said that the works of preparing the platform of the railway is already concluded in the section from Cubal District (Benguela) to Huambo City. "There are material conditions and human resources that will

guarantee the boost of the works in order to fulfil the established deadlines", he said. The official also said that the Chinese brigades have been working day and night so that by the end of 2011, the rehabilitation of Lobito (Benguela) railways up to Lwau City in the eastern Moxico Province, in an extension of 1,314 kilometres, can be concluded in order to benefit the Angolan development. On his turn, the Angolan Transports minister, Augusto Tomás, said that with the conclusion of the rehabilitation works of Benguela Railway (CFB), it will boost the economy of Angola and other countries of the region.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: China Strikes Wells of Hope in Kenya: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 16 August 2008.**

China has spent Sh3.7 billion in an aggressive search for oil in Eastern Province and says initial tests show "positive results", the Sunday Nation can reveal.

Industry experts said Chinese optimism is not surprising: oil was discovered at Loperot, 100 kilometres South of Lodwar by Shell in 1992 and the Chinese are prospecting in the same basin. Shell struck oil in the so-called Block 10B after drilling 11 dry wells. A dispute between the firm and the Kanu government halted exploration and the find was hushed up, but not before 19 litres of crude was extracted. In 1993 the US government estimated that there could be 100 million barrels of oil (worth more than Sh800 billion) at the Kenyan Coast alone. Woodside, an Australian company which prospected for oil off the Coast of Lamu, had calculated that four out of the seven possible wells, had more than 250 million barrels of oil, according to confidential documents seen by the Sunday Nation, and as much as one billion barrels for the whole of its block. Woodside left after its \$100 million drilling came up with nothing despite high expectation that they would strike at least natural gas. Kenya, which some experts describe as a gas rather than oil region, has a prospective 100,000 square kilometre oil field off-shore with between 600 billion and 6 trillion cubic feet of undiscovered natural gas, according to one US estimate. There was a gas explosion in a nearby coastal island during exploration and satellite maps seen by the Sunday Nation indicate seepage of oil on the sea bed.

Exploration efforts

A Chinese company, Bureau of Geophysical Prospecting, contracted by the government-owned China Offshore Oil Exploration Corporation, has been doing tests in Merti, 260 kilometres from Isiolo town. The Chinese project is one of five exploration efforts currently going on in various parts of the country. It also comes in the face of a mounting energy crisis which has seen the cost of fuel rise 40 per cent in 12 months and the cost of electricity follow suit. The Chinese have identified 15 wells which they say show strong signs of oil but are narrowing down to one. They are starting more exploration in neighbouring Marsabit District this month. In April, Lundin Company, a Swedish multinational visited Kargi and North Horr areas and informed the local community that they were to start searching for oil in the area. "They conducted meetings with the locals to inform them about their plans to search for oil," a resident of North Horr Hilary

Halkano told the Sunday Nation. This will be the second exploration in Kargi, the first was in 1987. A company contracted to do the job left behind holes which locals say contain water poisonous to animals. Kenya has a poor oil exploration record having only sunk 31 wells and none between 1992 and 2007. Sudan struck oil after drilling 78 times. BGP Party Chief Mr Ye Dong Quan told the Sunday Nation that the company identified the wells after seismic equipment, which can peer 20 kilometres into the ground using shock waves, detected oil in some points. Another engineer Mr Zhu Shanxin, who put the chances of striking commercially viable oil deposits at more than 50 per cent, said the wells must be draining into a major reservoir through underground oil rivulets and the task that remained was to establish which one among the 15 could be drilled. "Some of the wells might be too shallow or might have small amounts of oil not commercially viable," he said. The team has to establish the density, quality and quantity of oil before an announcement is made. Sources claimed that the Chinese are to spend up to \$60 million (Sh3.7 billion) on the project. The company has state of the art equipment on site, including a truck for generating seismic shocks and mobile data processing laboratories. "We would not have brought these machines here if we were not sure of striking oil. It is so expensive to maintain and run them," Mr Quan said. He said his company was prospecting for oil in 17 countries across the world, including Iran, Mexico, Pakistan, Nigerian and Sudan. The provincial administration has laid out the red carpet for the Chinese firm, posting more than 30 Administration Police officers to guard the base camp and field equipment around the clock.

Greatest concern

Six chiefs from Isiolo and Wajir districts have also been provided with a patrol vehicle to help keep off herders from the area. An oil industry insider, who spoke to the Sunday Nation in confidence, said Kenya does not seem to have a consistent prospecting strategy. Whereas the country has a good standard contract for oil, it has none for gas, though it is thought to be a gas region. The level of preparedness to deal with energy-hungry world powers such as China and the United States is also not there, the source added. China's conduct in Sudan, has been condemned. But the greatest concern is the threat of war with Somalia over the demarcation of off-shore territory. Kenya's territorial waters are clearly defined in the South by treaty with Tanzania but to the North the border is still open to interpretation. And given Somalia's past territorial ambitions, if Kenya finds oil or gas off-shore then trouble with Somalia is almost inevitable.

- **Uganda: China to Build Four Hospitals in City: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 20 August 2008.**

The Chinese government has donated \$15 million (about Shs24.3 billion) to Kampala City Council to upgrade four health centres into fully-fledged hospitals. Kampala Mayor Nasser Ntege Sebagala told Daily Monitor that the donation would be channelled through the central government. "We are grateful to the Chinese government for the donation and promise that the funds will be utilised appropriately," he said on Monday. The beneficiary health centres are Kiswa (Nakawa Division), Kiruddu (Makindye Division), Kawaala (Rubaga Division) and Naguru in Nakawa Division. An

estimated \$3.5 million is expected to be spent on each of the four hospitals. Mr Sebagala said construction is expected to commence early next year with Kiswa health centre located in Bugolobi, a city suburb, being the first beneficiary. He said the clinic would temporarily be relocated to another area to give way for construction work. "The demolition of the existing structures is expected to start in December and construction will follow. The three-storey hospital will be fully equipped and have over 100 beds," Mr Sebagala said. After completion, the hospitals are expected to have operation theatres, HIV and malaria centres and 24-hour ambulance services. The mayor said the Chinese government would do the construction and will only hand over-finished structures to KCC. KCC manages five grade II health centres serving about 3 million city dwellers. According to Mulago Hospital Director Edward Ddumba, the new hospitals will relieve Mulago of the big number of patients. "We are really handling more patients than a referral national hospital should," he said.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Government, China Sign Cooperation Pact: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 19 August 2008.**

An agreement on economic and technical cooperation between Rwanda and the Government of the People's Republic of China was signed at the Foreign Affairs Ministry yesterday afternoon. As a result, China will provide a grant of Renminbi ¥ 60m (over US\$8 million) to finance an agricultural technology demonstration center and polyclinic projects in the country. Renminbi, whose principal unit is the yuan, is the currency of the People's Republic of China. "We are happy with the cooperation between our two countries and we appreciate and hope this is all going to build on the already good relationship," Rosemary Museminali, Rwanda's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation said shortly after signing. Sun Shuzhong, China's Ambassador Extraordinary Plenipotentiary, also spoke well of the pact. He referred to the signing as an important component in the two countries' bilateral collaboration. Pointing to the forthcoming [October] senior officials meeting and ministerial meeting projected for next year, Shuzhong underscored the significance of a "new phase of development." "China will try its best to define new areas of cooperation in the years to come. I hope all these efforts will help boost economic development in Rwanda and even further improve China-Rwanda relations," he said. According to Museminali, the pact was in the framework of the Africa-China cooperation. Apart from potential market opportunities, China also largely benefits from Rwanda's support in different areas in the international forum, Museminali said while fielding reporters' questions.

101. PAN AFRICA

WEST AFRICA

- **Greenpeace Raises Alarm Over Rising E-Waste in Continent: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.**

As e-waste continue to pose health problem to the international communities, especially the third world countries, Greenpeace has called on the world's electronics companies to eliminate hazardous chemicals from their products, saying toxic waste from wealthy nations' gadgets ends up being dumped in poor countries despite laws prohibiting it. The environmental watchdog made the appeal in a new report on the electronic waste trade, which it said was spreading from Asia to West Africa - particularly Ghana, where discarded TVs and computers that contain toxic materials are being dismantled by children as young as 5. "Unless companies eliminate all hazardous chemicals from their electronic products and take responsibility for the entire life cycle of their products, this poisonous dumping will continue," said Martin Hojsik, a Greenpeace campaigner. "Electronics companies must not allow their products to end up poisoning the poor around the world." Many of the old computers, monitors and television sets that end up in Ghana come from the European Union, despite laws there prohibiting the export of such hazardous materials, Greenpeace said. In particular, the report cited shipments from Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands - as well as Korea. The materials are exported as "second hand goods" and purportedly meant to be reusable. But the report, citing a EU official, said most of these goods imported into Africa are broken and cannot be used again. In Ghana, the discarded waste is dismantled at scrap yards, where it is crushed or burned to separate plastics from more valuable metals like aluminum or copper, a process that pollutes the environment and exposes workers to toxic fumes. A Greenpeace team visited two main waste sites in Ghana - one in the capital and another in the smaller city of Korforidua. Soil samples analyzed at Britain's University of Exeter contained phthalates, which are suspected of causing reproductive problems, and lead. The report noted that while the EU officially prohibits such exports, the United States does not. Leading computer makers, including Dell Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co. and Apple Inc., have launched or expanded recycling programs in recent years. But overall, environmental groups and government regulators have said that a small percentage of electronics are actually being submitted for recycling.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **World Bank Asks Govts to Invest in Agriculture: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.**

The World Bank has advised African governments to make fiscal policy adjustments to save millions of their citizens threatened by the rising food prices. It is estimated that about 30 million people mainly in Africa could easily slip back into poverty as a result of high food prices. The call comes amid rising food prices resulting from growing demand for food items across the continent. The Senior Economist at the World Bank, Mr Robert Townsend, urged African governments to lower taxes such that people can have money to purchase food, increase investment in agricultural development and allocate resources channelled for agricultural development in a coordinated manner with the farmers. Addressing a televised video conference from the World Bank offices in Washington DC, Mr Townsend said the increase in food prices is likely to go on until 2009 thus calling for policy adjustments by governments. "The fiscal policy interventions can be divided into three broad classes: interventions to ensure household food security

by strengthening targeted safety nets; interventions to lower domestic food prices through short-run trade policy measures or administrative action and interventions to enhance longer-term food supply."Mr Townsend was speaking at a public lecture on the theme: "Current food and energy challenges in Africa and the response of the Bank and other international institutions."It is estimated that the food crisis could push 100 million people globally into poverty reversing the gains made in poverty reduction over the last seven years. The World Bank has pledged to invest between \$4 to \$6 billion in agriculture over the coming year.Africa is the most hit region by the rising food prices and the situation could go overboard with the increase in gas pump prices.More than 30 million people on the continent are at risk because majority of households spend roughly half of their incomes on food.Emergency food items are flowing into the continent to fill up the gap created by soaring prices for staples such as rice, maize, millet, and wheat.

102. HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND SOCIAL ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Minority Affairs International Promotes Citizens' Rights Abroad: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 22 August 2008.**

A Non-Governmental Organisation, Minority Affairs International, saddled with the burden of ensuring the rights of Nigerian immigrants has forwarded a proposal titled "National Migration Commission" to the Federal Government to serve as a watchdog for Nigerians residing outside the country.Addressing journalists in Lagos, Chief Executive Officer of the organisation, Mr. Fela Rahman said relief will soon come the way of immigrants if the proposal is approved by the concerned authorities. Among other things, the proposal aims to challenge prejudice and support the disadvantaged by promoting human rights of Nigerians in the Diaspora.According to him the proposal will also "reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, promote and protect human rights of individuals and strengthen good relationships between Nigerians and host countries.Continuing, Rahman said, " In order to bring about effective change, the Commission will use its vast knowledge, influence and authority to ensure that Nigerians travelling, residing and making a living in a foreign land, receive extended protection, the same way the United States, the United Kingdom and most developed countries protect their citizens when situations arise,""The organisation would also assist those finding themselves in difficulties due to misfortune such as long illness, breakdown of relationship, bereavement or any other unforeseen circumstances that have made them jobless and homeless.It would further campaign for social change and justice and develop an evidence-based understanding of the causes and effects of inequality for Nigerian migrants across Europe, Africa and America. The Commission will be an authoritative voice for reform".To achieve this, the CEO said the Commission will create a Legal department, Complaint and Investigation Department, Post mission office, Illegal Immigrants and deportees Centre, National Migrant Commission Identity cards and rehabilitation and counseling centre among others.

- **Gambia: New Islamic Council President Urges Unity: [The Daily Observer](#) (Banjul): 19 August 2008.**

Imam Momodou Lamin Touray, the newly elected president of the Gambia Supreme Islamic Council (GSIC) has called on Muslims in the country to bury their differences and unite for a common purpose. Imam Touray said Islam harbours no disunity and Muslims should unite for the good of Islam and the Ummah. Imam Touray, an erudite and reputed Islamic scholar, is the deputy Imam of Gunjur and a deputy Imam of State House mosque. He hails from Gunjur, Western Region, and is renowned for his fluidity in the propagation of Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He told the multitude of the faithful at the 4th national congress of the country's supreme Islamic body, on Sunday, at the GSIC Headquarters in Kanifing, that his election to the presidency was the will of Allah, but noted that all Muslim leaders in the country are equally competent to head the council. "The council belongs to all the Muslims in the country, but it is only when we unite together as a unified body that we can achieve the successes and developments that we all yearn for," the new GSIC president said, while calling for more commitment to Islam. Imam Touray challenged the Muslim Ummah to serve as a watchdog to the new executive committee of the council, as they should be corrected where they are likely to do wrong. However, he also called for maximum support from everyone in order to move the council forward. Imam Touray affirmed his resolve to make the council a more vibrant institution during his term and assured the gathering that the trust and confidence bestowed on them by Muslims will not be betrayed. At the occasion, the erudite Imam praised Allah for bringing the congress to a successful ending and the present government, under the leadership of President Alhaji Dr Yahya Jammeh, whom he thanked for his "unshakable" commitment to the cause of the council and Islam. Alhaji Banding Drammeh, the preceding president of GSIC, concurred with his successor's statement and urged Muslims to stand by the new executive committee in the execution of their functions. He informed the gathering that the outgoing executive will convene a meeting with the incoming one, for the formal handing over of the affairs of the council. Alhaji Mustapha Caroyol, the chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission, who presided over the election process, expressed satisfaction with the conduct of the congress. The 155 delegates who unanimously elected Imam Touray as president, also elected 10 other executive members to the executive committee of the council. They include Imam Sheriff Bajan and Imam Sheik Gibril Kujabi, as first and second vice presidents respectively; Dr Mbaye Kebba Kah and Ebrima Touray as the secretary-general and deputy secretary-general respectively; and Aji Jainaba Dibba and Cherno Darboe elected as the assistant secretary-general - English, and deputy assistant secretary-general - Arabic respectively. Other members of the committee are Baba Drammeh Junior, Alhaji Momodou Lamin Kanteh, Baba Babucarr Drammeh Senior and Aji Maimuna Savage.

- **Nigeria: Imam Wants Religious Laws in Constitution: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 18 August 2008.**

The Chairman of the Senate Committee of FCT Imams, Sheikh Tajuddeen Adigun, has suggested that the laws governing Islam and Christianity be incorporated into the

country's constitution. Adigun made the suggestion yesterday in Abuja at a one-day seminar on "Nigerian Constitutional Review: Imams' Perspective". The Seminar was organised by the Committee of FCT Imams. He said the inclusion of such laws would help reduce friction between adherents of the two religions as well as religious crises in the country. Adigun also advised the religious leaders to teach their followers to learn to tolerate other Nigerians, adding that Nigerians should respect one another and see themselves as brothers and sisters. "In addition, Moslems and Christians must be allowed to practise their religion as contained in their holy books," he said. The chairman told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that the only way Nigeria could develop and earn the respect of members of the international community, was for every one to join hands to develop the country. "God has blessed Nigeria with abundant human and materials resources and all we need as a people is for each and everyone of us to contribute to move the country forward." Nigeria will not develop if we keep emphasising those things that divide us; we should emphasis those things that unite us and not dwell on our differences," he said. Adigun blamed the country's problem on corruption and said that those engaged in it "do not belong to one particular religion or tribe". "Similarly, those who are rich or poor do not belong to one particular religion or tribe, so our problem has nothing to do with religion or tribe." "We will make progress as a nation, if we work together as other multi-religious and ethnic societies have done to move their countries forward," he added. Adigun called on the Federal Government to strengthen EFCC and ICPC to enable them win the war against corruption and said that nobody should be treated as a sacred cow. He also said that the only way to tackle the vices in the society was for parents and leaders to live by example.

- **Nigeria: 16 Sex Workers Back Out: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 20 August 2008.**

No fewer than 16 call girls publicly disowned their old ways during a preaching session organised by the daawah unit of the Kano State Hisbah Board at Daka Tsalle town of Bebeji local government of the state. In a dramatic scene, the repented whores came weeping to the venue where the preaching took place saying that they took up the profession by fate but were now set to quit the bad way. One of the born again ladies interviewed said she hailed from Zaria in Kaduna State and was married to a man from Kano who later divorced her. She said that when she was divorced she moved to her sister's house at Unguwa uku in Kano municipality. She disclosed that it was while she was at there that a man who said he was a businessman based in Lagos came seeking her hand in marriage. "But he brought me here (Daka Tsalle), and introduced me to this mess and fled" she said in tears. Speaking to LEADERSHIP, the Commander-General of the state Hisbah Board, Malam Ibrahim Muazzam Maibushira, said the preaching programmes was a method they employed for outreach to infamous places where evildoers reside. According to him, the repented prostitutes would be taken care of by the board. He added, "What we do is to hand them over to the Hisbah commander of that particular town and enroll them in schools. We then ask the local government chairman to provide women wares to any of them that get a suitable husband". Maibushira added that those who wanted to return to their parents would be taken there by the board and seek

their parent's forgiveness on their behalf. He explained that this was a wonderful achievement which portray Hisbah as a humanitarian establishment.

- **Nigeria: Integrates Western, Islamic Education: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 22 August 2008.**

Niger State Government has concluded arrangements to integrate Western and Islamic Education to further encourage all round and robust education for children in the state, Governor Babangida Aliyu who disclosed this in Minna yesterday, said under the new arrangement, operators of Islamic schools would be encouraged to integrate western education curriculum in their schools while teachers in such schools would be placed on monthly salary. Aliyu explained that the details of the programme were being worked out between the state government and the local government areas to ensure its smooth implementation. He equally called on local government chairmen in the state to set up committees on the principles of servant- leadership, stressing that a leader is a servant to the people. According to him, the servant has rights which must be respected and the leader must create the right atmosphere for the servant to work. The governor disclosed that an executive bill would soon be sent to the state House of Assembly to institutionalise the state ward development committees. Aliyu stated that ward development projects are being executed so that the impact of government can be felt at grassroots level. He explained that one of the provisions of the purposed law of the ward development committees is that councillors would be members of the committees in their respective wards. The governor said as soon as the finance of the state improves, allowances due to councillors would be reviewed upward while their constitutional entitlements would be given to them promptly. Aliyu also announced the purchase of 25 18-seater buses for the legislative councils of the 25 local government areas. He said the buses were aimed at enhancing the work and activities of the local government legislative councils in the state.

- **Ghana: Fight for Your Rights: [Ghanaian Chronicle](#) (Accra): 21 August 2008.**

The Greater Accra Regional Director of the Electoral Commission (EC), Mohammed Addo-Quaye, has called on people living with disabilities in the country, to constitute themselves properly, and demand for their rights. According to him, people living with disabilities should not allow other people to organize events or programmes for them, but rather come up with programmes that would serve their best interests. "I want to urge you to organize yourselves properly, draw up your own programmes, take the initiatives sometimes, assert yourselves, and do not always wait for others to draw up programmes for you," he pointed out. Speaking at a two-day workshop, organized by the EC, to sensitize persons with disabilities on the country's electoral process at Dodowa on Wednesday, Mr. Addo-Quaye said people with disabilities could source for funding, to produce their own posters and other publicity materials during an election period. The workshop, which was under the theme; "Awareness Creation Programme on the Electoral Process for the Ghana Federation for the Disabled," was to create awareness of the various stages of the electoral process, to enable the disabled persons become more

informed and active in the electoral process, so as to fight for policies that would improve their every day lives. The Chairman of the EC, Dr. Afari Gyan, noted that as a Commission, it was their wish that every Ghanaian becomes very knowledgeable about issues concerning the electoral process in the country. That is why for sometime now, they have been embarking on educational programmes to enlighten the general public, on voter or electoral issues. Consequently, he noted the Commission had in the past targeted other groups like journalists, whose duty it was to go round during electioneering periods, to give information about the event to the public. He disclosed that the Commission had decided to even target judges, who in the event of any incidences of criminality and offences during electioneering period, would determine such cases, to be well informed about issues pertaining to the electoral process. He apologized to the disabled body, for the struggle and inconveniences some of its members went through during the recently-held voter registration exercise. Dr. Afari Djan said the Commission did not anticipate such a mad rush for the exercise, because for the past 15 years or so, since the Commission has been organizing such exercises, the highest turnout of new voters they have recorded, was 600,000 people. "Given 2,500 stations, on the average each station was to register only 40 people per day, so we did not think that there would be this rush or struggle, such that it will be impossible for people with disabilities to register." It turned out to be otherwise, and we apologize, not having made special arrangements," the Chairman of the EC stressed. On his part, Joseph Adu Boampong, 1st Vice President of the Ghana Federation for the Disabled (GFD), thanked the EC for putting together such a programme for physically challenged persons. It was his hope that the EC would continue in its efforts to contribute towards the mainstreaming of the disabled people.

- **Côte d'Ivoire: Anti-Xenophobia Law Gets Lukewarm Reception:**
Inter Press Service (Johannesburg): 21 August 2008.

Human rights organisations are wary of a new law against xenophobia, racism and tribalism adopted by the Ivorian parliament. Certain organisations fear it will lead to infringements on freedom of speech. Adopted unanimously by members of Ivorian parliament, the law will carry sentences of five to ten years, and fines ranging from 500,000 to 5 million CFA francs (\$1,200 to \$12,000) for those found guilty of xenophobia, racism or tribalism. Sentences are doubled if the crime was committed in media (radio, television or print), any print medium or using any form of information technology. Sentences will also be doubled for acts committed during a demonstration or political rally. The law's preamble states that "for a number of reasons, individuals make claims or commit acts that weaken national unity and cohesion due to their racist, tribal, ethnic or xenophobic character." "By enacting these measures, the State will heal open wounds between Ivory Coast communities, and create an environment that fosters social harmony" declared Martin Bohui, a member of parliament.

Mixed reaction

Hervé Gouamené is the president of Action pour la protection des droits de l'Homme (APDH) a non-governmental organization based in Ivory Coast's capital Abidjan that works to defend human rights. "We're not opposed to a law against xenophobia,"

Gouamené told IPS. "However we're afraid of possible excesses and unintended consequences." "What kinds of actions would be covered? At what point would they be considered criminal?" Gouamené asks. "We should proceed carefully, because such a law could become a barrier to freedom of expression." Mathurin Kobenan, a legal expert based in Abidjan, disagrees. "There's is no cause for debate here," he says. "Over the last decade Ivory Coast has gained a reputation for being xenophobic. Adopting such a law counts as both a partial acknowledgment of this fact and a solution to the problem." "Applied properly, it will address the problem at its root by making it impossible for Ivorians to think of immigrants' racial, ethnic or religious differences in negative terms. As with the elimination of the residency card last November, the goal is to restore a sense of justice for those who have been mistreated," added Kobenan. However these arguments leave the Ligue ivoirienne des droits de l'Homme (LIDHO - the Ivorian Human Rights League) unconvinced. "What disturbs us about this law is that we haven't completed the studies," said Patrick N'Gouan, LIDHO's president. "There are some gaps, where the law fails to take into account current circumstances, especially with regards to political parties and tribal issues." "Politicians rely on tribalism for political mobilisation. When ethnic groups honor the head of state, they do so according to tribal customs. We in civil society are waiting to see how this law will be applied," he said. N'Gouan singled out a number of political rallies where hateful and disparaging remarks were made towards other ethnic groups, causing relationships between communities to become strained. Amadou Kéïta, a member of Abidjan's Malian community, said, "What's most important is a peaceful living environment that allows us to contribute to the development of our host country and, as a consequence, that of our mother country also. One must always respect the law and by the same token we'll fulfill our duties." Emile Kima, member of the Ivory Coast Burkinabé Association told IPS: "It's a step towards better relations between Ivory Coast and neighboring countries. Since the Ouagadougou Accord was signed (in Burkina Faso, March 2007), we've been working tirelessly for peace. This law and the abolition of residency cards are signs that things are back to normal." For six years, an armed rebellion in the north has split Ivory Coast in two. On September 19, 2002, ex-soldiers took up arms to bring an end to the exclusion of northern populations. However since the Ouagadougou Accord, process to resolve the crisis has been underway in this West African nation. Xenophobia emerged in Ivory Coast in the mid-1990s with the birth of the concept of "Ivorian-ness". It has since targeted several immigrant communities, particularly the two largest (Burkinabe and Malian) and has been one of the causes of conflict, according to many analysts. During August 7 celebrations marking the 48th anniversary of Ivorian independence, President Laurent Gbagbo called on his countrymen to strengthen cooperation with neighboring countries, especially Burkina Faso with whom Ivory Coast "shares a common destiny." "We must strengthen ties of friendship, brotherhood and cooperation between Ivory Coast and all neighboring countries and extending beyond that to all of West Africa, the continent and our friends throughout the world," Gbagbo said in a message to the nation. The declaration came close on the heels of an official visit to Burkina Faso in late July and then the adoption of the law against xenophobia. "It's yet another successful political move for President Gbagbo," Aboudramane Bamba, an Abidjan-based analyst told IPS. "Eliminating the residency cards and adopting a law against xenophobia will guarantee him support of neighbouring governments and their expatriate communities within Ivory

Coast."According to Bamba, "Preparations for November elections start early, and President Gbagbo is making sure he has all the right cards up his sleeve."

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Rights Groups Claim Violence Persists: [Zimbabwe Independent](#) (Harare): 22 August 2008.**

AN international human rights organisation has claimed that Zanu PF and state security organs are still perpetrating violence, undermining the party's credibility in the ongoing talks with the two formations of the MDC for a negotiated settlement to the country's decade-long crisis. In a 19-page report Human Rights Watch (HRW) said thousands of MDC activists who fled violence before the June 27 presidential election run-off were still in hiding, while armed Zanu PF supporters and government-backed "war veterans" and "youth militia" continued to terrorise villagers in the rural areas. "The government has made little effort to dismantle the torture camps and bases established by Zanu PF and its allies since the first round of elections on March 29," the report said. "In the past four months Zanu PF and its allies have been implicated in the killing of at least 163 people and the beating and torture of more than 5 000 others. Thirty-two of these people were killed after the run-off and two since Zanu PF and the MDC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on July 21." In the MoU, the parties agreed to stop all forms of politically motivated violence. The MDC claims that 122 of its supporters were killed before the run-off. The HRW report titled *They Beat Me like a Dog: Political Persecution of Opposition Activists and Supporters in Zimbabwe*, describes ongoing abuses, including killings, beatings and arbitrary arrests, by Zanu PF and its allies against MDC members of parliament, activists and supporters. "Zanu PF and its allies are still committing violent abuses, undermining the party's credibility as a political partner," said Georgette Gagnon, Africa director at HRW, in the foreword of the report. The report said the presence of torture camps and of armed Zanu PF supporters, militias and war veterans highlights the precarious nature of the human rights situation in Zimbabwe. "The ongoing tragedy has been exacerbated by an increasingly dire humanitarian situation," the report says. "Severe government restrictions on the distribution of humanitarian assistance, including food aid by local and international agencies, have had a devastating impact on people in the rural areas of Zimbabwe." According to the World Food Programme an estimated five million people are in need of food aid. The report was published amid claims by the Morgan Tsvangirai-led MDC that its supporters in Buhera South, Manicaland, were being intimidated and abducted by suspected Zanu PF war veterans and youth militia believed to have been sent by war veterans leader Joseph Chinotimba. Chinotimba lost the Buhera South parliamentary seat to the MDC's Naison Nemadziwa in the March 29 elections. Nemadziwa told the *Zimbabwe Independent* that Zanu PF still had bases in the constituency. "Last week, the wife of MDC activist Killion Chirawo was abducted and beaten by Zanu PF youths who were looking for her husband," Nemadziwa alleged. "They went back to Chirawo's house and when they did not find him they chased after his brother Moses Chirawo. Fortunately he managed to escape. The police tell us that they do not have powers to help us because of Chinotimba's position in Zanu PF and in the war veterans association." Efforts to get a

comment from Chinotimba were fruitless. The violence claims come just weeks after Zanu PF and the MDC issued a joint statement condemning violence nationwide and pledging to work on the matter. Police spokesperson Wayne Bvudzijena yesterday said he wanted to verify reports of the alleged politically-motivated violence. Meanwhile, MDC refugees at Ruwa Rehabilitation Centre staged a demonstration on Monday protesting against the presence of a Zanu PF activist at the centre whom they accused of causing terror in Ruwa, Epworth, Mabvuku and Tafara before the run-off. The refugees accused Zanu PF activist Teacher Kadumbo of beating up MDC supporters, destroying their houses, looting their property and displacing them. According to MDC Epworth councillor for ward seven, William Mapfumo who was at the scene, Kadumbo came to the centre as part of the Reserve Bank team compiling data on the Bacossi facility. "When the refugees spotted Kadumbo they protested saying he was one of the Zanu PF activists behind political violence," Mapfumo claimed. "The chairperson of the refugees, Tangai Takaruza, approached the centre's authorities demanding to know what Kadumbo wanted and he was told that he was on central bank business." The refugees, Mapfumo alleged, started singing demanding that Kadumbo be arrested for the crimes he committed against them. "Kadumbo was handed over to Ruwa police and we wait for justice to be delivered," he said.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Media Accused of Fanning Election Chaos: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 21 August 2008.**

The media contributed actively to the violence that rocked the country early this year, the Information and Communications permanent secretary has said. Dr Bitange Ndemo, who took to the stand on Thursday, told the Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence that the run-up to last year's General Election saw media houses take partisan positions and engage in unbalanced reporting, adding that Kenyans in the diaspora also played a role. According to the PS, most of the websites and blogs with inciting messages were run by Kenyans living abroad. The commission, led by Mr Justice Phillip Waki, indicated that a media practitioner will be summoned next week to shed more light on the role of the media in the chaos. At the same time, Mr Justice Waki ordered the PS to table all media content aired or published during and after last year's polls, which may have incited or fuelled violence on Monday. The materials will be presented to the commission in camera. Broadcast content, whether audio, visual or audio-visual, as well as newspaper cuttings, website and blog samples are expected to be analysed by the commission.

Specific stand

Dr Ndemo said that his ministry had prepared confidential evidence on the role the media played in the violence. "We have sourced media scripts of content aired before and after the elections," he said. Dr Ndemo, however also told the commission that his personal view was that media houses can take a specific political stand. The PS told the Waki team that the dissemination of unregulated content, especially by vernacular FM stations, fuelled the violence. He disclosed that following the chaos, the ministry set up a Media

Monitoring Unit that kept tabs on 11 TV stations, 70 radio stations and five mainstream newspapers on a 24-hour basis. However, it was difficult to transcribe content aired by vernacular stations because the language was often coded and may have different interpretations. Dr Ndemo accused Parliament of failing to pass the required appropriate laws with regard to the flow of information. He further defended the live broadcast ban made on December 31, last year, saying that the acrimony and bitter exchange by politicians at the KICC had brought the country to the brink. The Waki public hearings adjourned for private sessions in the afternoon. The hearings resume on Monday morning.

- **Tanzania: Religious Harmony Should Prevail: [The Citizen \(Dar es Salaam\)](#): EDITORIAL: 19 August 2008.**

A particularly worrying incident occurred on Sunday in Nguruka, Kigoma Region, when fighting broke out between Christians belonging to the Anglican Church of Tanzania and Muslims. Reports from the small town along the railway line from Kigoma to Tabora said the Muslims had attempted to attack an Anglican evangelist they had accused of making blasphemous remarks against Islam. The incident is indeed regrettable and deserves the condemnation of all people who aspire for religious harmony in Tanzania. For, as we all know, this country's constitution asserts in black and white that Tanzania has no religion. The constitution gives its citizens the freedom and right to follow any religion as long as they do not break the law. We therefore wonder why people had to act the way they did on Sunday. If the Muslims were offended by the preaching of the Anglican evangelist, as the reports say, the proper procedure was to report their grievances to the police, who, in our view, would have dealt with the issue in accordance with the law. On the other hand, if it is indeed true that the evangelist had uttered offensive and disparaging remarks against Muslims, then we condemn this transgression in the strongest terms possible. For religious freedom does not in any way mean despising or offending other religions. Religious leaders should only preach the word of God and nothing else. Standing on the pulpit does not give preachers a licence to fault and disparage other faiths. They should stick to what the Bible or Quran says. Period. That said, we call for harmony among all religions. Religious skirmishes and other conflicts pitting members of different denominations should be avoided by all well-wishing Tanzanians as they could have devastating consequences on the country. We should avoid them at all costs.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Mission Trains Police On Sexual Violence: [UN News Service \(New York\)](#): 21 August 2008.**

The United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is holding training sessions for the vast African nation's police in a bid to ensure that victims and witnesses of sexual violence are better protected. The training courses were carried out by the human rights branch - which monitors and documents rights abuses across the country - of the mission, known by its French acronym MONUC. Given

the high rates of sexual violence in the DRC, international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have joined forces with the Government to tackle the scourge. Under this "joint initiative" framework, the UN is in charge of the legal and judicial aspects to help victims find justice and to protect their human rights. In a report made public last month, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that tackling both sexual and gender-based violence poses a "complex challenge" for the DRC. "While data remains imprecise, there are indications that almost one third of new cases reported through the Joint Initiative emanate from North Kivu, primarily from internally displaced persons (IDPs)," he wrote, adding that sexual violence has also been reported to be on the rise in South Kivu. The report also raised concerns about impunity for crimes committed, especially by State agents, especially the police. Nearly 40 police inspectors and investigators in the territories of Beni, Butembo and Lubero in the North Kivu province were educated this month on new laws regarding sexual crimes; procedures for helping victims of such violence; and protection of victims and witnesses, among other topics. MONUC has also trained Government forces, known as FARDC, in child protection, human rights, sexual violence and military justice. In June, close to 1,800 soldiers underwent a course in South Kivu as part of the mission's zero-tolerance campaign on recruiting children into armed forces. This week-long human rights component was part of a broader 12-week course that also covered military tactics, weapons handling, logistics and professional ethics. To date, MONUC has trained some one dozen FARDC integrated battalions, and it continues to support the efforts of the Congolese Government in the creation of a professional army, with the goal of training 28 FARDC integrated battalions by September 2009. In a June report, MONUC found that FARDC was one of the biggest human rights violators, with its members being accused of rapes, torture, armed robberies, extortion and arbitrary arrests. On completing the training, the troops were deployed in South Kivu, an area which sees frequent attacks from militias and foreign armed groups, to consolidate State authority.

- **Rwanda: Trial of Rwandan Army Officers Accused of Murdering Bishops in 1994 Begins: [Hirondelle News Agency](#) (Lausanne): 20 August 2008.**

Arusha, 20 August 2008 (FH) - The trial of four officers of the current Rwandan army prosecuted for murders in Kabgayi, central Rwanda, in 1994, of 13 members of the Catholic clergy, including three bishops, opened Tuesday before a military tribunal in Kigali, reported Wednesday governmental radio station, Radio Rwanda. General Wilson Gumisiriza, Major Wilson Ukwishaka as well as Captains John Butera and Dieudonné Rukeba were arrested on 11 June, following joint investigations by the Rwandan Prosecutor General and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). "The trial started to rule on the merits yesterday (Tuesday)", reported the radio. The two accused captains renewed their guilty plea of 17 June at the time of their initial appearance. However, they have requested the tribunal to thoroughly examine their case by taking into account the context and the circumstances of the time of the facts. General Gumisiriza and Major Ukwishatse, who pleaded not guilty, did not have the time to begin their testimonies Tuesday because it was late, according to Radio Rwanda. The proceedings continued all day on Wednesday, eye-witnesses told Hirondelle Agency on

phone from Kigali. The other two accused-- General and Major--have rejected any responsibility, asserting that they did not know that their subordinates were going to commit these murders perpetrated on 5 June 1994. All four defendants were then members of the armed wing of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF, the former rebellion currently in power in Rwanda). Among the clergymen killed, almost all of them Hutus was the Archbishop of Kigali, Vincent Nsengiyumva, Bishop of Byumba (northern Rwanda) Joseph Ruzindana, and Bishop of Kabgayi, Thaddee Nsengiyumva, then President of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Rwanda.

103. REFUGEES AND MIGRATION ISSUES

WEST AFRICA

- **Sierra Leone: GTZ to Repatriate 3,000 From Freetown: [Concord Times](#) (Freetown): 21 August 2008.**

German development agency, GTZ's project manager Tuesday told President Ernest Bai Koroma at State House that up to 3,000 young people have expressed willingness to be repatriated from Freetown to where they hailed from. Lawrence Paul Myer said his organization embarked on a pilot programme of resettlement and reintegration of marginalized youth in Freetown and the mining areas back to their communities in four town and villages in Kono and Kailahun districts. "There are between 100,000 and 200,000 youth in the country working in extremely difficult conditions and who were initially displaced by the war and scattered in urban areas," Myer said. GTZ, he said, has so far succeeded in repatriating some 300 young people who were mainly taught skills that would get them engaged in agricultural activities. They would be managed by a 'food for work' programme that includes a \$300 package for each family. President Koroma applauded the efforts of GTZ saying it was a wonderful idea to repatriate displaced people in urban areas back to their villages of origin up-country. Koroma recalled that a few weeks back he had called a meeting of development partners and donor community at State House on his government's identified priority areas which he would like them to co-opt into their projects. The President said he was happy that the pilot scheme was started in Kailahun and Kono which are border districts with great agricultural potentials. "My government is now turning its priorities on agriculture and this is an opportune time with a project like this to give young people skills to get involved in agriculture," he said adding that the project would combat some of the challenges associated with urbanization.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zambia: Making a Home for Themselves: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 19 August 2008.**

Zambia is home to over 90,000 refugees, many of whom have been in the country for up to 15 years. A voluntary repatriation programme is now drawing to a close, but many of the refugees will likely remain in a country where they have established themselves. The

refugees come mostly from Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, with smaller but significant numbers from Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. With peace now returning to some these war-torn countries, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has been helping to repatriate increasing numbers of these refugees back to their countries of origin. But some of the refugees no longer want to return to their native countries. Mushata Bobo, a Congolese refugee at Meheba refugee camp in Solwezi town, in northwestern Zambia says, "Children have been born here in this camp. They are now in secondary school. Why should we go back?" The U.N. refugee agency will close the voluntary repatriation programme in the next two years. In 2006 and 2007 season, 74,000 Angolans and 7,000 Congolese refugees were repatriated back to their country of origin. The UN- humanitarian agencies are hoping to assist some 26,000 Congolese and other refugees return home in 2008 and 2009. The international Organisation for Migration will facilitate transportation while World Food Program will provide food to the returnees. The Zambian government has yet to decide what status will be given to those who remain behind when the UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme closes down in 2010. Latest statistics show that there are over 15,000 refugees at the Meheba camp alone. Kelvin Shimo, UNHCR programme officer for Zambia, said services such as food and other support in education have at times been inadequate. "Funding is one of the major difficulties we face in the period that the refugees have lived in the country. But I believe this also a responsibility of the international community to be much involved as well," Shimo said. Meheba camp is the largest refugee camp in the country, covering an area of 720 square kilometres. It was opened in 1971. The UNHCR and U.S.-based non-governmental organisation FORGE (Facilitating Opportunities for Refugee Growth and Empowerment) have been engaged in training refugees in subsistence agriculture skills. They have also provided cash loans to encourage economic self-sufficiency. The refugees are involved in various programmes such as fish farming and rearing livestock. Each family is allocated 2.5 hectares of land, together with agricultural tools and seeds. They are expected to grow their own food such as cassava, maize, sweet potatoes and a variety of vegetables. Others refugees have taken small loans from FORGE project to start business ventures. Kjerstin Erickson, FORGE project manager, told IPS that the project has been successful in the past five years they have been in operation in the refugee camps. "Our small loans are about K 500,000 each (about US\$ 140). Now, however, we've switched to giving out agro-loans, in which we give out bags of fertilizer during the planting season and are repaid in maize after the crops have been harvested," Erickson said. "It is envisaged that the refugees grow enough food to sustain themselves and sell the surplus food." FORGE is running 25 projects with 162 staff members working in the three refugee camps in Zambia. "Business is okay," said Kundo Ndumbe in an interview. He is one of the beneficiaries of the FORGE project at the Meheba camp, "I now own a bakery and I have been able to pay back the loan I got." Now with the community in the area near the camp growing due to the increasing mining activities, the refugees at the camp are encouraged to produce more agriculture products to supply to the mine community. The Lumwana Copper Mine (LCM), eight kilometers from the Meheba refugee camp, will be biggest copper and uranium mine in Africa when it opens later this year. It will employ over 1000 workers directly. Other sectors are also expected to develop within the area. Erickson said with agro-loans, the main risk is the changing weather patterns and the growing conditions. "We have found-out that refugees can be

very reliable when given the right tools, education, and support."As the voluntary repatriation comes to an end in 2010, the UNHCR will focus on resettling for those refugees who will remain."Our goal will be to protect and re-settle those refugees. As UNHCR, we think re-settling them is a primarily tool we can use to protect them [refugees]," Shimo told IPS. The UN refugee agency and some international donors have developed a Strengthening Protection Capacity Project aimed at protecting refugees. It will also assist Zambia to revise the refugee legislations to meet international standards for protecting refugees."Some sections in this project will be a systematic monitoring and improvement of detection conditions of refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as helping with legal representation for refugees and asylum seekers before mobile courts," said Shimo.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Sudan: Five Killed in Darfur Camp Floods, UN Peacekeeping Mission Reports: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 19 August 2008.**

At least five people have been killed and some 1,500 homes destroyed in floods at camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan's strife-torn Darfur region, the joint United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported today. The floods affected several camps and UNAMID said a damage assessment was under way. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the area are trying to provide water, food and sanitation, it added. UNAMID yesterday also strongly condemned recent attacks on two of its helicopters in West Darfur. It said the incidents were "unacceptable obstacles to UNAMID's mandate and mission in Darfur," and called on all parties to cease and desist from violence and aggression. One helicopter was hit while flying approximately 90 kilometres northeast of El Geneina, the state capital sustaining damage to its radio system and rear fuselage. The leadership of the rebel group known as the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) apologized for the attack, saying that its elements had mistaken the aircraft for one operated by the Government of Sudan. The second helicopter was fired on approximately three kilometres south of Jebel Moon but was not hit. Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

- **Uganda: Scuffle As Congolese Refugees Are Relocated to Nakivale Camp: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 22 August 2008.**

About 30 Congolese refugees who have been stranded in Kampala for several months were on Wednesday relocated to Nakivale Refugee Resettlement camp in Isingiro District amid stiff resistance. The group comprising mainly women and children has been sleeping in an open ground at the main entrance of Interaid Uganda on Kabaka Anjagala Road in Mengo. But at around 3am yesterday, Police raided their 'camp', flogged the refugees and bundled them onto a bus to Nakivale. Mr Mushengezi Zihahirwa, 28, told Daily Monitor that they were flogged and Mr Piracel Dieudonne, 46, was hospitalised. "We were sleeping only to be woken up by strokes of the cane. It was a very nasty experience and we did not expect the Police to do that," he said on phone on the bus to Nakivale. But Old Kampala Division Police Commander Moses Mwanga refuted the

refugees' claims. "It is not true. No one was harassed. Why should we harass them? We wanted them to board a bus to Nakivale which they accepted though some tried to resist," Mr Mwanga told Daily Monitor. The refugees were reportedly asking Interaid, an agency charged with assisting immigrants, to legalise their stay in Kampala saying they feel unsafe in camps. However, Interaid rejected their appeal. Ms Sicolastica Nasinyama, the Executive Director, said: "We referred them to the Prime Minister's Office but they stubbornly refused to leave our premises." The refugees fled to Uganda following violent clashes between the Lendu and Hema in eastern DR Congo. Refugees have two choices. They can either remain in Kampala and forfeit the right to assistance or move to a resettlement camp and receive aid.

104. HEALTH MATTERS (HIV/AIDS, MALARIA, TB)

WEST AFRICA

- **Sierra Leone: Country Qualifies for Health Sector Fund: Concord Times (Freetown): 22 August 2008.**

Senior advisor to the ministerial leadership initiative for global health, Dr. Deinca Mutumbuka has congratulated the country for being one of the five countries chosen from over 70 nominees for health financing and leadership development. Other countries include Nepal, Senegal, Mali and Ethiopia. During a meeting at the ministry of health and sanitation he said the initiative sought to strengthen the leadership capacity of ministers of health and their senior staff to promote pro-poor health financing reforms, harmonize and align donor funds for health and to prioritize women's health. Dr Mutumbuka said initiative was poised to support ministerial teams through peer learning opportunities, tailor intensive technical assistance and practical business-style cases of ministerial led best practices. He observed that unless a broad consensus in the global health community is achieved by strengthening leadership and human resource capacity, the millennium development goals would be farfetched. Programme officer health financing and leadership Loren Becker said the principles of the initiative was to respect the alignment to the Paris declaration, the option for countries to choose their own areas of focus and encourage countries to look for technical resources locally, regionally and globally.

- **Nigeria: Sickle-Cell Disorder Killing 100,000 Infants a Year: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 21 August 2008.**

At least 100,000 infants die from the sickle-cell genetic disorder in Nigeria every year, and the country still has the highest incidence of the illness in Africa.

"From available statistics, 100,000 infants die from sickle-cell disease in Nigeria annually, making it the number one sickle-cell endemic country in Africa," Sadiq Wali, president of the Nigeria Sickle-cell Foundation, told IRIN. "Based on World Health Organization [WHO] indices, Nigeria accounts for 75 percent of infant sickle-cell cases in Africa and almost 80 percent of infant deaths from the disease in the continent", Wali said. According to the WHO, 200,000 infants are born with sickle-cell in Africa every

year, with Nigeria accounting for about three-quarters of these births. Sixty percent of the 200,000 will die as infants. Sickle-cell disease is an incurable genetic disorder widespread in sub-Saharan Africa and among descendants of Africans worldwide. Sufferers have no visible symptoms, but periodically experience severe pain and are also highly prone to anaemia because the blood cells break down after only 10-20 days, rather than the usual four months. A person can only inherit sickle-cell disorder if both parents are carriers of the genetic trait, and then there is a one in four chance of giving birth to an affected child. WHO says that in some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, up to 2 percent of children are born with the condition. For more on this see *Africa: Little help for those who suffer from blood disorder*. "This genetic disorder alone accounts for 8 percent of infant mortality in Nigeria which calls for urgent attention", Wali said. Around four million Nigerians are estimated to suffer from the disease, while 25 million others carry the genes which they pass to their offspring.

Link with malaria?

According to the WHO, sickle-cell is particularly prevalent in areas of high malarial transmission. "The mutant sickle-cell gene confers a survival advantage against malaria which explains the prevalence of the disease in Nigeria where malaria is endemic," explained Ibrahim Musa, a Nigerian medical expert based at Kano general hospital. Carriers of sickle-cell are less prone to being infected with malaria, which attacks red blood cells. However, those with sickle-cell disease are more vulnerable to malaria because of their weakened health, experts say. Although sickle-cell in infants is curable through bone marrow transplants, lack of expertise and the high cost of the operation makes preventive measures the best option, medical experts say. "This is why we advocate genetic counselling by intending couples before marriage to determine the status of their genes", Nigeria Sickle-cell Foundation's Wali said. "People should go for a genetic test in the same way they determine their HIV status before marriage as the most effective way to protect their children and curtail the disease", he said. Sickle-cell contributes to 9 percent of deaths in children under five in West Africa, and up to 16 percent in some countries. Sickle-cell has a heavy impact on children: malaria is the leading killer of under-fives in Africa.

- **Nigeria: Government Earmarks N6 Billion for Free Medicare: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 21 August 2008.**

The Federal Government has set aside N6 billion to facilitate free medical care for children and pregnant women in six states, Executive Secretary of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), Dr. Dogo Muhammad, said in Minna, Niger State yesterday. Muhammad, who was speaking at an advocacy meeting with the Niger State Executive Council, said the fund was received from the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) fund. He said the money would be used to support the MDG-Maternal and Child Health Project in Gombe, Niger, Sokoto, Bayelsa, Oyo and Imo. He said that under the project, all children under five and pregnant women would enjoy free medical services. He said the decision to undertake the project was informed by the increasing child and maternal mortality rate in the country. "Today in Nigeria, according to available

statistics, 191 children die out of every 100,000 births and 1,100 women die out of every 100,000 deliveries," he said. The secretary said that the project was aimed at reducing the country's child and maternal mortality rate of 63 deaths per 100,000 births. He said that the project was expected to cover 600,000 children and pregnant women in the six states. "More than 100,000 people are expected to benefit in each of the pilot states," he added. Each of the benefiting states will get N700 million for the project in the first year of operation, Muhammad said. Governor Babangida Aliyu said the state had already embarked on free medicare for children under five, pregnant women and the aged. Aliyu said the state would match the grant from the MDG office with an additional N2.7 billion to ensure that all vulnerable groups enjoyed free medicare.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Botswana: Aids Ravages Quarter of Country's Labour Potential: Mmegi/The Reporter (Gaborone): 20 August 2008.**

HIV/AIDS is the foremost cause of maternal, newborn and child death in southern Africa whilst in Botswana, one in four people in the 15 to 49 years age bracket is HIV/AIDS infected, the 2008 State of The World's Children Report says. According to the report, the risk to children starts well before birth, owing to the fact that one third of pregnant women aged between 15 and 24 are HIV positive. Maternal HIV positive status, it says, leads to an increased rate of still births and deaths in the neonatal period and infancy, even if HIV is not transmitted to the child. "Women who contract HIV during pregnancy or while breastfeeding have a high risk of passing the infection to their newborn. Moreover, mothers are increasingly at risk of death, leaving behind babies with diminished chances of survival. AIDS is a significant cause of disability and death in babies and children beyond one month," it reads. The report praises government's positive response by providing free health services for the prevention of mother-to-child-transmission (PMTCT), especially aimed at benefiting women and children to help in fighting HIV/AIDS. "These services include obstetric practices, counselling, HIV testing, prophylaxis or treatment for HIV infection and testing for babies for HIV infection at six weeks of age. Antiretroviral therapy is also provided to qualifying mothers and their families. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation is implemented and closely managed," the report says. It takes cognisance of the milestones Botswana made, among them the unified co-ordination mechanism around a single national scale-up plan. PMTCT was fully integrated with maternal and child health services, and government has made ongoing adjustments to increase quality and service uptake. "Community participation and male involvement were also crucial elements to support women who chose not to breastfeed and to facilitate follow up paediatric care and support," the report says.

- **Namibia: Government Supports Circumcision as Anti-HIV Tool: The Namibian (Windhoek): 21 August 2008.**

MALE circumcision should be regarded as part of a comprehensive package of HIV prevention interventions, says Health and Social Services Minister Richard Kamwi. He made the call at the opening of a two-day meeting on male circumcision in Windhoek on

Tuesday. Kamwi said circumcision provided partial protection against HIV infection. Recent international research has revealed that male circumcision could be a potential method for limiting the spread of HIV. Kamwi said despite significant efforts to fight the HIV pandemic in Namibia, the Ministry was still seeing prevalence rates of 19 per cent among pregnant women. "Our models estimate that there are approximately 40 new HIV infections a day in our country. Safe male circumcision for HIV prevention is now being given attention in Namibia and other African countries as a potential tool our prevention package," said Kamwi. However, the introduction of safe male circumcision services in Namibia needs to take into account local cultural and religious values to ensure accountability by communities and built on existing cultural practices, he said. "We know that in some communities circumcision is a well-established practice. Careful assessment and conversation with leaders and communities continues to take place to plan for a scale-up of safe male circumcision services in Namibia," he said. Kamwi said this required well-trained health workers, equipment and supplies. But he emphasised that circumcised man could still become infected and those who were HIV positive could infect their partners. There was no evidence that circumcising men who are HIV positive had any protective effect on their partners, the Minister pointed out. "HIV-negative men who engage in sexual activity before they have healed [from the circumcision] are also at risk of becoming infected with HIV." Therefore, all men who undergo circumcision should be counselled to abstain from sexual activity until they are healed and thereafter use condoms correctly and consistently," Kamwi said. Male circumcision is one of the oldest and most common surgical procedures worldwide, done for religious, cultural, social or medical reasons.

- **Namibia: Foot-And-Mouth Disease Costs Communal Farmers: [New Era \(Windhoek\): 22 August 2008.](#)**

The outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the two north-eastern regions has resulted in financial losses to communal farmers there, Meatco has said. The disease, which broke out in Caprivi towards the end of last year and in the Kavango region last month, has been a setback for the farmers in these regions, Meatco's Chairman, Arne Gressmann, said on Wednesday. He was speaking at the launch of Ekwatho Meatco Financing Scheme. Caprivi State Veterinarian, Dr Frank Chitate, said the impact on the farmers' income was significant because cattle sales through the export abattoir were their main source of income. "The closure of the abattoir means that the farmers have not been able to get an income," he said, adding that the impact was great as no country could import meat from an area that has foot-and-mouth disease. The only slaughter at present is at village level, which does not bring in as much money as what they derive from the abattoir. With the closure of the Katima Mulilo abattoir in November 2006, farmers lost income they used to receive after delivering slaughter cattle to the abattoir. In 2006, the abattoir provided an income of nearly N\$20 million to local farmers. Due to the foot-and-mouth disease surveillance status of the Northern Communal Areas (NCAs), the marketing of livestock in these areas is restricted to either slaughter for local consumption or slaughter at export abattoirs under strict quarantine requirements. The NCAs have always been closed to fresh meat exports to the European Union and are restricted to the local or South African market. "NCA farmers are penalised by the cost of

compliance with foot-and-mouth disease regulations as well as by the relative lack of marketing infrastructure," the chairman said. Gressmann said, "It is of utmost importance that everything possible is done to get the situation under control and also that the necessary control measures are enforced to prevent any further spread of the disease." Meanwhile, veterinary officials are still vaccinating cattle, with close to 90000 having been vaccinated. Chitate said the vaccination would last another three weeks because the eastern areas, which until now have been inaccessible by road because of the floods, were starting to dry up. There are still between 40000 and 50000 cattle that still need vaccinations. Since November last year, there have been 1290 cases of foot-and-mouth disease. But Chitate said he was happy with the way the disease is being managed so far because the cases have dropped considerably. April had the highest number of cases with 286, which has dropped to 53 in July. The Caprivi Region has a cattle population of 140000.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Uganda: Scientists Plan New HIV Protection for Females: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.**

SCIENTISTS are designing a new way of protecting women from getting infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, the Uganda Aids Commission chief said yesterday. Dr. Kihumuro Apuuli said studies were ongoing to combine anti-retroviral drugs with pessaries for vaginal insertion to kill HIV before it gets into body cells. A pessary is a device placed in the vagina either as support for the uterus or as a contraceptive. This follows the unpopularity of the female condom. Many females said it was difficult to use, noisy and not convenient. The director general, who was addressing journalists at the Media Centre in Kampala, said scientists unveiled the study at the recent Global HIV conference in Mexico. Apuuli was flanked by Dr. Jesse Kagimba, the senior presidential adviser on HIV and Dr. Stephen Watiti of Mildmay Centre. He, however, added that participants noted that there was no hope yet for a breakthrough in finding a cure for the deadly disease and that new infections were outpacing treatment. For every one person taking ARV drugs, Apuuli said, two more were getting infected. "The infections in Uganda, Senegal and Kenya, which were reported as falling, are now gradually rising. It is the same in the USA," he said. "This means we are unable to sustain treatment and must, therefore, scale up prevention measures." Apuuli noted that there were people able to resist infection for many years despite repeated exposure to the virus. He said such people held the hope for a cure. The ministries of health and justice were working on the proposed law to punish those who intentionally infect others with HIV, stated the director general, adding that such people were few. Apuuli condemned the recent act of a husband in Rukungiri district, who stabbed his wife to death, accusing her of infecting him with HIV. He called for more counselling, saying a positive result for one person did not mean that their spouse was also infected. Watiti, who said he was living with HIV, noted that there was laxity on preventive behaviour, especially among the older people most likely to be in the marriage bracket.

- **Uganda: Clay Pots to Store Children's Aids Drugs: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 22 August 2008.**

Clay pots that have traditionally been known to store drinking water can now be used to store children's Aids drugs in the absence of refrigerators. The drug in question is called Keletra. It is in liquid formulation and is given to those children who catch HIV following the failure of nevirapine to protect them after being born to infected mothers. Amid resource limited settings across the country where health centres only have refrigerators for keeping vaccines, this development comes as relief to HIV/Aids care treatment programme implementers in the country. Speaking at the ongoing second national paediatric HIV/Aids conference in Kampala yesterday, the executive director of the Baylor Uganda Programme, Dr Addy Kekitiinwa, said the innovation was first piloted at Mulago Hospital's Paediatric Infectious Diseases Clinic. "In situations where our health centres and homes do not have refrigerators we must come up with innovation of how to store this Keletra until companies come out with small tablets that can be dissolved for these little babies," she explained. "We have found that using a clay pot works miracles. You put in sand, some water to wet the sand and place the Keletra bottle and it will remain as if it is in a fridge, just like we keep our drinking water." Dr Kekitinwa said the development even becomes more important because new treatment guidelines for children with HIV call for immediate onset of medications as early as six weeks of age. "Children born with HIV are going to be put on treatment," she said.

- **Uganda: 'Gay Activities Rife in Schools': [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.**

SCHOOLS have become breeding grounds for homosexuality, according to Dr. Kihumuro Apuuli. Anne Mugisa reports that the Aids Commission chief urged the education ministry to stamp out the vice. He, however, noted that parents and guardians had an even bigger responsibility to inculcate African values in their children. "The practice is common among young people between 15 and 24 years." He was answering questions about attacks against Uganda during the recent HIV/AIDS conference in Mexico. Many participants, he said, claimed that gay people were being harassed in the country. "We had quite adverse publicity in Mexico. Many speakers condemned our country but I believe we have strong values in terms of behaviour and what we think is right," said Apuuli. It was difficult, he added for someone to depart from the values they are taught right from the time they were toddlers. Over 30,000 people were at the conference. They included people living with HIV, scientists and policy makers and other stakeholders. Over 500 Ugandans from here and the Diaspora also participated.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Health Crisis Looms As Doctors' Strike Continues: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 22 August 2008.**

Thousands of patients in health care centres in the Democratic Republic of Congo capital Kinshasa are being deprived of urgent medical care after a strike by doctors and health workers entered its fifth day. "We are afraid because the doctors who have people's lives in their hands are not there," said Faustin Badiamu, whose sister was in the intensive care unit at Kinshasa General Hospital. "My sister is in a critical condition after an operation," Badiamu said. "We are very worried because she is not getting appropriate treatment." "There is no doctor here," Hortense Ikota, head nurse in charge of emergencies at the hospital said. "We do not know what to do." Kambamba Mbwebe, a doctor in the 2000-bed hospital, said the doctors had to strike "so they could be heard". According to Mbwebe, doctors want the government to issue pay rises and various administrative changes to the health sector. Mbwebe said doctors were earning just US\$200-400 a month, leaving many struggling to pay rents, and some facing eviction from their homes. "It's unacceptable that ministers, government officials and members of parliament earn more than \$4,000, buy new cars while we [doctors] suffer," he said. The Kinshasa General Hospital registers over 3,000 consultations daily with 2,000 sick people being admitted. The government, meanwhile, claims to have responded to the doctors' demands. "We did not ignore any of the doctors' claims. Quite to the contrary, many of the issues were resolved between January and August 2008," Makwenge Kaput, the minister for health, said, explaining that unpaid bonuses had been paid and salaries raised. The government was also looking at solutions to stop the strike, which had spread to other health centres across the country.

105. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **West Africa: Flooding in Region Puts Lives at Risk, Says UN Health Agency: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 19 August 2008.**

International aid is urgently needed to reduce the risk to millions of lives in danger across West Africa due to the effects of flooding, the United Nations health agency warned today. Rising flood water and heavy rains forecasted to continue until September are exacerbating the threat of potentially deadly conditions including malaria, diarrhoea and other fatal communicable diseases, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said in a statement. Flood conditions are also adding to the already dire impact of rising food prices in the area. "West Africa's annual floods bring with them not only the threat of vector-borne communicable diseases, but it further endangers the lives of people already malnourished by the food price crisis," said Assistant Director-General of the WHO's Health Action in Crises Cluster, Eric Laroche. Half the children aged under five in Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are suffering from severe malnutrition and 10 per cent of them have contracted deadly levels of the disease, according to the statement. WHO is assessing the health of the vulnerable - particularly children, women and the elderly - as well as providing essential medicines and raising badly needed humanitarian funding. The agency noted that only 22 per cent of the emergency health funding has been met. Some \$418 million was requested in the 2008 Consolidated Appeal for the region, of which \$76 million was for emergency health care. WHO is also supplying clean water, sanitation,

mosquito nets, drugs and vaccinations to the almost 200,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) - with 150,000 IDPs in Benin alone - to reduce the intensified threat of malaria, diarrhoeal diseases and respiratory infections, especially for children. Widespread flooding in the region has also caused damage to infrastructure vital for the delivery of health services and humanitarian supplies. Bridges, roads and railway lines in Benin, Togo, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso have been damaged, while Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea have also been affected.

- **Nigeria: Flood Submerges 150 Houses in Sokoto: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 19 August 2008.**

No fewer than 150 houses have been submerged by flood in Bela village, Shagari Local Government Area of Sokoto State. The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that farm produce estimated at millions of naira were lost in the disaster. A NAN correspondent who visited the village yesterday reports that though there were no loss of lives, several domestic animals, stored food items and household materials were washed away by the flood. The flooding was the outcome of four days of torrential rain in the village. When NAN visited the village, it was observed that most of those affected were busy erecting temporary shelters. There was scarcity of safe drinking water in the village as all the wells were submerged, a situation that may lead to the outbreak of water-borne diseases if urgent measures were not taken by the authorities. NAN also reports that several villages located on the fringes of the Shagari Earth Dam were in danger of being swept off by flood. The dams included Gidan-Hussaini, Gidan-Magana, Illelar-Dabore, Kaurar-Mafara, Ruggar-Buda, Rinaye, Doruwa and Mazoji. Reacting to the incident, one of the victims, Malam Sama'ila Bela said: "I have lost my house, my farm and other belongings, and I have left everything in the hands of God." Another victim, Alhaji Musa Salisu, appealed to the three tiers of government to come to their aid by assisting them to rebuild their houses. The chairman of Shagari Local Government, Alhaji Abdullahi Danjeka told NAN that both the state and local governments were doing their best to avert further flood in the area. "The incident is a source of concern to all of us. We, however, submit that it is an act of God," he said. Danjeka told NAN that the council had provided over 3,000 plots of land for the relocation of some of the residents of the flood-prone areas. "We have relocated the victims in Gangam to new Gangam while those in Lambara had since been allocated with their plots." "We will also provide them with the necessary social infrastructure" Danjeka, pledged, adding that the Federal Government would compensate them for the losses suffered.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **South Africa: Dirty Water Used on Fruit, Vegetables: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.**

Stellenbosch University scientists are investigating the levels of harmful bacteria on locally grown fruit and vegetables, hoping to establish a link between the bugs on the food and contaminated river water used for irrigating crops. The research is important because it is likely to increase pressure on local municipalities to improve their water-

treatment management. Fruit- and vegetable-growing businesses risk losing key customers if there are unacceptably high levels of dangerous bacteria on their crops, but had limited scope to clean up the water they obtained from local rivers since setting up their own water treatment plants would be impractical and unaffordable, said Jo Barnes, an epidemiologist from the university's community health department. Most of the dangerous bugs came from improperly treated sewage discharged into rivers by municipalities, but a small amount came directly from communities living along river banks, she said. "With our massively polluted rivers, all producers will have a hard time producing clean fruit and vegetables." Barnes' research into river contamination in Western Cape has already shown that the water is laden with germs such as E coli, salmonella, and listeria, which cause potentially fatal diarrhoea and food poisoning. She also found high levels of adenovirus, which causes respiratory tract infections, and several strains of streptococcal bacteria that can damage the heart or reproductive system. All these bugs exact a greater toll among poor communities, where there is already a higher burden of diseases. Young children, pregnant women and the elderly or malnourished are extra vulnerable. One of the rivers Barnes has analysed closely is the Plankenburg River, a tributary of the Eerste River, which farmers use to irrigate crops. She measured the levels of E coli to gauge the extent of pollution. She found the levels of E coli were thousands of times higher than SA's recommended safety levels of 2000 bacteria per 100ml of water, a threshold that is already twice that of the European Union. In January 2006, for example, the E coli count was 9,2-million per 100ml, a slight drop on April 2005, when she recorded 10,8-million E coli per 100ml. Bugs such as E coli accumulate on the surface of fruit and vegetables irrigated with contaminated water and can survive there for weeks after harvest, said Barnes. The concentration of bacteria rises with each successive watering. She and her colleagues are now using sophisticated molecular analysis to assess whether the E coli found in the river water matches the bugs found on the vegetables irrigated from this source. They hope that by proving a direct link between what is found on the food and in the irrigation water, municipalities will be forced to clean up their act. Since cooking destroys most bacteria and viruses, the researchers are focusing on food eaten raw or lightly cooked. Barnes said anxious consumers could reduce their risk of infection by rinsing fruit and vegetables in a bowl of water containing a bit of household bleach.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Tanzania: NEMC Urges for Halt to Building of Phone Towers: [The Citizen](#) (Dar es Salaam): 18 August 2008.**

The National Environment Management Council (Nemc) has called for suspension of ongoing construction of telecommunication towers which lack in-depth research on health risks they pose to people and the environment. The mobile phone companies should also draw defensive mechanisms in case of accidents as the law requires. Speaking during a press conference in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Nemc director general Bonaventure Baya said the mushrooming of the towers in the country, has sparked fears and complaints over dangerous effects to both humans and the environment. The council has urged mobile phone companies to conduct research on effects of telecommunication

towers before they erect them in residential areas. Mr Baya said telecommunication companies have to involve people and local government authorities in the ordered research on the towers and findings be forwarded to Nemc in order to clear people's doubts. Mr Baya added that since December 2007 to date, Nemc had received several complaints from Tabata Kimanga on Tigo towers, Msasani against Excellent Communications, Kimara Baruti against Celtel, Kimara against Vodacom, Kijitonyama against Tigo and Magomeni against Celtel. This comes amid complaints from the public living near phone towers that they are dangerous as they produce radio active rays which can cause serious diseases like cancer, and noise they produce as a result of their generators operating for 24 hours. "The complaints are a results of unplanned erection of phone towers which has become a source of disturbance and rising fears by people," said Mr Baya, calling on the phone companies to adhere to laws of the land. The council has since suspended construction of a tower at Msasani Peninsula in the city by Excellent Com to pave way for investigations on the legality of the company to construct a tower there, added Mr Baya. According to the law, telecommunication companies are supposed to conduct investigations before they embark on building towers in order to detect the possible environmental effects. "Telecommunication companies even use fake licences to build towers near people's residences," Baya insisted. He however, said Nemc in collaboration with Tcra, Tanzania Atomic Energy Commission, local governments and other stakeholders plan to set up standards on how to operate telecommunications towers in order to develop the sector. Meanwhile, Mr Baya has assured people on the minimal effects brought by radio active rays by the towers because they are built under international standards a situation that minimizes effects.

- **Mauritius: The Butterfly Effect: [L'Express](#) (Port Louis): 19 August 2008.**

It's been gaining in popularity in recent times. Climate change has, in effect, been giving credibility to the Butterfly Effect, which posits that a minor change in one part in a system can unleash major changes in another part of the system. This phenomenon is all the more apposite if one adheres to the Gaia hypothesis. This philosophy affirms that the totality of Earth's organisms and their environment act as a "single, self-regulating system". Accordingly, small changes can upset the whole planet. In today's "Florum", a student of the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Dhaval Adjodha, notes an explosion in the population of the "Nephraura inaurata" spider in the Plaine-Wilhems region, as well as a steep decline in the number of butterflies that used to frequent the district's fields. The use of animals as environmental indicators is an increasingly widespread technique. What do Dhaval's observations mean for Mauritius? In its "Digest of Environment Statistics" 2006, the CSO warns that, "intensive use of chemical-based fertilizers and other agro-chemicals may contribute to the pollution of the environment through the leaching of nitrate to ground water". Over and above its implications for the country's water supplies, the abusive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides is taking its toll on the island's insect populations. The UK offers a pertinent case study. Bee populations there have plummeted over the past year. Known as the Colony collapsing disorder (CCD), this phenomenon has farmers running scared. Last week, Alison Benjamin wrote in the "Guardian" that a third of UK beehives perished

during the winter. And the ramifications of such a drastic population decrease are frightening. "More worryingly, insects pollinate a third of everything we eat - most fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, and forage for our livestock. As we become more and more dependent on a monoculture system of growing food, we become more reliant on the honeybee to do the bulk of this work; trucked into an area for just a few days or weeks when a single crop is blossoming, they can be moved in their hives to more fertile pastures when the orchards and fields turn into a barren wasteland", she explained. Mauritius is more familiar with monoculture than most countries. The world food crisis means that a continued over-reliance on the cane industry and the disappearance of butterflies could be catastrophic for the country's agriculture and, by extension, food security. There is an urgent need to collect more data on both these issues in order to understand their possible impacts on our environment. On the upside, the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation will soon be launching a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about our endemic reptiles. Dhaval believes that each Mauritian can make a big difference by taking small daily actions. The Butterfly Effect might just prove him right.

- **Tanzania: Dar to Spend \$2 Million On New Weather Radar This Year: [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.**

The Tanzania Meteorology Agency will spend \$2 million to purchase a new weather radar to improve forecasting, monitor changes and impending disasters such as drought and floods. The Director of Forecasting Services at the agency, Mohamed Matitu, said the acquisition of the radar has been necessitated by unpredictable weather patterns, that have affected the country's economy. The problem is partly attributed to global warming. Mr Mtitu said the country needed seven new radars but because of the costs involved, the government will first buy one and when funds become available, six more will be purchased. "The agency needs the radars immediately. For instance, in case of an approaching storm, it takes time to receive satellite pictures, gauge frequency of wind, precipitation or magnitude of the storm. With little or no time left to issue a warning, the storm could make a landing with disastrous consequence," he said, adding that this however does not mean that the country has been without radars for meteorological functions. The Meteorology Agency is tasked with providing weather forecasts, climate change data and weather warnings for the safety of life and property. Its data is used by various industries ranging from aviation, agriculture and food security to water resources, disaster management, health and construction industry. It also organises and administers networks of surface and upper air stations necessary to capture accurate records of the weather and climatic conditions of the country. Tanzania currently relies on satellite systems for collecting, interpreting and analysing data that is then passed on to various departments. Whereas the satellites have been efficient and reliable, their only handicap is that it takes up to 30 minutes for the meteorology department to receive pictures and information about change in the climatic conditions in the atmosphere. Radars are more efficient and precise as they cover a small and specific geographic area at a particular time as opposed to satellite systems that cover a wider area and whose forecasts are received at the weather station in Dar es Salaam every 30 minutes. Last year, the government initiated the process of acquiring radars specifically for weather forecasting after it was realised that the country had a low capacity to pinpoint and manage natural

hazards such as tropical cyclones, storms, earthquakes, and flood. The new radar to be purchased this year will be located in Dar es Salaam, while the six to be purchased later will be installed in Kigoma, Mbeya, Mtwara, Dodoma, Mwanza and Kilimanjaro. The agency had three radars at Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam and Mtwara serving the northeastern and southern highlands respectively under the East Africa Meteorology Department. When the then East African Community collapsed in 1977, Tanzania could not maintain the three radars which eventually got worn out and stopped functioning after many years of use and no service. To date meteorological department relies on satellite systems in addition to manual collection of data, analysis and interpretation at the various weather stations in the country. Once the Meteorology Agency acquires all seven radars, it will be able to monitor the atmospheric weather changes countrywide through a central location at its new headquarters currently under construction in Dar es Salaam. Other new weather stations are being set up in Pemba, Zanzibar and Manyara. The Mpanda station, whose construction has been completed will be officially opened later this year.

- **East Africa: Help Pastoralists Adapt to Climate Change – Oxfam: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#): 19 August 2008.**

Pastoralists in East Africa's arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) need to be empowered to adapt to, and survive, climate change, a report by a humanitarian organisation says.

"Pastoralists across East Africa are starting to learn to live with the reality of climate change, adapting as they can to its impact," Oxfam International says in a report launched on 18 August in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi.

The report, [Survival of the Fittest, Pastoralism and Climate Change in East Africa](#), says climate change has manifested itself within these areas with successive poor rains, frequent droughts and unpredictable and sometimes heavy rainfall, which has caused incidences of floods and diseases. However, climate change is only one of the problems the pastoral communities are forced to face, said John Letai, the regional Pastoral Livelihoods Coordinator for Oxfam International in Kenya. "Pastoralists are among the most poor and most vulnerable," he said. "They are not victims of climate change, they suffer marginalisation more." "There is chronic under-investment in these areas," Letai said, adding that the introduction of alternative livelihood options among the pastoralists, whereby grazing land was used for crop cultivation and conservation, was not benefiting them. "We need to empower them [pastoralists], by formulating and implementing policies in their favour," he said. "Governments in the region have, historically, had little economic and political interest in promoting pastoralists' interests, as they tend to see pastoralists as a 'minority vote' that isn't worth winning," the report said. In Kenya, the government has expressed its commitment to the arid areas, recently creating the Ministry for the Development of Northern Kenya and Arid Lands, headed by Mohammed Ibrahim Elmi, who also attended the launch of Oxfam's report. "Pastoralists are the best custodians of the arid areas," Elmi said. He said the government had not done enough to improve the lives of pastoralists in ASAL areas, "for the past century pastoralists in Kenya have suffered the consequences of poor decisions taken by those charged with planning and decision-making". The minister said there was need to improve pastoralists'

access to healthcare, education, support for livestock production and marketing, rural electrification, tourism, energy supply and debunking the myths associated with pastoralism."Many people say pastoralism is a livelihood which time has passed, I'm happy that is changing," Elmi said, adding that the issue of climate change needed to be looked into as soon as possible."It is time we came together to address this issue [of climate change] now; time is not on our side."According to an August 18 field mission report, Pastoralists Living on the Edge in Kenya, released by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, climate change also plays a crucial role in inter-ethnic conflicts among the pastoralist communities in northern Kenya. Thousands of environmental refugees flee from drought, which results in pasture and water shortages for livestock. The report says pastoralists living in the ASAL areas are bearing the brunt of adverse consequences, particularly food insecurity due to droughts, floods and livestock diseases."There is a humanitarian crisis looming in Northern Kenya as pastoralists have resorted to eating wild fruits and gum arabica to contain hunger. This is a community which has been self-reliant on food as the majority of them were farmers," the OCHA report said, adding: "It is about time donors and government reconsider their strategies and empower pastoralist communities by directing funding support to pastoralists' institutions."In its report, Oxfam recommended that governments within East Africa should protect the land and resource rights of pastoralists, eliminate inappropriate development policies and provide support to the pastoralist communities through cash payments in place of food aid."Pastoralists can and should play a role in shaping their own future," Oxfam said.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Operation Green Sahel Resumes: [Inter Press Service \(Johannesburg\)](#): 16 August 2008.**

"I have come to plant trees -- that is why I have left my jacket and tie in Yaoundé" declared Cameroon's Minister of Forest and Wildlife, Elvis Ngolle Ngolle, as he launched the tree planting at a small village near the town of Kousseri, in the north of the country. In four minutes, the minister and his staff planted a hundred trees as a bulwark against rapidly encroaching desert. About 80,000 trees have been planted in this area -- described by Kousseri mayor Mahamat Abdoukarim as the desert's gateway into Cameroon. More than one million trees will be planted across Cameroon this year."This is the country's contribution to the global efforts against climate change," the minister said. He said tree planting is no longer an issue for professionals but everybody's concern emphasising that people should not only plant but follow up to ensure that the trees are growing well. In Cameroon's dry sahel zone, almost 97 percent of the population depends on wood as a primary source of fuel for cooking."Today firewood in the North is an intensive commercial activity. It is a major source of employment for the people and if it is to be stopped, an alternative source of employment must be sought," says Jacques Billong, the North Provincial Delegate for the environment and protection of nature. It is against this background that Minister Ngolle Ngolle is criss-crossing the country to awaken national consciousness on the necessity of planting more trees. In the southern part of the country, commercial logging is the major problem. The north is bedevilled by

significant loss of original wooded savannah to seasonal shifting cultivation over-grazing by livestock, large scale cutting of wood for domestic energy use, devastating wild fires, trophy hunting and poaching. Following wars and repeated coups d'état in neighbouring Chad, the northern part of Cameroon has witnessed a significant influx of refugees with a resultant additional pressure on the land. In the north, almost all the protected areas, reserves and parks are being encroached upon. In the Faro administrative division, people are cutting down large wooded areas, exposing land and people alike to extreme conditions during the dry season. Between January and about mid-May temperatures in this region sometimes reach 47 degrees celsius. "During this period we just have to pitch mosquito nets on the verandas and sleep outside our rooms throughout," confirms Ngwa Bah, a primary school teacher in Garoua, a town in which every house has its trees, planted to moderate the high temperatures. "For 9 or 10 years now, the river beds have been empty. These are streams which at one point were permanent but today you can find water in them only at the peak of the rainy season," says Clement Njiti, the Peace Corps associate director for agro-forestry and environment. He says that 78 percent of Garoua residents rely on firewood for cooking; outside the town, firewood is the only source of fuel. Gatwe Juskine, a forest and water technician, says the desert is advancing at a terrific rate. From a vantage position outside Garoua, today one looks out over endless flat, empty land scoured by southerly winds. In some villages, women now trek up to five kilometres to fetch water. People battle over water pools with animals. In major wildlife parks, several species including the black rhinos, hippopotamus, wild dogs, cheetah and panthers are under threat of extinction as the wooded savannah now remains only in patches. Many cattle herders have moved permanently to the south in search of grazing land.

Operation Green Sahel

In the early 1980s, Operation Green Sahel planted about 10 million trees in an effort to stop the advancing desert, but this programme ended abruptly due to the generalised economic crises. Some of the repressive methods employed -- including seizures of wood and charcoal and detaining people suspected of illegal wood-cutting -- have not been missed, but the desert continues to move steadily south. Local and international NGOs and even the corporate sector have stepped in to support the government's renewed efforts. The World Wildlife Fund is currently executing a reforestation project with support from a major cellphone company. The "Tree For Life" campaign aims to plant at least 90,000 trees, of which nearly a quarter will be fruit trees. The aim is to encourage locals to see and feel the benefits of reforestation and protect the newly-planted seedlings. The Peace Corps' Njiti endorses this strategy: "In the final analysis, the only way to salvage the situation is to plant trees to stop the encroaching desert. But we should not plant just any trees; they should be fast growing multi-purpose trees." Billong sums the situation up this way: "I can assert that the fight against desertification has entered the mentality of the people in the north, because they feel it. But poverty and unemployment is pushing them to continue to put pressure on the wooded savannah."

- **Cameroon: Heavy Rains Paralyse Buea: [The Post](#) (Buea): 18 August 2008.**

They came down in fast blinding sheets, drumming hard on rooftops and whipping at the vegetation. The rains set off floods that practically wrecked the better part of the day. Buea was transformed into a delta with what began as rivulets swelling into swirling streams, while runoff littered with garbage gurgled down the gutters. Nearly every street in the town was turned into fast flowing shallow rivers. In a matter of minutes, the rivulets had cut corners on the stony streets and found their way into bedrooms, parlours and kitchens. The rains paralysed taxis, the Great Soppo market, stores, bars and other businesses which remained closed for at least five hours. Everyone went back to sleep. Then flash floods from the mountain descended upon the town. Along with them flowed garbage piled over the months, debris, filth and gut-wrenching smells. By the time the rains subsided into a gentle drizzle around half past eleven, many people were in tears and sorrow. Some traders at the Great Soppo Market had their merchandise flushed away. One Irene Teubou, a tomato seller, said she got to the market before the rains came down. As she began displaying her tomatoes, it started drizzling. Soon afterwards, it began pouring. The ravine along the market filled up rapidly, overflowed its banks and submerged the market in no time. "Before I could gather up my goods, the torrent had washed away tomatoes worth about FCFA 2000. It was hell. The water was knee-deep," recounted Teubou. Her neighbour said she lost plantains worth FCFA 4,000. A vegetable and spice seller, Beatrice Njoh, lamented that she lost about FCFA 130,000 worth of her wares. Recalled Njoh; "the rains turned the market into a swimming pool, sending us scurrying after our goods." As for Caroline Mafany, the torrent flushed away FCFA 50,000 worth of spices crayfish and fresh tomatoes. A dealer in flip-flops was near tears. "I lost two bags of flip-flops. That is about FCFA 35,000. My master settled me only last week and this is my first venture," said the trader. Several other traders in cocoyam, snails and the like lost something to the torrential rainfall. Store owners too, counted their losses. One Ejike said he couldn't open his store. "This is the worst sale I have ever made since I started business," he said. Still, others lamented the wrecked day. Taxi drivers couldn't remit minimum returns ("balance") because they began plying only at midday with a scanty commuter turn-up. Francis Nkemotoh said he only started working at about noon. He said it was practically impossible to break even on that day. Taxi drivers did not only start working late, but few people sallied out of their homes on that day. Away from the market scene, the heavy rains equally wrecked havoc in the neighbourhoods. The Post observed several families in Great Soppo hurling carpets out and dragging furniture onto verandas, while other members swept and mopped the wetness on the floors. Verandas and some fences gave way too. A hairdresser on Campaign Street said she lost all her equipment in the flood. All this notwithstanding, no major casualties were recorded. However, as the day picked a little steam towards 6 pm, a blackout that lasted till about 8 pm added more gloom to the already ruined day. Dejected, the town folks trooped back to the warmth of their homes.

106. ENERGY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Country, Germany Partner On 6,500 Megawatts: [This Day \(Lagos\): 20 August 2008.](#)**

The Federal Government yesterday signed a Memo-randum of Understanding with Germany to improve power supply. The agreement will empower Germany to execute various power supply projects in different parts of Nigeria, to enable the supply of 6,500 megawatts of electricity between now and 2020. Germany is also expected to expand existing dams, rehabilitate substations and build new power plants in different parts of the country. President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua after signing the MoU at the State House, said the agreement was entered into as a culmination of the diligence and dedication demonstrated by members of the two delegations that negotiated the partnership. "It also signals our unwavering commitment to evolving those requisite deliberate, structured policy choices that will enable us rapidly rebuild, upgrade, and expand our critical infrastructure. It is evident that the original objective of the partnership, which is to address Nigeria's energy challenge while guaranteeing Germany short and long term energy security, has been properly addressed," he said. He assured that the Nigerian government will ensure speedy implementation of the agreed terms of the MoU and suggested the establishment of a joint secretariat to work out modalities for operations of the partnership. German companies involved in the partnership are Siemens, ArGe, E.ON, EVONIK and KfW IpeX Bank. Some of the projects are located in Ikot Abasi (Akwa Ibom), Kainji (Niger), Kaduna, Obudu (Cross River), Kano, Maiduguri, Egbin (Lagos), Sapele (Delta), and Afam (Rivers). Others are in Sokoto, Katsina and Gombe States, while a nationwide audit of substations and grid bottlenecks would also be carried out. In his earlier remark, Honorary Adviser to the President on Energy, Dr Rilwan Lukman, said the partnership provided basis of cooperation that satisfied the interests of the two countries. The German delegation was led by its Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Hennrich Thiemann. The agreement was signed on Government behalf by the Nigerian Ambassador to Germany, Abdul Rindap, and the German Ambassador to Nigeria, Joachim Schmillien.

- **Nigeria: Militants Warn FG on Moves to Alter Gas Master Plan: [Vanguard \(Lagos\): 20 August 2008.](#)**

MOVEMENT for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND), yesterday, warned that it will sabotage any plan by the Federal Government to change the National Gas Master plan to suit the whims and caprices of those that want to pipe gas from the producing States of Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers States to Lagos State and Northern parts of the country, instead of developing the gas plants in the Niger-Delta to boost the economy of the region and create employment for the jobless youths. MEND in an exclusive electronic mail to Vanguard, signed by its spokesman, Jomo Gbomo, said, "If the Niger Delta already had gas plants to power the region, that would not be an issue, but coming from a system that puts the region down in everything, this move will not be a possibility except there are other modes of transporting the gas to Lagos". "The government ", it asserted, "can impose the languages of the Igbos, Hausas and Yorubas on the national currencies, they can give preference scholarships to others but for this, it will be impossible. Times have changed when we were docile and allowed our resources to

benefit the other regions to our detriment. Those pipelines will be sabotaged". "One of the mandates of MEND is to right any injustice or confront physical, economic or psychological threats to the Niger Delta people. Just like the insult that Obasanjo perpetrated by locating a gas plant in Ogun State to feed from gas all the way from the gas reserves in the Niger Delta, this is similar", it added. Investigation by Vanguard showed The Gas Infrastructure Blueprint that was recently approved involves the creation of three domestic central processing facilities at the Warri/Forcados area, Akwa Ibom/Calabar area and Obiafu area (north of Port Harcourt). The Central Processing Facilities will be the major gas hubs where wet gas from gas fields will come, get treated and processed. LPG and condensate will be extracted at these facilities and the dry gas fed into a network of gas transmission lines, and with this arrangement, more LPG will be available for domestic use and the recurrent problem of liquids ingress into pipelines which has continually impacted on Power Supply will be permanently eliminated. The blueprint also stipulates the development of three major domestic gas transmission systems in Nigeria: The Western system, comprising the existing Escravos Lagos Pipeline System (ELPS) and a new offshore extension to Lagos. The people of the Niger-Delta are raising eyebrows over the new offshore extension; The first South-North gas transmission line. This will take dry gas from the Akwa Ibom/Calabar facility to Ajaokuta, Abuja, Kano, Katsina. The line will serve the Eastern states of Anambra, Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo, and an inter-connector that links the Eastern gas reserves centre with the two transmission systems above. The transmission infrastructure will enable the industrialization of the Eastern and Northern parts of Nigeria, enable connectivity between the East, West and North, which currently does not exist. In addition, the system is developed as a grid, ensuring redundancy and multiple access to gas markets from any gas source. This increases the resilience of the gas market to pipeline disruptions. The infrastructure as proposed ensures synergies are optimized and is expected to result in an overall cost reduction of about \$4-5bn. The blueprint will delineate three franchise areas around the Central Processing Facilities. In essence, only licensed investors within a franchise area will be allowed to develop and operate the facility. This will prevent proliferation of gas facilities with attendant cost impacts. It is premised on the grounds of commerciality and primarily third party private sector investment lead. The thinking of the Federal Government is that the foregoing provides the basis for the establishment of a robust and liquid Nigerian gas market and that with it, gas availability can be assured and the deliverability as well as commerciality also assured. It is anticipated that over the next four to five years, a great part of the infrastructure will be delivered. Whilst the above plan deals with the medium term, the FEC also approved the short term gas supply proposed by the Master Plan. The plan will double domestic gas availability to 1400mmcf/d by end 2008 and triple it to 2050mmcf/d by end 2009. With this plan, it is expected that power generating capacity will grow to about 4.5GW (excluding hydro) by end 2008 and 6.2GW (excl hydro) by end 2009. Furthermore, this plan will also triple the gas availability to existing domestic industrial users by end 2009 at about 450mmcf/d. In order to put the Domestic Gas market on a sustainable growth path where buyers are assured of gas availability at affordable prices and suppliers are encouraged to invest in gas development for the domestic market, the Federal Executive Council also approved a gradual migration of the domestic aggregate price (currently depressed due to low gas price to power sector) to a more commercially

viable price that is comparable to feed-gas prices to dominant export projects such as LNG. The Gas Infrastructure Blueprint was approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC) during its bi-weekly meeting on Wednesday February 13 2008 and taken together, the three inter-related approvals constitute the Master-Plan to guide the commercial exploitation and management of Nigeria's gas sector. Government explained the aspiration of the Nigerian Gas Master-Plan to grow the Nigerian economy with gas by pursuing three key strategies: However, the gas sector in Nigeria is presently faced with significant challenges, which are manifested in the numerous power plants sitting idle for lack of gas. For many years, gas was flared in the country because there was no domestic market to utilize the gas. The situation has however changed very rapidly. From a very low level of gas utilization of about 700mmcf/d in the domestic market, the country is now faced with a huge gas utilization potential estimated at about 6000mmcf/d - 10,000mmcf/d by 2010. This demand is underpinned by a rapidly growing power sector, numerous investment plans in gas based industries such as Methanol, Fertilizer etc. inherent in this demand growth is a major opportunity for the industrialization of Nigeria. Unfortunately, the gas sector has been unable to respond rapidly to this demand growth. The slow response of the sector threatens the aspiration outlined above. It is in the light of the above that the NNPC has led a two-year effort in developing comprehensive Gas Master Plan, the components of which have now all been approved. Besides the MEND, which said it would sabotage any gas plan that is designed to work against the economic interest of the Niger-Delta, leaders of the Niger-Delta, including the former Federal Commissioner for Information, Chief Edwin Clark, former Supreme Court Justice, Justice Adolphus Karibi-Whyte at the weekend, rejected the plans by some persons to alter the National Gas Master plan, saying it would exacerbate the Niger - Delta crisis.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Mozambique: Biofuels Must Not Damage Food Production: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 18 August 2008.**

Mozambican Agriculture Minister Soares Nhaca has insisted that the government will only approve biofuels projects if they do not conflict with food production. Speaking at a seminar on biofuels in the central city of Beira on Friday, Nhaca stressed that biofuels could be a viable alternative to imported petroleum-based fuels. Cited by the Beira daily paper "Diario de Mocambique", Nhaca said the great challenge facing the government, and Mozambican society as a whole, was to identify solutions to the current constraints imposed by high international oil prices. Mozambicans, he urged, should always seek "to transform adversities into opportunities". The government was thus committed to carrying out viability studies for the production of biofuels from a variety of plants, but had no intention of sacrificing food security. "Any project to produce biofuels that may be approved in Mozambique will always be on the condition that it does not prejudice food production", stressed Nhaca. Furthermore key food crops such as maize, although they can be turned into biofuels easily enough, are not eligible for Mozambican biofuels projects. "In Mozambique, biofuels cannot be produced on the basis of foodstuffs", declared Nhaca. In its biofuels strategy the government has stressed cultivating the shrub

jatropha. Using jatropha seeds to produce diesel in no way compromises food security, since jatropha is grown on marginal land, and is inedible. The two major biofuels investment projects approved so far, in Manica and Gaza provinces, will use sugar cane to produce ethanol.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Tanzania: Country Starts World's First Sisal-Based Power Plant: [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.**

The world's first sisal electricity plant has started operations in Tanzania two years after the completion of a study on the use of sisal waste. Frank Maro, executive director of Katani Ltd, told *The EastAfrican* last week that the company was negotiating with the state energy firm Tanesco to have the power connected to the national grid. The company intends to produce 600 Kilowatts of power a day. Mr Maro said that the sisal fired electricity plant would go commercial as soon as more equipment is procured and installed in five sisal farms. "We are still negotiating with Tanesco to take up the electricity from the plant," he said. The \$1.5 million project is being financed by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (Unido) and the Tanzanian government. The company's initial strategy is to process 100 tonnes of sisal biomass per day and be able to produce 10 Megawatts of electricity within the next ten years. Nine other plants will be established at the other nine factories owned by the company -- at Hale, Magoma, Magunga, Mwelya and Ngombezi estates. Salum Shamte, the managing director, told *The EastAfrican* that the plant will be linked with the biogas and paper production plants the company plans to establish. Mr Shamte said a fibre extraction plant has been established at Hale estate and there are plans to establish another one at the nearby Magunga Estate. According to Mr Shamte, the milling plant for chopped fibre production has been fabricated by Tanzania Automotive Technology Centre. "The Hale project is part of the efforts to find alternative applications of sisal to counter the present slump in sisal fibre sales after the introduction of synthetic fibres in the international markets," he said. Tanzania has registered considerable success in testing the use of sisal waste in generating electricity. The ongoing pilot project managed by Unido and called "Cleaner Integral Utilisation of Sisal Waste for Biogas and Biofertilisers," shows that sisal residue is efficient in biogas production.

- **Ethiopia: Government, Yemen Agree On Oil, Gas Exploration: [The Daily Monitor](#) (Addis Ababa): 21 August 2008.**

The governments of Yemen and Ethiopia agreed to jointly work for the exploration of oil and gas, *afrol News* reported citing Minister for Mines and Energy Sinknesh Ejigu.

The two countries on Tuesday sign a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of their agreement on gas and oil exploration in Ethiopia. Ethiopian and Yemeni energy and mineral officials are taking part in the third Ethio-Yemen Joint Technical Committee Meeting on Oil, Gas, Minerals and Energy in Addis Ababa. The second such meeting was held in the Yemeni capital Sana'a four years back. Sinknesh

Ejigu informed the Addis Ababa meeting that the two countries had agreed to strengthen cooperation in various fields, particularly exploration and exploitation of oil, gas and minerals "This meeting is expected to create ample opportunities to review the implementation of the area of cooperation stipulated in the executive program previously signed between Ethiopia and Yemen," Ejigu said."It would also assess additional avenue of cooperation for the benefit of the two sisterly countries." Yemen's deputy Oil and Minerals Minister Abdulmalik Alama believed the joint technical meeting would boost cooperation between the two countries as well as enable Yemen to receive electricity supplies from Ethiopia.

- **Uganda: Power Losses Amount to Sh104 Billion: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.**

THE Government has come up with strategies to reduce power losses, which cost the economy sh104b annually.Fred Kabagambe-Kaliisa, the permanent secretary in the energy ministry, said 40% of the 255MW produced is lost in transmission and distribution. This means that over 100MW are lost."Commercial losses caused by illegal connections, a poor billing system, long response time by UMEME to reported cases and new connections plus unmetred connections all contribute to the losses.""Actions to be undertaken by UMEME include putting in place a credible billing system and conducting more assertive public campaigns on power theft," Kabagambe-Kaliisa explained."UMEME should link up with national and district leaders, especially MPs, resident district commissioners and local council leaders when handling cases of power theft."He said UMEME field staff should have prominent identification, which cannot be easily forged and also work closely with district security committees.Kabagambe-Kaliisa was stating outcomes of a stakeholders' forum on power loss reduction, which was held on July 18 at the Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala."UMEME should provide a toll-free line to report power failures and there should be immediate response to reported cases of power failures.""Provide prepaid metres to customers and conduct a thorough audit of power consumption for large consumers because power theft is not limited to domestic customers," he said.The permanent secretary said there was a need for UMEME to quantify the different components of power losses and provide a loss reduction plan with measurable milestones.Kabagambe-Kaliisa said UMEME should employ more staff and establish more offices closer to the customers.

107. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Microfinance - Citizens Set to Learn From 2006 Nobel Laureate: [Vanguard](#) (Lagos): 21 August 2008.**

THE 2006 Nobel laureate and US-trained Bangladeshi economist, Professor Mohammad Yunus, who is also acclaimed as the 'Banker to the Poor' will on Saturday be the guest speaker at a microfinance conference scheduled for Lagos.The conference which is being put together by Tradewise Speaker Bureau and Consulting Limited is targeted at

stakeholders in the microfinance sector. Tradewise Managing Director, Dayo Omotayo, said in a statement that the conference is unique especially now that attention is being directed at developing the Small and Medium Enterprises(SMEs) sector that depends mainly on microcredit. The Bangladeshi economist and founder of the Grameen Bank is expected to share the secrets of the success of his microcredit model that has been replicated in over 100 countries with stakeholders in Nigeria at the conference. "The conference is for the benefit of the microfinance industry and those who have developed policy framework for the sector. The idea is to bring stakeholders together to share their experiences and learn how they surmounted their challenges if any, " Omotayo explained.

- **Nigeria: North to De-Emphasise Reliance On Oil: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.**

Northern Nigeria is planning a new economic drive that will de-emphasise reliance on oil revenue. Towards this end, a pan-Northern economic summit tagged, "The Northern Economic and Investment Summit (NEIS 2008)," has been scheduled for Abuja between October 6 and 8. Organised by the Conference of the Northern States Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (CONSCIMA), the summit has as its theme, "Transforming Potentials to Wealth." CONSCIMA's Chairman, Alhaji Jani Ibrahim, who disclosed this, said the summit will focus specifically on agriculture, solid minerals, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), human capital development, public-private partnership, banking and finance and good governance. He said President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua is billed to declare the summit open, while former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon will chair the opening ceremony. Ibrahim said the summit will attract key stakeholders in the North in public and private sectors who will brainstorm on how to boost the Northern economy and reduce poverty in Northern states. "We want everybody on board. The North has many people in the commanding height of the Nigerian economy, we want them at the summit. We have people who are ready to make available their expertise for Northern development," Ibrahim said. The CONSCIMA leader said the summit would be different from the usual talkshop shows, saying "it will go beyond rhetorics and at the end of the summit, we should have a blue-print on how to grow the economy of the North in such a way that it becomes a win-win situation for everyone."

- **Nigeria: Niger Delta Killings - Chevron's Trial Begins Sept in U.S.: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 19 August 2008.**

Oil giant, Chevron Nigeria Limited, will stand trial in the United States (US) in September, after exhausting all appeals meant to stop the company from being tried for the alleged murder of villagers in the Niger Delta region in two separate incidents between 1998 and 1999. The US District Court Judge in San Francisco, California, Susan Illston, ruled last year in the *Bowoto v. Chevron Corp.*, No 99-2506, that Chevron was directly involved in the alleged attacks by acting in consonance with Nigerian government security forces and therefore would stand trial. *THISDAY* gathered that Chevron appealed the California Superior Court's ruling unsuccessfully. A source at EarthRights International, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), acting as legal counsel for the plaintiffs, and who spoke under condition of anonymity, stated that

"Chevron has exhausted all potential appeals and the case will go forward. All motions were dismissed and nothing will keep the case from going forward." THISDAY was unable to reach Public Relations Officer for Chevron in San Francisco, Mr Campbell, for comments. His voice mail indicated that he would be out of town until the 23rd of August. Mr Justin Hagues whose name was dropped on the voice message told THISDAY he was not authorised to comment on the case. He however confirmed that the trial would take place in September. Litigation Co-ordinator for EarthRights International, Mr Rick Herz, was also not in town as at press time. The lawsuit was brought against Chevron eight years ago in San Francisco Federal Court by nine Nigerian plaintiffs for alleged deaths and other abuses in the two incidents. The plaintiffs assert claims ranging from torture to wrongful death. The report alleged that the Nigerian Military and Police were paid by Chevron to shoot and torture protesters in the volatile region. Chevron helicopters and boats were used by security forces to harass, torture and kill people, it claimed. In her ruling, Judge Illston found "evidence that CNL [Chevron Nigeria Limited] personnel were directly involved in the attacks; CNL transported the GSF [Nigerian government security forces], CNL paid the GSF; and CNL knew that GSF were prone to use excessive force." The plaintiffs are also (a) litigating the legality of the Nigerian government's conduct at Parabe and Opia/Ikenyan; (b) asking the state court to issue an injunction regulating the manner in which the Nigerian government may provide law enforcement services in Nigeria; and (c) asking the court to limit CNL's ability to obtain armed protection in Nigeria. Chevron argued that the action would hinder its operations in the country. In addition to Environmental Rights Action and Traber & Voorhees, the plaintiffs are represented by the private law firms of Hadsell & Stormer and Siegel & Yee, the Center for Constitutional Rights and the Electronic Frontier Foundation, and Paul Hoffman, Michael Sorgen, Robert Newman, Anthony DiCaprio, Elizabeth Guarnieri, and Richard Wiebe.

- **Ghana: Country Prepares for Oil Exploitation: Ghanaian Chronicle (Accra): 20 August 2008.**

Ghana has taken a bold initiative towards a systematic establishment of economic, technical and legal framework to manage its oil extraction, whilst maximizing its benefits to improve living standards. To this effect, the government has assigned a team of experts in the oil industry to develop a master plan for the petroleum sector. The team of experts has been subdivided into six working groups and each is supposed to produce a policy document which would become part of the master plan to guide the development and management of Ghana's emerging oil industry and how it interfaces with the rest of the economy. This was made known at a workshop dubbed "Consultative meeting on the Oil and Gas fiscal regime and fund types" in Accra, on Tuesday by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MOFEP). The workshop is aimed at providing space for in-depth discussions on the specific issues of taxation and all the fiscal arrangements most suitable for the country if it intends to achieve the desired growth of a middle income status in the shortest possible time. Among the six working groups include- the legal regime, fiscal regime and fund types, health, safety, environment and community issues, security, local content and capacity building and downstream, natural gas utilization and infrastructure development. Addressing the gathering (mainly made up of stakeholders in the oil

industry) at the workshop, a Chief Director at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Nana Juaben-Boaten Siriboe noted that the discovery of oil in the country puts the economy on a good stand towards realizing a middle income status and is leaving no stone unturned to learn from oil producing countries who have benefited from the smooth management of their upstream resource activities. According to him, the experiences of some resource-rich Developing Countries in managing their oil has not been encouraging as it has in one way or the other destabilised the economies of those countries. "The experiences of some resource-rich developing countries suggest one thing. Growth and prosperity from oil discovery are not inevitable. The irony in some cases is that the oil effect has been destabilising, leading to low growth, widespread inequalities and conflict, the so-called resource curse. According to one expert, the curse stands ready to capture new and unsuspecting economies that have weak institutions and poor standards of governance", he noted. "The good news is that there are other countries that have grown and developed from their natural resources. Botswana with diamonds and Norway and Malaysia with oil are good examples", he added. Nana Siriboe averred that the eventual benefits the country can receive from its oil and gas resources depend, in part, on the fiscal regime that the country has in place. "In fact, many experts believe that the fiscal regime is what separates those economies where petroleum has made a difference to the overall living standards of citizens from where it has not", he said. The country, since February 2008 has had the benefit of many experts on several aspects of the petroleum industry through a number of workshops. Nana Siriboe contended that the biggest challenge facing the country is how to transform the experiences gained to good use. "Our challenge is rather how to take these lessons and experiences and use them to develop the rules and guidelines that will yield the maximum direct and indirect benefits for all Ghanaians and to make progress towards a good and prosperous society", he noted.

- **Ghana: \$200 Million Offered for Valco Stake – JAK: [Accra Mail](#) (Accra): 20 August 2008.**

President John Agyekum Kufuor has said Ghana has received offers in excess of \$200 million for a "partnership" role in the 200,000 tonne/year VALCO aluminium smelter. In June, Ghana bought back the final 10 percent of VALCO from Alcoa for \$2 million, having previously paid Kaiser Aluminum \$18 million for its 90 percent share in the smelter, which has been inactive since March 2007 due to power shortages. The ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) Government plans to relaunch the industry with a new mine and alumina refinery with the aim of mining, refining and processing bauxite in country. "As I speak with you now, VALCO is attracting international offers of over \$200 million," Kufuor told a conference of the ruling NPP in the western port city of Sekondi. He said the proposed deal was not an outright sale but a partnership. He did not give any further details or say where the offers had come from. "We bought it (VALCO) two years ago at \$20 million, now we are selling only part of it for 200 and in addition will be earning interest that we never had in the past," Kufuor said. The announcement follows the approval by parliament this week of a \$900 million bid by Britain's Vodafone Group for a majority stake in Ghana Telecom. The deal had been delayed by protests led by opposition politicians complaining the amount was too low. Political analysts saw this as jostling for position ahead of presidential and parliamentary elections later this

year. Ghana is one of Africa's brightest economic prospects, with growth at over 6 percent. It is already the world's second largest cocoa producer and the continent's number two gold miner. It is also due to join Africa's oil-producing club with an output of 120,000 barrels a day in 2010. Despite the economic successes, the ruling party faces a battle in the December polls to win over voters facing the double hit of high food and fuel prices. But inflation fell for the first time last month, easing to 18.3 percent. Kufuor said that Ghana would receive the money from the Vodafone deal this week, providing some relief to its fiscal deficit, which has mounted following tax cuts in May aimed at countering the impact of rising prices.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Southern Africa: SADC Attains Free Trade Milestone: [Southern African News Features](#) (Harare): 19 August 2008.**

The launch of the SADC Free Trade Area by southern African leaders this week marks the attainment of a major milestone in the regional body's 28-year history. Formed in 1980 and transformed in 1992 to the present Southern African Development Community (SADC), the regional organisation has embarked on several ambitious regional integration projects, covering areas such as trade, infrastructure, food security, human and social development, as well as politics, defence and security, all intended to bring about economic prosperity, peace and security to its 250 million citizens. Trade has been singled out as the one intervention that has the greatest potential to make a dent on southern Africa's biggest challenge - poverty. The Windhoek Treaty of 1992 defined the current regional integration path while the overall regional integration programme is guided by two blueprints adopted in 2004 -- the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO). The RISDP, which identifies poverty eradication as the overarching priority in SADC's regional integration agenda, outlines the key milestones for economic integration. Through the RISDP, SADC plans to create a Free Trade Area (FTA) in 2008, moving incrementally to establish a Customs Union in 2010, a Common Market by 2015 and a Monetary Union by 2016. A regional central bank and a common currency are expected in 2018. Thus by launching the FTA on SADC Day, 17 August, southern African leaders did not only comply with set targets but demonstrated their readiness to deliver a better life to the millions of citizens as acknowledged by South African President Thabo Mbeki, who took over the rotating SADC chair at the two-day Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. "The masses of our people demand of us to do everything in our power to help pull the poor from the morass of wretchedness," said President Mbeki. "The challenge facing our region during this era is to do extraordinary things so as to build the Free Trade Area and consolidate its gains for the mutual benefit of the region's economies and development," added the South African president. One of the challenges facing the region is infrastructure development. For example better road and rail networks are necessary to facilitate easier cross-border flow of goods and services. While the FTA directly addresses the question of tariffs insofar as it allows for 85 percent of traded goods to be duty-free, Member States still need to tackle the challenge of non-tariff barriers such as restrictive entry border requirements which are

counter to the spirit of free trade. Other challenges are on the supply side of trade where the private sector would be called upon to improve productivity if they are to remain competitive on the regional market. The private sector was represented by its apex body, the Association of SADC Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASCCI), during the launch. Competition from regional firms, while it may have negative implications on employment in smaller and weaker economies, is likely to bring in cheaper alternatives, from the consumer's point of view. SADC Member States are aware of the demands of an FTA. "Summit called for the acceleration of interventions to further deepen the regional integration agenda through the development of a programme of cooperation aimed at expanding regional production capacity which entails provision and rehabilitation of regional infrastructure to facilitate efficient movement of goods and people in a more open economy," reads part of the Summit communiqué. The FTA has been made possible through the implementation of the SADC Trade Protocol whose implementation began in 2000. To date, 12 out of 15 SADC Member States are applying the protocol meaning that as many as 170 million people in those countries will immediately benefit from the new economic dispensation. Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have asked for more time before they join the FTA. Seychelles, which rejoined SADC at the just-ended Summit, will soon be expected to go through the formalities of becoming a member of the FTA. Member States would still be expected to harmonise their national trade policies with all the provisions of the Trade Protocol if the FTA is to be successfully implemented. Other highlights of the Summit were the signing of the protocols on Gender and Development; Science, Technology and Innovation as well as agreements amending Article 20 of the Protocol on Trade; and Article 6 of the Protocol on the Tribunal and the Rules of Procedure Thereof. The Summit elected King Mswati III of Swaziland as chairperson of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation while Mozambican President Armando Guebuza will deputise him. The next Summit will be hosted by the DRC in 2009. sardc.net

- **Zimbabwe: Doctors On Strike And Teachers to Follow: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 20 August 2008.**

It is feared that Zimbabwe will dissolve into complete anarchy if things don't change very soon.

The Zimbabwe dollar continues to fall in value, food remains scarce and the workforce is feeling the brunt of the economic crisis. Now doctors at Harare and Parirenyatwa hospitals have embarked on industrial action demanding better working conditions and better salaries. The Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition said hospitals have turned into 'death halls' rather than treatment centres due to acute shortages of drugs and equipment. The Coalition reported that last month, doctors earned Z\$600 re-valued (less than US\$10), and are penned to receive Z\$4 600 (less than US\$50). The salaries that doctors are earning have become so useless that they are now demanding to be paid in United States dollars. Teachers have also said they are unhappy with the paltry salary increase given to them by the state. Takavafira Zhou from the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe said: "The 448% on basic salary and 900% transport allowance and 290% housing allowance given this month in essence is a high sounding nothing. The increases amount

to a net salary of only \$1.1 trillion (re-valued) or \$11 trillion (old value) on average. It falls far short of PTUZ demands of US\$800 equivalent." "Sad faces were the order of the day today as teachers learnt that the govt is continuing to pretend to pay teachers when in reality they are starving them." Zhou said teachers have resolved to demonstrate their anger and poverty when schools open. Economists say Zimbabwe is sliding well beyond workable limits. John Robertson said: "I think most of us would claim that we have been in impossible territory for some time, but now that the restricted cash limits and low supplies of cash are keeping many companies' turnover below the amounts needed to even pay salaries, we seem to be entering much more threatening circumstances."

- **Zambia: Sharing the Copper Windfall: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 19 August 2008.**

Australian mining giant Equinox Minerals is developing the Lumwana Copper Mine (LCM) to take advantage of strong prices for copper on the international market. When it opens later this year, the mine will be the largest in Africa, but critics say Zambia's share of the profits of minerals is smaller than it should be. This open-pit mine in north-western Zambia, some 45 kilometres from the border with Democratic Republic of Congo, is expected to bring in large amounts of foreign investment. The Lumwana project is expected to generate over 1,500 jobs during the construction phase and about 1,055 direct jobs in its full operation phase starting in December. Zambia holds Africa's biggest copper reserves. In 2006, the country produced 515,618 metric tonnes of copper -- up by 1.5 percent from previous year. The Zambian government recently announced an upward adjustment of the tax regime for mining firms. They say the taxes are designed to capture a greater share of windfall profits from the mining companies operating in the country. Announcing the new regime in April, Ng'andu Maganda, Minister of Finance and National Planning, said that the development agreement between the Zambia government and mining companies operating in the country is lopsided. "These measures are competitive, reasonable and balanced. So with this (new tax), the government will be able to improve education and health services and make investments that will create more jobs in other sectors of the economic and improve livelihoods of Zambian citizen," Maganda said. The mineral royalty tax levied on copper ore produced has been increased from 0.6 percent to 3 percent, while the tax on corporate profits has jumped from 25 to 30 percent. Maganda said the government is expected to gain an estimated \$415 million in additional revenue in 2008 alone. But Harry Michael, chief operation officer for the Lumwana Copper Mine (LCM), told IPS that government needs to consider the impact of this on new taxes regime on investors like Lumwana mine. "I do not speak on behalf of government or the Chamber of Mines in Zambia. But coupled with the increasing fuel prices, the operations of mines will be affected. As for the Lumwana mine, we have not started operations, but there are already changes to the development agreements. I hope we will stick to the old agreement with government on taxes." Michael conceded that the mine's owners planned to recuperate the investment they are putting in before the majority of Zambians would start seeing meaningful benefits from the project. "We have put in the largest investment in this project, in excess of \$800 million, to develop this mine. The total investment is expected to come up to over \$1 billion. So you should understand that we are a business," Michael told IPS. Some mining companies are

considering taking legal action to prevent changes to the development agreements they have already signed. The Lumwana Copper Mine is expected to produce about 20 million tonnes of copper ore each year at an average of 450, 000 tonnes of copper concentrate per annum.

Protecting the environment

The government is not merely reviewing profit-sharing with the mining sector. It is also tightening protection of the environmental laws. The mining town of Kabwe, is the most polluted places on earth, where decades of unregulated copper smelting have left a toxic legacy: children tested in 2006 had levels of lead in their blood averaging four to eight times higher than the maximum considered safe. The government-owned mine principally responsible was closed in 1994, three years before new legislation governing pollution standards was passed. Three years ago, more than 50 mine workers died in an explosion at the privately-owned mine. There are some encouraging signs of enforcement: just last year a manganese mine owned by Chimani Manufacturing Limited was closed down for exceeding allowable air pollution limits which affected nearby townships in Kabwe; the mine was also sanctioned for failing to provide sufficient personal protection for its staff. On uranium production, government is reviewing the regulations and framework for licensing under the Mines and Minerals Act. According to an Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), obtained from the Environmental Council of Zambia in Lusaka, the Lumwana Copper Mine will be required to develop a tailing storage facility and waste rock dumps to protect surface and underground water from uranium and other heavy metal pollution. The EIA also outlines that the mining company should comply with the air pollutions law under the Zambian law. Nathan Chishimba, LMC corporate affairs officer, said the mining project fully supports action to reduce toxic gas emissions and other solid waste. "We have put up a very good management team that is committed to build and develop low carbon emission technology at the mine plant. This includes a chemical storage shed and a twin tower laboratory," Chishimba explains to IPS. This modern technology at the plant could reduce carbon dioxide and other toxic gas emissions into the atmosphere by 70 percent compared to other plants without carbon capture measures.

- **Namibia: Government Bans Ekipa (carved ivory products) Sales: [The Namibian](#) (Windhoek): 21 August 2008.**

THE Ministry of Environment and Tourism has placed a moratorium on the sale of carved ivory products with effect from September 1 as a measure to control trade in ivory amulets known as omakipa. The decision was announced in Windhoek yesterday by Environment Permanent Secretary Dr Kalumbi Shangula, who said the Ministry was acting in accordance with a Cabinet decision taken earlier this year. From September 1, Shangula said, all jewellery and curio shops and street vendors selling ivory products would have to register with the Ministry of Environment and a registration fee of N\$500 would be payable. Applications for registration can be obtained from the Ministry's permit office in the Channel Life Building in Windhoek. This is the only place in the country where these forms can be obtained. Shangula said the moratorium would remain in place

until the Controlled Wildlife Products Bill had been passed. He said the bill had been discussed by Cabinet and would be tabled in Parliament during its next session. Shangula said for the duration of the moratorium, the buying and selling of ivory products in Namibia would be prohibited and legal action would be taken against anyone found doing so. The Ministry is concerned about illegal ivory entering Namibia to be carved here and sold legally, and it wants to establish a legal trade in omakipa carved from ivory supplied by the Ministry. At the Cites conference held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2004, Namibia received approval to allow local communities to trade in worked ivory products for non-commercial purposes. The decision was bitterly opposed by Kenya, which feared that any re-opening of the ivory trade would be exploited by poachers who would target its elephants in a bid to launder 'dirty' ivory through Namibia. Trade in ivory products for non-commercial purposes means that Namibians can produce omakipa and sell them, for example to tourists for their own personal use, but they cannot be sold in bulk to outside markets. Omakipa (singular: ekipa) are unique cultural objects mainly found in northern Namibia and southern Angola and are in high demand because of their aesthetic quality and cultural-historic value. They were once the jewels of Owambo aristocracy. They were worn on leather straps suspended from the neck or the waist and indicated the social status of the wearer. They were worn mainly at special occasions such as fertility feasts, wedding and funerals.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Workers' Retirement Age May Rise: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

Civil servants' retirement age could rise to 60 years if a recommendation by the Public Service Commission is implemented. Its chairman, Mr Titus Gateere, announced on Wednesday that the PSC supports calls to increase the retirement age from the current 55 years to 60, a move that Prime Minister Raila Odinga also seems to back. While launching the second annual Public Service Week, Mr Odinga said: "You heard what Mr Gateere said... pay keen attention to it." The PM warned civil servants to toe the line by avoiding corruption, nepotism and incompetence. "Even if you are my own brother and you can't deliver on the services, I have no reason but to kick you out. The Government is well balanced and nobody should say because this factory is in our place, the chief executive officer must come from here. Let's rise above cheap thinking," he said in apparent reference to recent calls made by some Coast MPs over the running of Kenya Ports Authority.

Zero tolerance

"We want to ensure that the Government operates with zero tolerance to corruption," he added. Mr Odinga urged the public to shun giving bribes to civil servants, citing the rampant practise in the Police Force and Provincial Administration as a worrying trend which needs to come to an end. He said that the Government will face public disaffection if transparency and accountability are not observed. "Kenyans have proven to us that they know their power and have the ability to throw out not only MPs, but even a whole

government," he explained. He said Government services must reflect what the people seek and that the era when the Government was 'King' was long gone. "The heavy-handed, top-down approach is no longer tenable," he added. The theme of this year's Public Service Week is: "The Citizen's Service Delivery Charter". The charters provide essential information needed to understand the functions and services of all public institutions. With this information, wananchi will be in a position to hold the Government to account. The PM explained that this year's theme had gone a step further of last year's theme: Huduma Bora ni Haki Yako (quality service is your right) by clearly defining what Huduma Bora (quality service) is. He said civil servants had a major role to play as the Government embarked on building the economy. "And while we will never be able to deliver everything we are required to, discourtesy and lethargy are unacceptable in the civil service," he said. Mr Odinga also said that the Public Complaints Standing Committee, which he launched recently, would help build institutional complaint handling capacity to strengthen public sector institutions and improve delivery of public services. He said that the Government still performed poorly in areas such as technology adoption, which is the trend worldwide. Mr Odinga thanked all civil servants for embracing and championing reforms which have changed the face of the public service. Performance contracting, he said, had brought the country at par with the best in the continent. "We want to aim even higher and be rated with the best in the world," Mr Odinga added.

Staff training

He said training of staff to improve professional skills, continuous revision of salaries and meritorious promotions will be enhanced. The launch was also attended by several Cabinet ministers, permanent secretaries and top Government officials. Similar functions are also being carried out in the districts. Mr Odinga toured the exhibition stalls of all ministries and parastatals showing their performance standards.

- **Kenya: Researchers Breed Weed-Resistant Cereal: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

Scientists have made a major breakthrough in the search for a solution to a weed that has hampered cereal production in Africa for years. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) on Wednesday announced that it was on the verge of developing strains of sorghum resistant to striga weed. The weed causes losses estimated at Sh462 billion in Africa, according to the Consultative Group for International Research. Using a novel marker-assisted breeding technique, the researchers have found a way of conferring resistance to sorghum, millet, maize and rice. The technique entails use of genetic markers to tag and transfer genes that control desirable characteristics such as improved crop productivity, resistance to diseases or pests and tolerance to floods and drought. "When using this breeding method, we can monitor genetic composition of plants from an early stage unlike conventional methods," said one of the researchers, Dr Dionysious Kiambi. Dr Kiambi said that the other methods involved waiting until crops attained maturity before the traits were expressed. The search for striga-resistant sorghum began years ago as scientists scoured gene banks worldwide for

the characteristic. One of the sorghum varieties, N13, which was found to be neither high-yielding nor drought-resistant, was discovered to have the resistance. It is this variety that has been crossed with varieties preferred by farmers using markers to precisely transfer only the striga-resistance without affecting other desirable characteristics. Icrisat collaborated with the University of Hohenheim in Germany and national agricultural research institutes of Kenya, Eritrea, Mali and Sudan. The team has already created five sorghum varieties that are resistant to the weed, and initial trials have been successful.

- **Eritrea: President Isaias Inaugurates Banana And Tomato Processing Factory in Haikota Sub-Zone: Shabait.com (Asmara): 20 August 2008.**

President Isaias Afwerki yesterday inaugurated the newly set up Banana and Tomato Processing Factory in Alebu, Haikota sub-zone. The President observed the activities of the factory "Banatom," during which he received briefings by experts and managers. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony in which ministers, regional Administrators, Army commanders, village elders and invited guests took part, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Gergis Teklemichael, indicated that the factory would be engaged in processing bananas over eight months and four months in processing tomatoes. He further pointed out that the factory has been set up in Alebu in view of the fact that there exists fertile land and the farmers of the area are engaged in the production of banana and tomato, and thus provide them with easy access to market. It is also in line with efforts to promote equitable economic growth and social justice, in addition to introducing modern farming methods, the Minister elaborated. Dr. Gergis went on to say that the factory is owned by the Eritrean government and Mr. Katili, an Italian investor, in partnership. He further explained that the factory meets international standards and that a sample of its production has been sent abroad and has borne fruitful outcome. Also speaking on the occasion, the Administrator of Gash-Barka region, Mr. Kahsai Gebrehiwet, stated that the opening of the factory in Haikota sub-zone would give additional impetus to the development and modernization pace of the area. Expressing conviction that the newly established plant would be effective considering the existing natural resources in the area, Mr. Kahsai called on the farming community in the area to strive for competitive output. Banatom Factory set up along the Asmara-Tessenei road has already provided job opportunities to 170 citizens.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Central Africa: Swiss Logger 'Conned Congos Out of \$12 Million in Tax': [The East African](http://TheEastAfrican.com) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.**

A Swiss-based logging company operating in the Congo Basin has been accused of declaring losses in its local subsidiary to avoid being taxed while at the same time transferring immense amounts of cash into its offshore accounts. Conducted by Greenpeace International, the investigative report, Conning the Congo, says that Danzer Group has been using "an elaborate profit-laundering system" that has also meant moving cash out of the Democratic Republic of Congo into offshore bank accounts in

Switzerland. The Greenpeace Report -- which is based on a Danzer's internal documents - - says that the company has been evading tax in both countries. And so DRC and Congo-Brazzaville -- which own vast tracts of the Basin's rainforests -- have been losing millions of dollars of much-needed tax revenues. For instance, Greenpeace says that by not complying with the tax agreements the company had made with the two governments, the latter have lost an estimated 7.8 million euros (\$12 million) in tax revenue between 2000 and 2006. In real terms, Greenpeace says this would have been 80 per cent of what DRC used in 2000 to finance public health care or the cost of vaccinating 700,000 Congolese children. But in a statement sent to The EastAfrican from Switzerland, the Danzer Group terms Greenpeace's accusations "groundless allegations" and "populist gimmick." The company says it pays taxes and invests 3 million euros (\$4.5 million) annually in both DRC and Congo-Brazzaville. "The recent allegations made by Greenpeace are totally without foundation. They are an absurd, populist gimmick," the statement says. The company also says that Greenpeace had filed cases in Switzerland against it in 2004 and 2006 but the charges were dropped by the Swiss Attorney General's Office. Greenpeace is an independent not-for-profit organisation involved in environmental and peace campaigning throughout the world. Among other roles, the organisation's trademark operations involve investigating, exposing and challenging governments and industry to stop operations that destroy forests and contribute to climate change. It comprises 27 independent national/regional offices in over 40 countries across Europe, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific. Greenpeace says that Danzer Group's subsidiaries in the DRC and Congo Brazzaville -- Siforco and IFO, respectively -- sell wood to its Swiss-based firm, Interholco AG, at a price that is below the true market value of the wood. "Internal Danzer Group documents show, in great detail, the price-fixing arrangements between the Group's Swiss-based trading arm Interholco AG and the parent firm's logging subsidiaries in the DRC and the Republic of the Congo," the report says. The report further alleges that once the company fixes a price that is below that for which wood sells in the market, it then makes "unofficial" payments through bank accounts in Europe, enabling it to "evade the payment of a variety of taxes to which it is liable to the DRC." But now, Danzer Group accuses Greenpeace of "stealing" its data and protests that it has been operating on losses saying; "It is unfortunate that Greenpeace, despite the fact that it is in possession of many items of stolen data, fails to mention that Danzer operations suffered a loss of 11 million euros (\$17 million) in 2003 alone." It adds: "One cannot evade paying taxes when there were no profits to tax in the first place." Based in Switzerland, the Danzer Group is owned by a wealthy German family. The company prides itself on being the world's largest manufacturer of hardwood veneers, operating six veneer factories and five sawmills in Europe, North America and Africa. It operates 30 sales outlets and employs a workforce of some 4,700 staff. It posted a turnover of approximately 410 million euros (\$615 million) in 2007. Its subsidiaries in the Congo Basin, started in 1972, employs 2,400 people while a further 20,000 people benefit indirectly. Greenpeace appears to have been able to acquire a 2003 audit on the company's holding firm, ANBE AG, which was carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers and which exposed how the transfer pricing has been contravening DRC's laws. Curiously, Danzer Group appears to have been predicting losses in its subsidiary in DRC and the Republic of Congo but profits for its Swiss-based mother company. For instance, Greenpeace presents Siforco's 2003 business plan in which the company projected a loss of 1 million euros (\$1.5 million) but an offshore

profit of 440,000 euros (\$686,000). This is the second time the Swiss-based company is featuring prominently in a Greenpeace investigation. In a previous probe, Danzer was named for trading in illegal timber, bribery and dealing with a timber dealer who had been blacklisted by the UN Security Council for trafficking arms in Liberia. What is worrying for the two resource-rich countries is that the Greenpeace report shows that falsifying accounts there seems to be the rule rather than the exception. "Export figures for the whole of the DRC (2002-05) and the Republic of the Congo (2004-06) indicate that the phenomenon of tax evasion through under-invoicing of the sales value of exported timber from both countries is by no means restricted to the Danzer Group." To Greenpeace, logging companies are only able to do this because they are "able to feed networks of corruption." Western companies also seem to be directly (and indirectly) abetting an ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in the DRC. The seemingly forgotten war there has no parallels anywhere on the planet -- Informed estimates now say that it has brought to their early deaths some 5.4 million people and could be killing 45,000 people every month -- thus making it, as Greenpeace observes, the world's deadliest conflict since the Second World War. "The vast majority die from non-violent causes such as malaria, diarrhoea, pneumonia and malnutrition -- conditions that are easily preventable and treatable so long as people have access to basic healthcare and nutritious food." The World Bank, IMF and the governments in the two countries seem unable to combat the cheating. In the DRC, for instance, Greenpeace's report says that the tax evasion has been going on right under the noses of the Bank, the IMF and the government. In DRC, 75 per cent of timber exports is controlled by four foreign companies -- Danzer Group (which accounts for 40 per cent), NST Group of Portugal, Olam of India and the Lebanese company, Trans-M. The Greenpeace report concentrates on the activities of Danzer. But in its website, Danzer says its operations in the Congo Basin are beyond reproach. "For years, our work in Africa has involved large investments that have made significant contributions to local development," it adds. The company also prides itself for being one of the most important investors in both DRC and Congo-Brazzaville. But the Greenpeace report paints a rather different picture from what the company has posted on the website. It offers evidence to show that Danzer has been falsifying its accounts since the late 1990s. It also appears from the report that officials in the three subsidiaries have been going to great pains to hide the true nature of their operations. For instance, the report quotes a 2002 letter from one Schmidt of IFO who cautions a colleague, "If false information gets into unauthorised hands, this will certainly lead to costly consequences for IFO or for Siforco." Besides under-invoicing timber exports, the report says that Siforco has been under-invoicing for services provided to other Danzer Group companies, including milling and transporting of logs. A further source of tax evasion appears to be payment of expatriates working for Danzer Group in the two countries, who are allegedly paid from offshore accounts. Greenpeace quotes from an audit done by PricewaterhouseCoopers in May 2003, "PricewaterhouseCoopers states candidly that some of Siforco's costs are paid outside the country of production and outside the subsidiaries' own local accounts." It also says that the firm's auditors questioned the use of offshore accounts as a source of additional income in Switzerland to pay for the salaries of expatriates, spare parts and foreign exchange. The audit firm concluded, "These transactions might not fully comply with local (DRC) law." After the Amazon, the Congo Basin contains the second largest expanse of rainforests in the world. It is credited for

ameliorating the world's climates as well as being an extremely important source of biodiversity. Today, Greenpeace says that 53 million hectares of the rainforests are under the logging sector. Here, companies from France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Switzerland, the USA, Lebanon, Singapore and India compete for the lucrative timber export business. The activities of these companies are barely controlled by governments largely because the latter are weak and prone to massive corruption. Greenpeace asks the DRC government and the World Bank to prevent further expansion of industrial logging until comprehensive social and environmental land use planning has been conducted and basic governance and anti-corruption measures have been established. It also asks rich governments that give financial aid to the DRC and Congo Brazzaville to "prevent further fraudulent expatriation of wealth and profits from the two countries by companies that engage in tax evasion, capital flight and aggressive tax avoidance."

- **Gateway Communications Expands to Central Africa: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 18 August 2008.**

Gateway Communications, the leading communications service provider in Africa, has continued to expand its pan-African reach, with the establishment of a Central African regional office in Cameroon. Gateway has pioneered the delivery of high quality and cost effective voice, data and managed network solutions across the continent. Africa is the fastest growing telecommunications market in the world and the Cameroon office will strengthen the sales and customer service network across 40 countries that Gateway operates in. Central Africa is a large and diverse region with huge opportunity, consisting of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, which collectively comprise the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). Sao Tome and Principe, which has strong economic links to CEMAC, is also included in this new Gateway Communications region. It has also promoted Lanre Kolade to the newly-created position of Managing Director for the Central Africa region. A graduate of the London Business School and Obafemi Awolowo University, Kolade has been successful in growing the Gateway business within Cameroon over the last two years, following two years in francophone Africa, and takes the lead in establishing the Central African regional head office. In order to service new customer demand from landlocked nations in the Central African region, and across the continent, Gateway Communications has bought additional capacity from Intelsat, a leading provider of fixed satellite services worldwide. "Our strategic focus on Africa ensures that we continue to meet the demanding voice, data and satellite networking needs of African GSM operators and multi-national businesses," he said.

- **Equatorial Guinea: Human Rights Drowning in Oil : [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 18 August 2008.**

The oil interests of Angola, Brazil and Portugal could pave the way for former Spanish colony Equatorial Guinea to become the ninth member of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) two years from now, despite the country's poor human rights record. Equatorial Guinea, which has been ruled with an iron fist for nearly 30 years by President Teodoro Obiang Nguema, currently holds observer status in the CPLP, whose

full members are Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Príncipe and East Timor. At the 2006 CPLP summit of heads of state and government, Obiang Nguema managed to play down accusations of systematic human rights abuses, and his country was admitted as an associate observer. And at this year's summit, held in July in Lisbon, Obiang Nguema requested that Equatorial Guinea be accepted as a full member in 2010. To that end, he promised to make Portuguese the country's third official language, after Spanish and French. (Spanish is the most widely spoken language). Membership in the CPLP would give Equatorial Guinea access to professional and academic exchange programmes and would facilitate the cross-border circulation of its citizens. Obiang Nguema pointed out that Equatorial Guinea was a Portuguese colony for three centuries (from the late 15th to the late 18th centuries), and that Portuguese-based Creole is still spoken in some parts of the country. This tiny west central African nation of 28,000 square km, wedged between Gabon and Cameroon, has a population of just over one million people. It was discovered in 1471 by Portuguese navigator Fernando Po, and in 1493, King John II of Portugal took the title of "Lord of Guinea". In 1778 the colony was ceded to Spain in exchange for recognition of Lisbon's sovereignty over Colônia do Santíssimo Sacramento, the disputed city founded by the Portuguese in 1680 on the shores of the Rio de la Plata (River Plate) estuary across from Buenos Aires, Argentina. Colonia del Sacramento is now one of the biggest cities in Uruguay. However, it was not the arguments referring to history or languages that convinced the CPLP leaders, but the participation of the organisation's three biggest members, Angola, Brazil and Portugal, in exploiting Equatorial Guinea's vast oil reserves. According to oil industry estimates, there may be 450 million barrels of reserves in the Muni estuary alone. Since oil and gas were discovered in Equatorial Guinea in the early 1990s, it has quietly become sub-Saharan Africa's third-largest oil exporter, after Nigeria and Angola. BP (previously known as British Petroleum) reported in 2007 that Equatorial Guinea's output was estimated at 363,000 barrels a day -- five times more than a decade ago. The BP report also states that Equatorial Guinea's proven oil reserves amount to just 0.1 percent of the global total only due to the lack of geological studies, because if such studies were to confirm what is suspected, the country's reserves could represent 10 percent of the total, due to the vast off-shore reserves in the Gulf of Guinea. Enticed by the industry's vast potential, oil companies from Portugal, Brazil and Angola have joined countries like the United States in a mad scramble for a share of the pie. With the help of Libya, granted by its leader, Muammar Gaddafi -- one of Obiang Nguema's long-time allies -- a Portuguese delegation visited Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea, early this year. Angola signed its first oil agreements five years ago, and Brazil is starting to explore a promising off-shore block. The agreements with Angola, signed in 2003, include bilateral cooperation agreements in oil, electricity and transportation, which led to the creation of the Sonagesa airline, a joint venture that is run in Equatorial Guinea by the Obiang Nguema family. Brazil's state-owned oil company Petrobras acquired a 50 percent stake in Block L, in the Muni estuary, where it hopes to find an estimated 450,000 barrels of oil. Portugal is also keen on keeping up in the race. But as a former European colonial power in Africa, it prefers to forge ahead by means of its preferential agreements with Angola and Libya. One of the key shareholders in the Portuguese state-owned oil company Galp Energía is Angola's national oil company, Sonangol, which has a strong presence in Equatorial Guinea. At the same time, Galp

Energía wants to fully apply its partnership agreement with LAP (Libya Africa Investment Portfolio) to explore and produce oil and natural gas in Libya, as well as in Equatorial Guinea and other African countries. The president of Galp Energía, Manuel Ferreira de Oliveira, visited Malabo in February to identify business opportunities, including the distribution of fuel. But in the race to conquer the market, the three countries are not alone, nor do they even head the list. The United States is the biggest foreign investor in Equatorial Guinea's oil industry, having invested seven billion dollars this year alone. "The environment is extremely favourable to doing business: there is economic openness, and 15.8 percent growth from 2002 to 2006, but under a totalitarian regime that guarantees a disciplined labour force, as transnational corporations tend to demand," international affairs analyst Augusto Videla told IPS. But while the economy is enjoying fast economic growth driven by oil and gas sales, which represent 90 percent of the country's exports, "the country is the victim of immense corruption, with Obiang Nguema's family as the chief culprit, but with the involvement of foreign companies and banks as well, at the same time that the overwhelming majority of the population lives on less than a dollar a day," he added. Asked why a notorious dictatorship would be accepted as an observer and perhaps full member of the CPLP, the organisation's outgoing executive secretary, Luís Fonseca, told IPS that the Community, "made up of eight democratic members, will exercise its influence to improve the situation." But Videla is sceptical, saying that "with Obiang Nguema in power, nothing is going to change in Equatorial Guinea, which he considers his personal fiefdom, and which has become one of the most closed countries in the world and one of the worst human rights violators, where opposition is not tolerated and freedom of the press is a pipe dream."

- **Cameroon: FCFA 4.5 Billion Rural Electrification Project Launched: [The Post](#) (Buea): 15 August 2008.**

An electrification project valued at FCFA 4.5 billion and destined to cover some 26 rural areas in the Southwest and Northwest Provinces of Cameroon has been launched. The project is expected to be completed in 2010. Cameroon's Minister of Water and Energy Resources, Jean Bernard Sindeu, on Tuesday, August 12, at Idenau, West Coast District, launched the project. The project, which is jointly sponsored by the Cameroon and Spanish Governments, shall be carried out by the Rural Electrification Agency, REA, in Cameroon. "This project of a total cost of FCFA 4.5 billion is aimed at supplying electricity to a target population of about 38,800 inhabitants," Sindeu said. The Minister stated that 17 of the localities to benefit from the project are from the Southwest while the rest come from the Northwest. In the Southwest, one of the chief beneficiary localities is the West Coast District: from Bakingili through Isongoh to Debundscha. In the other parts of the Southwest, REA shall also string the lines from Mpot to Ekok and from Eyumujock to the Otou borders in the Mamfe areas. The Project also envisages putting up a thermal generating plant in the remote settlement of Akwaya. The Minister said the project aims at lighting up most of the village localities along the Cameroon-Nigerian borders. "This project's execution is one of the accompanying keys to wealth and job creation as well as the consolidation of growth along the Cameroon and Nigerian borders," Sindeu said. He added that across the two provinces, some 205 km of electricity lines will be constructed and 42 transformers installed. According to him, some 650

homes, public places, schools and health centres will equally be lighted by the time the project wraps up. One of REA's technicians, Felix Endjanga, told The Post that they are already carrying on some feasibility work in the field. The Mayor of Idenau, James Esange Elonge, enthused that the project would boost the growth of his municipality. According to the Mayor, the mainly fishing population of Idenau would be able to preserve their excess catch due to the availability of electricity unlike before. Idenau, nevertheless, has for over decades been dependent on free thermal electricity supplied by the Cameroon Development Corporation, CDC. But the Mayor said that CDC's supply has not been adequate to meet the needs of the entire population and, also, has some of the times been supplied intermittently. "I think my people are extremely happy. In fact, most of the people here rely on fishing. With the electricity, I am glad that they will be able to preserve some of their extra fish from getting rot," he said. The Mayor, however, said that the project was not going to cover all the villages of his municipality. He said that it was regrettable that inhabitants of the villages of Itome, Eyenge and Esai will continue to stay in darkness while the rest would get electricity soon. While appreciating the electricity programme, the Mayor, appealed that Government should provide potable water in his municipality. He said Idenau was replete with water resources, paradoxically, the inhabitants cannot drink potable water. On his part, Minister Sindeu said FCFA 395.5 million has been budgeted for water projects this year with Fako Division getting a good share of it. Sindeu announced other electrification projects that shall be carried out under the Rumpi project worth some FCFA 9 billion in the Southwest. He disclosed that the projects, which will be launched in the next few months, shall be sponsored by the European Union and the Cameroon Government and will run on for the next four years. Sindeu also went on to disclose that the Government has equally signed agreements with the World Bank for some other electricity projects that will eventually see the reconstruction of the Yoke Dam in Muyuka and the construction of a mini-hydro plant at Mbonge. Minister Sindeu was accompanied to the Southwest by the Chancellor at the Spanish Embassy, Ms Nieves Robledillo; the General Manager of REA, Ousmanou Moussa, and a host of other dignitaries.

- **Rwanda: Government Ends Quarter With Surplus Money: [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information](#) (Kigali): 20 August 2008.**

With listening donors and a buoyant tax base, government sailed through the first quarter of 2008 with a surplus in its coffers instead of a huge deficit it had envisaged, according to the latest budget implementation report.

In the spending plan for the quarter, government had projected that it would have 84.4 billion Francs from taxes and grants from the usually reluctant donors. Instead, total revenue and grants amounted to 143.9 billion Francs exceeding by about 59.5 billion francs. For this year, Rwanda will spend some 623.225.527.207 (\$1.2 billion). For the first time in years, the country will foot 56 % of its expenditures. "Because of the speed up of external budget support disbursements in the first quarter, the overall performance ended with a surplus of about RwF 9 billion compared to a deficit of RwF 50.9 billion projected", the Ministry of Finance report says. The World Bank, the UK and some other

smaller partners kind of loosened their rules on disbursement. Particularly, the government reports that it managed to negotiate with the World Bank to "disburse its grant budget support in March rather than in April or May as originally programmed". The Bank indeed responded with a US\$ 72.5 million injection in March. This amount includes additional US\$ 10 million earmarked energy. These 9 Billion Francs surplus funds mean that Government is able to increase its deposits with the Central Bank by about RwF 26.1 billion. In addition to reduced internal expenditures and lending, coupled with a better than expected tax base, the authorities say all seems to be back to normal - at least for now. Total tax revenue collections at RwF 68 billion were RwF 8.8 billion higher than the revised projection of RwF 59.2 billion. However, as the report notes, all the major tax heads overperformed with the exception of petroleum excise duties. Direct taxes at RwF 24.4 billion exceeded the first quarter projections at RwF 0.6 billion by about RwF 3.8 billion - with PAYE collections accounting for the over-performance. Company taxes also benefited from arrears collections of about RwF 0.9 billion. Officials had initially suspected that the February post election crisis - that forced Rwanda to move its fuel import route to Tanzania, would bring significant strife to the economy. The finance Ministry says the impact was 'relatively minor'. What the Kenya crisis brought was, according to government, higher imports and transportation costs that continue to exert strong inflationary pressures on the economy. These high costs though beneficial to some revenue areas like VAT and import duties, could at the same time become harmful to some aspects of economic performance. The report says: "For instance, the surge in petroleum prices and the policy not to implement a full price pass-through would reduce petroleum excise duties. On the other hand, the inflationary trend could exert pressures on public expenditures and given that there was a slowdown in spending during the first quarter, acceleration for the rest of the year could be expected." Finance and Economic Planning Minister James Musoni said last week that the country would have GDP growth 'unseen' previously at 8.5 %, but also admitted that the 13 percent inflationary point could be challenging.

108. DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Yar'Adua Drops Service Chiefs in Military Shake-Up: Vanguard (Lagos): 21 August 2008.**

PRESIDENT Umaru Yar'Adua appointed, yesterday, a new Chief of Defence Staff and new Service Chiefs for the Army, Navy and the Air Force, after dropping the incumbents. The new Chief of Defence Staff is Air Marshall Paul Dike, who until now was the Chief of Air Staff. He replaces General Andrew Aziza who is retiring from the service. Other appointees are Major-General A.B. Dambazau, Chief of Army Staff, who takes over from Lieutenant-General Luka Yusuf. Yusuf is also retiring. Until his new appointment, Maj.-Gen. Dambazau was the General Officer Commanding the Two Division of the Army in Ibadan, Rear Admiral Isaiah Iko Ibrahim, new Chief of Naval Staff, is taking over from Vice Admiral Ganiyu Adekeye. Rear Admiral Ibrahim was the Flag Officer Commanding the Naval Training Command, Lagos. President Yar'Adua who

left Abuja yesterday for Saudi Arabia for the lesser hajj also approved the appointment of Air Marshal Oluseyi Petinrin as Chief of Air Staff. Until his appointment, Air Marshal Petinrin was the Air Officer Commanding the Nigerian Air Force Training Command, Kaduna. All the appointments are with immediate effect. President Yar'Adua's chief spokesman, Mr. Olusegun Adeniyi, said the President and the Minister of Defence, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, had met with the outgoing Chief of Defence Staff and Service Chiefs to thank them for their services to the nation. Following the changes, the Defence Retreat scheduled to begin in Kaduna today has been postponed until further notice. The Minister of Defence, Alhaji Ahmed, regrets any inconvenience the postponement might cause all those invited to the retreat, especially former Heads of State and royal fathers.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: Talks Hang in Balance As Mugabe Outflanks Rivals: [Business Day](#) (Johannesburg): 21 August 2008.**

ZIMBABWE's power-sharing talks are hanging in the balance, with the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) saying Zanu (PF)'s intention to convene parliament on Tuesday would be a "clear repudiation" of the framework for dialogue. The move to assemble parliament has left relations between Zanu (PF) and the two MDC factions in disarray. It also threatens to sabotage talks that were said to be in their final stages. The talks have deadlocked over the division of executive powers between President Robert Mugabe and the MDC's Morgan Tsvangirai. MDC secretary-general Tendai Biti yesterday said assembling parliament would ruin the talks and widen the gap between the parties. "Any decision to convene parliament will be a clear repudiation of the memorandum of understanding (MoU), and an indication beyond reasonable doubt of Zanu (PF)'s unwillingness to continue to be part of the talks. In short convening parliament decapitates the dialogue," Biti said.

"The MoU makes it clear that no party shall take any decision or measure that has a bearing on the dialogue, save by consensus. Such a decision or measure includes, but is not restricted to, the convening of parliament or formation of a new government. In the present case, the MDC has not consented to the convening of parliament," Biti said. His stance contradicted that of Tsvangirai and another party spokesman Tapiwa Mashakada, who said the composition of a new cabinet was their main concern, and not the reconvening of parliament as such. Tsvangirai is understood to be relying on a coalition agreement with the breakaway MDC faction led by Arthur Mutambara to protect him from attempts by Mugabe to secure a parliamentary majority by co-opting MPs from his or the other faction in the party. But senior MDC officials last night confirmed to *Business Day* that there were fears that Mugabe would "make a deal" with sufficient opposition MPs. "There is a feeling of uncertainty ... our worst fears are that Mugabe would manipulate the situation," one official said. Zanu (PF) holds 99 seats, the main MDC 100 and the Mutambara faction 10 seats, while Mugabe needs only 106 seats to form a government. Welshman Ncube, Mutambara's secretary-general and chief negotiator, said they had no objections to the convening of parliament. The latest stalemate gave President Thabo Mbeki, the talks mediator, an added challenge. His task

could be more difficult if Mugabe appoints five senators and 10 provincial governors to the 93-member senate. The main opposition MDC won 24 seats in the senate, the breakaway faction six and Zanu (PF) 30 in the March 29 poll. The appointment of senators and governors is part of the talks. Convening the 210-member parliament would also require a speaker to be elected -- a post that is also part of the discussion at the talks. The issue of senators, governors and the speaker had not been resolved when talks stalled last week. Southern African Development Community leaders approved the convening of parliament during their summit last weekend in Johannesburg. Mugabe immediately started preparing for the swearing-in of MPs on Monday, and the opening of parliament on Tuesday -- causing consternation within his party and the opposition circles. Zanu (PF) hardliners and ministers who lost their parliamentary seats oppose talks. Army, police and intelligence chiefs who meet under Joint Operations Command -- which also serves as Mugabe's power base, are also opposed to the talks -- especially the proposal that Tsvangirai should attend their meetings.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Kenya: Give Amnesty to End Graft Cases – Githongo: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

People accused of corruption should be offered amnesty, former Ethics chief John Githongo said on Wednesday. However, amnesty can only come with full confession and voluntary surrender of stolen wealth, he said. Kenya cannot afford to lose the war against corruption, he said, and an amnesty - "however unpalatable and distasteful as it looks" - was the most practical way to close old cases. Mr Githongo went on: "It is a big hot issue in the world because the blunt object of prosecution only causes delays." The one time anti-corruption czar, who flew back in the country on Tuesday night after three years of self-exile in the United Kingdom, said he was excited on his return, and submitted that he was ready to assist the Grand Coalition Government take measures that will end corruption and also solve old scandals. "I have come back home a humbled servant thankful that there is peace, and I am prayerful for peace. I don't pretend to have solutions, but one thing is clear: the war against corruption is best fought at home and that is why I am back," he said. The former permanent secretary for Ethics and Governance worked from State House reporting directly to President Kibaki, until he fled the country three years ago, expressing fears for his life after exposing the Anglo Leasing scandal. He raised the thorny issue of amnesty, saying, it was the most practical method of closing old cases of corruption. The former PS had just been described as the "hope of Kenyans" and "a principled man in the war against corruption" by members of civil society, who crowded a meeting room at the Hilton Hotel. Participants at the forum organised by the Kenya Human Rights Commission were mainly drawn from civil society and NGOs that have campaigned against corruption and bad governance. At the high table were KHRC chairman Makau Mutua of the State University of New York, vice-chairperson Betty Murungi, executive director Muthoni Wanyeki and former Transparency International Kenya boss Gladwell Otieno who is now the executive director of the Africa Centre for Open Governance. A few minutes after he had walked into the hall at 3.07pm, Mr Githongo noticed veteran activist Mrs Wambui Otieno-

Mbugua and went over to give her a long hug in her wheel chair as her youthful husband Peter Mbugua looked on. Dressed in black trousers and a casual shirt, a smiling Githongo walked back to the high table to wait for formalities before telling his side of the story on Anglo Leasing and other corruption cases. Prof Mutua opened proceedings by praising Mr Githongo's role in fighting corruption when he served as the President's adviser on governance. The university don, who served as Mr Githongo's legal advisor while in exile, told off politicians who vilified the former PS for seeking exile in the UK and said that if his initiatives had been implemented, perhaps the country could have been spared horrendous political violence that rocked it at the beginning of the year. "You spoke of reforms and came up with a lot of initiatives during your time. If they had been carried out, perhaps the violence that we saw the beginning of this year could have been avoided," he said. Mr Githongo said that his homecoming was not meant to shake the Grand Coalition Government, but to share his thoughts on fighting corruption, putting in place good governance and fashioning economic policies that will lift all Kenyans from poverty.

No apologies

Mr Githongo said he had no apologies for the disclosures and the recordings of high level Government officials while he was PS, "because those things continue to haunt us and our leaders, and they should never cause a paralysis as we make decisions for the future," he said. The former PS proposed economic amnesty as the fastest method of ending a retinue of corruption cases that had blighted the Kanu, Narc and Grand Coalition administrations. "However unpalatable and distasteful as it looks, we need economic amnesty. It is a big hot issue in the world because the blunt object of prosecution only causes delays. Adoption of amnesty is the truth in other parts of the world and can easily be used to shut down past cases," he said. But he added that blanket amnesty was counter-productive and gave the example of the surrender of the Grand Regency Hotel by businessman Kamlesh Pattni that has ended up in controversy.

Spells confessions

A clear procedure that spells confessions and surrender of irregularly acquired property, he said, must be put in place. "Those who have swindled the country should be ready to make full disclosures in a transparent manner on the basis of local and international instruments so that Kenyans know what it is being done," he said. "During my time, I found out that those suspected of corruption preferred to be taken to court where they could present highly paid lawyers who specialise in delaying cases." "These are the realities; blunt realities which are a travesty to poor Kenyans," he said.

109. PEACEKEEPING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND SECURITY MATTERS

WEST AFRICA

- **Niger: Tuaregs 'To Lay Down Arms': [Angola Press Agency \(Luanda\)](#): 19 August 2008.**

Tuareg rebels fighting the government in Niger say they are laying down their arms, as part of peace talks brokered by Libya. The announcement was made by the Tuareg rebel leader, Aghaly ag Alambo, following a meeting in Libya with the country's leader, Muammar Gaddafi. Mr Alambo said he was also speaking for Tuareg rebels in neighbouring Mali - they would disarm too, he said. The revolts by Tuareg nomads broke out last year in the two Saharan countries. The government of Niger has welcomed Mr Alambo's statement and Libya's peacemaking efforts. Following his meeting with Mr Gaddafi in southern Libya, Mr Alambo said he also spoke on behalf of the leader of the Tuareg rebellion in neighbouring Mali, Ibrahim Ag Bahanga. The Tuareg are an historically nomadic people living in the Sahara and Sahel regions of North Africa. Tuareg militants in Mali and Niger have been engaged in sporadic armed struggles for several decades. But analysts are divided over whether the Tuareg revolts have been driven by genuine political grievances or efforts to defend control of drugs, arms and migrant-smuggling routes.

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- **Nigeria: Warring Ebonyi Communities Lay Down Arms: [Vanguard \(Lagos\)](#): 20 August 2008.**

THE two warring factions in the four months old communal clashes of Ezillo and Ezza-Ezillo in Ebonyi State have agreed to laid down arms and embrace a lasting peace in order to avert a military option that the state government has threatened to apply. The truce is coming on the heels of four persons reportedly killed in a renewed clash that re-erupted last weekend, where one was beheaded while an indigene of Enugu State was equally hacked to death in a shoot-out. Mediator in the ceasefire parley and leader of the state House of Assembly Hon. Emma Nwobo had threatened to expose the sponsors of the mayhem whom he said are already known by the government and security agencies. Nwobo had warned that government would be forced to allow the military, which he said had already requested from its high command for increase in the number of soldiers to be deployed in the warring communities to force them to surrender their arms, adding that this would not be in the interest of the people because it would lead to unforgettable consequences in human and material toll. The lawmaker cited the case of Odi and Zaki Ibiam in Bayelsa and Benue states respectively, and told the people of Ezillo and Ezza-Ezillo that authorities are already aware of arms stock in the communities but advised them to give peace a chance in their own interest and interest of their children. He charged them to emulate the example of the recent war between Russia and Georgia which he said ended a few days after it started. Council chairman of Isihelu Local Government, Onwa Ali Onwa confirmed the latest killings, gaving death figures as only two persons and disclosed that while the first victim, a male was hacked to death at the weekend, the second victim was hit by a stray bullet and died instantly on Monday when four youths dressed in black rode to Isimkpuma Junction along Enugu-Abakaliki express road and shot randomly at people and zoomed off. One of the unfortunate victims

is said to be an indigene of Amechi Awkunanaw in Enugu State, and said to be a member of the National Union of Miners, Ezillo branch. According to the council boss, leaders of the two communities have finally resolved to sheath their sword in the ceasefire agreement.

- **Liberia: Country Still Needs Help to Protect Unsteady Peace, Warns Ban: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 18 August 2008.**

The struggle with the rule of law and competition over natural resources threatens Liberia's fragile stability despite its economy showing significant improvement, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in a report to the Security Council today. "Overall, the main threats to peace and stability emanate from the law and order maintenance issues," Mr. Ban reported, while recommending a 12-month extension to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) through September 2009. "Much still needs to be done, urgently, to strengthen the capacities of both the police and the army, and facilitate their effective presence in the country," Mr. Ban added. The delay in the reinforcement of the national police and the establishment of an Emergency Response Unit is making it difficult for UNMIL police units in Monrovia to reduce its tasks and redeploy to other "hotspots" around the country. Consequently, Mr. Ban proposes expanding the size of the UNMIL police units from 605 to 845 officers, and calls on Liberia's international partners to urgently provide assistance in building a national police force. More than 60 per cent of the population lives below the national poverty line and the country scores among the lowest in the world in key social indicators, posing a potential risk to a delicate peacebuilding process, Mr. Ban reported, while noting an increase in Liberia's gross domestic product (GDP) to 9.4 per cent and a significant reduction in external debt. While the increased value of natural resources has contributed to an improvement in the Government's revenue, "it has created a stronger incentive for illegal exploitation of natural resources, particularly minerals and rubber," Mr. Ban warned. The recent surge in fuel and food prices as well as political instability in neighbouring Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire could also have negative implications for security in Liberia. Mr. Ban, however, recommends continuing with the planned reduction in UNMIL military personnel, repatriating almost 1,500 - including troops, officers, observers, and engineering and administrative units - leaving a troop strength of just over 10,000 by September 2009. "UNMIL will be able to continue to discharge its mandate of maintaining a stable and secure environment and providing the necessary security umbrella throughout the country to enable the Government to continue its reform and restructuring programme," Ban reported. In a related development, work started on an UNMIL-funded magisterial courthouse in Unification Town, about 45 kilometres from Monrovia, last week. The \$25,000 courthouse, when completed, will bring to 17 the number of such buildings constructed and rehabilitated across Liberia by the UN mission since 2004. "They say that the strength of a chain lies in its weakest link: so does the strength of a judicial system lie in its magisterial courts," said Henrietta Mensa-Bonsu, the Deputy Head of UNMIL, at Saturday's ground-breaking ceremony

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Zimbabwe: SADC Presses Tsvangirai to Sign Deal: [The Herald](#) (Harare): 19 August 2008.**

SADC Heads of State and Government have endorsed the agreement between President Mugabe and Arthur Mutambara as a good basis for the formation of an inclusive Government and urged Morgan Tsvangirai to sign it. At an extraordinary summit of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-ordination under the chairmanship of Swaziland's King Mswati III held on the sidelines of the SADC summit in South Africa at the weekend, regional leaders exerted pressure on Tsvangirai to put pen to paper and sign the agreement. They also said Zimbabwe's Parliament should be convened very soon and this would pave the way for President Mugabe to form a new Government with the signatories to the agreement. Last week, Cde Mugabe and Mutambara reached an agreement on the formation of an all-inclusive Government while Tsvangirai refused to sign at the last minute for the third time in as many weeks. According to the record of the extraordinary summit held on Friday and Saturday shown to *The Herald*, leaders "expressed strong opinion that documents as contained in the facilitator's report reflect the framework, spirit and purpose of the African Union resolution" passed at the continental body's summit in Egypt in June, calling for an all-inclusive Government. "In view of that," the report reads, "they are a good basis for an agreement." SADC leaders "encouraged and appealed to the parties to sign any outstanding agreements and conclude the negotiations as a matter of urgency to restore political stability in Zimbabwe". Since Tsvangirai is the only one yet to put pen to paper, the resolution is a direct call for the MDC-T leader to accept the same agreement that President Mugabe and Mutambara have endorsed. On the issue of Parliament, SADC leaders said they "recognised that while negotiations are continuing, it may be necessary to convene Parliament soon to give effect to the will of the people as expressed in the parliamentary elections held on 29 March 2008". The resolution came on the back of reports from insiders privy to the discussions held by the organ with Zimbabwe's political leaders indicating that Tsvangirai was demanding executive powers to hire and fire ministers and to chair Cabinet in any new Government. The insiders said Mutambara and his secretary-general Welshman Ncube had vigorously opposed this, saying the will of the people as reflected in the elections was not for a transfer of power to Tsvangirai but for power to be shared among the different parties. The two are said to have argued that Tsvangirai was seeking to humiliate President Mugabe and though they too were in the opposition, they could not accept it as the Zimbabwean leader was a liberation hero and an African icon. "We set out to unseat President Mugabe in the elections and we failed. That is the reality. We will certainly try and unseat him in the next election but as things stand right now, Tsvangirai's demands are unacceptable and we should not tolerate them." Our first prize is that there should be a tripartite agreement involving all three parties. If that fails, we must sit down and map a way forward with our national council. We want summit to pass a resolution that the document that we agreed on with President Mugabe is a reasonable basis for the formation of an inclusive Government. "Summit should appeal to anyone who does not want to sign it to reconsider. We need Parliament to sit. In short, we want a clear signal from summit that the present situation is untenable," Mutambara and Ncube reportedly said. In an earlier address to an informal session of the summit, Tsvangirai had told SADC leaders that he would accept nothing short of executive powers and that he was

Zimbabwe's legitimate leader on the basis of the House of Assembly elections. He said he wanted the power so that he could deliver on his election promises to the electorate. However, Angola's President Eduardo dos Santos, who also attacked Tsvangirai for lying to regional leaders on Friday, asked why Tsvangirai was not also looking at the Senate election results that had given Zanu-PF a clear majority in both Houses of Parliament. "President dos Santos," the insiders said, "told Tsvangirai that he could deliver on his election promises as a member of Cabinet." It is believed that President Mugabe will proceed to convene Parliament soon and form a new Government on the basis of the agreement with Mutambara that was endorsed by the SADC leadership. President Mugabe reiterated to the Organ on Defence, Politics and Security Co-ordination that he was still prepared to talk to Tsvangirai but the country had to move on with its economic recovery programmes and could not wait any longer. Yesterday, Zanu-PF information and publicity sub-committee chair Cde Patrick Chinamasa said the negotiations would continue under President Mbeki's facilitation. Newsnet quoted him saying: "It is our expectation as Zanu-PF that a deal will be concluded in the fullness of time so that we can put behind us the divisions, conflict, the polarisation that, in fact, has divided our country." On the issue of Parliament, Cde Chinamasa, who is Zanu-PF's chief negotiator at the talks, said: "They (the MPs) were elected for five years and already five months of that is gone without performing the functions of their office." Sooner or later Parliament must convene, MPs must be sworn in and we carry on with the business of running the country."

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: Rivals Sign Peace Deal in Djibouti: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 19 August 2008.**

Somalia's interim government and some opposition figures signed a peace deal on Monday that called for the rapid deployment of a robust United Nations force. It was the latest in a series of such agreements. Some Opposition members in exile and insurgents in Somalia had dismissed the United Nations-led talks here in Djibouti, so it was unclear what effect it might have on the ground. United Nations envoy for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, told Shabelle that the two sides had agreed to end all acts of armed confrontation. The main opposition demand has been that Ethiopian soldiers helping the government fight Islamist rebels leave Somalia. Mr. Abdalla said that the two sides have established a committee implementing the agreement jointly signed by the Government and the opposition on 9th June 2008. Fighting between the guerrillas and allied Somali-Ethiopian troops killed thousands of civilians in two years after Ethiopian troops entered in the country. A contingent of 2,200 African peacekeepers has made little headway in stemming the conflict, and the United Nations is reluctant to intervene until security improves. The violence in Somalia has set off a crisis that aid workers say may be the worst in Africa, with at least a million refugees in a nation torn by constant civil conflict since the 1991 toppling of a military dictator by warlords. The agreement articles are as follows: - Communiqué by the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia

1. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) held the first meetings of the High Level Committee and the Joint Security Committee in Djibouti from 16 to 18 August 2008. The international community, including diplomats from regional organizations (African Union, European Union, League of Arab States) and individual countries, as well as representatives of Somali civil society and business community, attended as observers.
2. They adopted the Terms of Reference for both Committees and discussed practical means of implementing the Djibouti Agreement.
3. The Parties agreed to continue the political dialogue between themselves and refrain from making inflammatory statements. They reaffirmed their commitment to cease all armed confrontation and to establish sub committees to implement the arrangements to that end.
4. They welcomed all efforts undertaken by Somali nationals, including through supportive meetings inside and outside Somalia, as well as those of the international community to help implement the Djibouti Agreement.
5. The Parties strongly condemn the perpetrators as well as those who mastermind and fund violence which targets innocent people, including killings, indiscriminate shelling, looting, raping and acts of piracy.
6. The TFG and the ARS are very concerned by the seriousness of the humanitarian situation in the country and the continued suffering of their compatriots. The Parties agree on the critical need to address this situation in all its dimensions - political, security and access. They call on the international community to urgently provide humanitarian assistance to the needy people of Somalia. In this connection, the Parties reaffirmed their strong determination to help ensure unhindered humanitarian access and assistance.
7. The Parties call on the international community to provide full support for the High Level Committee and the Joint Security Committee, particularly in their work in establishing a national mechanism for humanitarian access and assistance.
8. The Parties call on the United Nations Security Council to accelerate the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to facilitate the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Somalia.
9. The Parties would like to reassure the Somali population that they are determined to strengthen their commitment for peace, stability, unity, sovereignty, territorial integrity and dignity in Somalia.
10. The Parties thank the Government and people of Djibouti for their hospitality during the meetings of the High Level Committee and the Joint Security Committee.

11. The parties also express their appreciation to the international community for its generous support and invite it to remain supportive of the Djibouti Agreement, formally signed on 18 August 2008, to help start its effective implementation.

Djibouti

18 August 2008

High Level Committee

Ahmed Abdisalam Aden Abdurahman Abdishakur Warsame

Transitional Federal Government The Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia

Joint Security Committee

Mohamed Mohmud Hayd Omar Hashi Aden

Transitional Federal Government The Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia

Shebelle Media Network - Source of Somalia News

- **Uganda: World Bank Offers Over Sh3 Billion to Resettle Former ADF, LRA Rebels: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 19 August 2008.**

The World Bank Group and the Government of Uganda have signed a \$2.85m Multi-Donor Trust Fund Grant to support the Amnesty Commission's demobilisation and reintegration of former rebels. The new financing follows previous support from the Multi-Country Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (MDRP), which closed last year. The new grant agreement signed by Uganda's Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Dr. Ezra Suruma, and the World Bank Uganda Country Manager, Kundhavi Kadiresan, will improve access to socio-economic reintegration support for about 24,000 ex-combatants and collaborators. It will also support reconciliation and trust building activities between former rebels and their communities of return, to build a strong foundation for future peace and development in Uganda. "This Multi-Donor Trust Fund provides both financial and technical resources to assist the Government in supporting the reintegration of the people that have reported for Amnesty in the past, as well as for planning and implementing the demobilisation and repatriation of the remaining caseloads of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)," explained Kees Kingma, the World Bank senior social development specialist. At the request of Uganda, the World Bank in January established a special Multi-Donor Trust Fund to the demobilisation and reintegration of former rebel

combatants and their collaborators in their return to civilian life. Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom have committed funds to the Trust Fund which will make financing available through 2010. The new trust will be the main source of funds for the reintegration component of the Government's peace, recovery and development programme for the north.

- **Uganda: Ex-Rebels Receive Packages: [New Vision](#) (Kampala): 20 August 2008.**

TWELVE former Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels received their resettlement packages from Amnesty Commission in Kasese on Monday. The rebels are part of 100 former combatants who have surrendered in Kasese since 2006 but had not received their resettlement packages, according to the Amnesty Commission western regional senior resettlement officer, Dennis Nkawsibwe. This brings to 1,545 the number of ADF rebels who have abandoned rebellion to get amnesty since 2000, he said in an interview. The package, provided by International Organization for Migration and supported by the US agency for international development (USAID) and UNDP, included sh264,300, five kilograms of beans and maize, three hoes, saucepans, a jerrycan, two plates, a basin and one cup for each beneficiary. The Amnesty Commission chairman for the western region, the Rev. Fr. John Kalyerengeza, warned that nobody would be pardoned once they go back into rebellion. Kalyerengeza, the head of demobilisation and resettlement in western Uganda, urged the former rebels to form associations if they are to benefit from other government programmes such as Bonna Bagaggawale. The cleric advised the beneficiaries to put to good use the start-up funds and promised to monitor their progress. Kalyerengeza said they would call some of them for training at the rehabilitation centre in Kilembe. The returnees were, however, dissatisfied with the package, saying it could not help them acquire land to sustain themselves.

- **Uganda: Kenyan Minister Accuses UPDF of Killing Pastoralists: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.**

"Bombing Kenyans for what? That's a rumour and as of now we are not using any helicopter," Gen. Aronda said. But the military chief said, if the Kenyan cattle rustlers entered Uganda with guns, the UPDF would be compelled to fight them to stop harm to Ugandans. UPDF 3rd Division spokesman Henry Obbo said the allegations by the Kenyan minister were surprising because the Uganda-Kenya joint security committee has not received such reports. "We should expect the Kenyan army to complain not a politician because we monitor movement of cattle rustlers jointly," he said adding that the UPDF has not had any operation by a gunship of late. Mr Munyes said 5,000 Turkana herdsman crossed to Uganda two months ago due to persistent drought in Kenya but were asked to leave by the UPDF. "I will fly to Kakuma and then drive for five hours to the area to get first hand information," Mr Munyes said. Kenya and Ugandan authorities had scheduled a meeting for July 30 to resolve the issue but it never took place. Mr Munyes said Kenya's High Commissioner Japheth Getugi was asked to arrange for another meeting and he was to accompany four other ministers to Kampala next week. The team will come to further negotiate for the herders to be allowed in the country until the situation improves in

Turkana."We thought we would negotiate under the spirit of the East Africa Community," Mr Munyes said."Some of the herders are returning as it has started raining in Turkana," he added.

- **Somalia: Alshabab Snubs Djibouti Peace Deal: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 21 August 2008.**

In a teleconference he held for the local media on Wednesday night Sheikh Moqtar Robow Abu Mansur has avowed that the Djibouti peace deal jointly signed by Somali government and the major opposition group, Alliance for the reliberation of Somalia was "futile""The Jihad will keep on, there is no peace agreement, the martyrs will move ahead to the Jihad bath even if Ethiopians pull out" Robow said.' there were no representatives from the Mujahidin at what called "peace deal" He added that the end of hostilities hinges on the re-establishing of Islamic sharia in Somalia."Our objective is not only fighting, we want the Islamic sharia to be the constitution of Somalis" he added.Robow's remarks come later than Somali government and the ARS opposition groups have signed peace agreement in the neighboring Djibouti.The Djibouti Agreement seeks the replacement of Ethiopian troops supporting the transitional government with U.N. peacekeepers, who would also take over the duties of a small, ill-funded African Union force.But disagreement over the discussions split the Eritrea-based opposition Alliance for the Re-Liberation of Somalia (ARS) in two, with hardline exiles in Asmara joining the insurgents in denouncing the ARS officials who took part.Like previous rounds of talks -- including a six-week peace conference last year in rubble-strewn Mogadishu -- the negotiations have done little to reduce bloodshed on the ground. At least five people were killed on Tuesday when Islamist fighters attacked a military base near a busy Mogadishu market."Three mortar shells landed in Bakara market and hit traders and customers," Mohamud Hussein, a mini-bus driver said. He counted 17 wounded.Another resident, Nimco Sara, said fighting between the insurgents and the allied government and Ethiopian troops killed two fighters and lasted about 15 minutes.In some of the worst violence for weeks, city residents said nearly 50 people died last Friday when Ethiopian soldiers and government troops opened fire on civilians in retaliation after two roadside bombs ripped through their convoys.This was denied by the Ethiopian foreign ministry."Ethiopia's military conduct follows international rules of engagement and we do not attack civilians," Wahade Belay, a ministry spokesman, told Shabelle.He said an independent investigation by Somali officials found the only deaths had been caused by bombs planted by the rebel al Shabaab militia, which Washington says is a terrorist group with close ties to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda.Near-daily grenade attacks, gun battles and assassinations have driven many civilians from their homes, particularly in the capital, and their plight has been compounded by record food prices, hyperinflation and drought.The U.N. statement said both sides in Djibouti were united on the urgent need to address the crisis."The parties reaffirmed their strong determination to help ensure unhindered humanitarian access and assistance," it added.The number of Somalis desperately needing food aid could reach 3.5 million people later this year -- nearly half the population, but the international donors have only funded about a third of a \$637 million aid appeal, according to the U.N.

- **Somalia: Government, Opposition Call for 'Urgent Deployment' of UN Troops: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 21 August 2008.**

A joint communiqué issued by delegations representing Somalia's transitional federal government and the opposition faction - Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) - has condemned violent attacks and called for the "urgent deployment" of United Nations peacekeepers. The statement, issued in Djibouti on Wednesday, appealed to the Somali public and the international community to support the Djibouti Agreement, which was signed in June and aims to end nearly 18 years of war in the Horn of Africa country. The government and the opposition established two committees - one political, one security - to oversee implementation of the Djibouti Agreement, the statement read. The two sides appealed for all parties "to look at the humanitarian situation with a special eye and how to help people who are suffering across the country." The statement condemned "acts of murder, kidnapping, rape, bombardment of cities and piracy."

Violence

Meanwhile, violence continues across Somalia and insurgent attacks are on the rise. In Beletwein, capital of the central Hiran region, at least five people were killed in two separate explosions yesterday. Among the dead were three civilians and two Ethiopian soldiers, according to witnesses. In Mogadishu, the country's national capital, 7 people were killed when Ethiopian troops attempted to forcefully enter the sprawling Bakara market, which has long been considered an insurgent stronghold. Medical sources at Medina Hospital confirmed to Garowe Online that 20 people were admitted with various wounds after the shelling. Six of the dead persons were civilians who were killed when Ethiopian army shells hit their homes, neighbors and relatives said. In Kismayo, a strategic southern port, al Shabaab fighters claimed on Thursday that they now control the town after deadly battles killed at least 20 people. Somalia has lacked an effective national government since 1991, when the country's last effective ruler was violently expelled by clan warlords. In late 2006, Ethiopian forces backing the Somali interim government dislodged Islamist rulers from Mogadishu, sparking a bloody insurgency that is now in its 20th consecutive month.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Cameroon: Despite Bakassi Handover, Indigenes Uncertain About Future - BBC Reporter: [The Post](#) (Buea): INTERVIEW: 18 August 2008.**

*BBC correspondent in Cameroon, **Randy Joe Sa'ah**, who witnessed the hoisting of the Cameroon flag in Bakassi on August 14, has revealed that in spite of the handing over of the peninsula to Cameroon, the indigenes of the area still nurse fears about their future and have big expectations from the government of Cameroon. Just back from Bakassi, Randy, in this exclusive interview, talks about the August 14 ceremony, the challenges of the people and his alleged capture.*

The Post: You were in Bakassi on August 14, while the handover ceremony of Bakassi to Cameroon took place in Calabar, Nigeria, what happened in Bakassi?My interest was to find out what was happening on Bakassi land itself, considering that the official ceremony was taking place in Nigeria. In the late afternoon, there was the hoisting of the Cameroon flag in Bakassi by the military. A Lieutenant Colonel was in charge of that. Cameroonian soldiers were looking so garland and so anxious to put up that flag. There was a small gathering of Cameroonians with a Cameroon flag; they sang the National Anthem, beat the drums and danced. That, happening in Bakassi for the first time, I think it was a very great moment for Cameroonians. The flag was hoisted in a place called Atabong; the Nigerians call it Atabong, but I think it is called Idabato. Interestingly too, there was a group of Nigerian youths, who despite anxiety, burst into a joyous song.

You talked of the hoisting of the flag and the dancing by the small Cameroonian and Nigerian groups, what was the atmosphere like; was it tense?Well, there were some tense moments no doubt. In fact when I just landed on that piece of land, there were some gun shots, and speed boats were coming with Cameroonian gendarmes. Most of them were very alert; you could see them taking positions on the ground and behind other objects. At one moment, there was a loud bang from a distance of about 50 metres and some of our soldiers ran to that direction. For me, I thought it was a plank breaking. But the Nigerian youths who were around there didn't move. But after a few moments, they verified and found out there was no trouble.

What are some of the worries and expectations of the Bakassi indigenes? For the people themselves on the Bakassi land, they have great worries and big expectations. The people do not seem to have a good impression about Cameroonian gendarmes. They recounted how some uniformed officers from Cameroon would stop their boats, take off the engines and leave them rudderless in the sea. They have worries of them being harassed for money and they also have fears that the Cameroon government will sooner or later impose taxes on them. They said they have been fishing and doing their commercial activities on that part of the land without paying taxes, and their worry now is what they hear about the tax situation in Cameroon, especially on Nigerians. They think it might be a bit too difficult for them. The youths particularly are interested in seeing schools being improved upon. They said they want more schools. There was a pregnant woman who told me her greatest wish would be to have a good hospital. I spoke to some chiefs who told me that their greatest wish would be that the Cameroon government should build an embankment to stop the sea water that is perpetually creeping into their settlements.

What were the expectations from Cameroonians? I didn't happen to find any Cameroonian. There were some Cameroonians but they came from main land Ekondo Titi and they only came there for the celebrations. I passed a night in a place called Black Bush. I was told that there were about two Cameroonian families living there but I didn't meet them. All the inhabitants I met in the various parts of the island were Nigerians.

There are reports that the Cameroon government has carried out infrastructural developments in Bakassi; did you see any structures? There is no doubt that the Cameroon government is actually carrying out some developments in Bakassi. I have seen TV footage and pictures of structures being put up. But because my focus was on the area where there was action, in terms of commemorating the handing over of Bakassi, and because of the rough waters, the tight schedule and the security checks, I could not visit all the areas of Bakassi. Although the Cameroon government says it is carrying out infrastructural developments in the area, the places which I visited such as Atabong and Kombo Ajaeni, have virtually been abandoned. A place like Kombo Ajaeni has no inhabitant. There was only a military post at Kombo Ajaeni. The only things that can indicate that there was any life there are the thatch roof huts, broken posts and washing basins. Apart from that there is no sign of life in the place.

What is the relationship between Cameroonians and Nigerians in Bakassi?

For the civilian population, you won't differentiate between a Cameroonian and a Nigerian when you see them together. They talk and laugh and do business together. There is nothing to indicate that there is any friction between them. After the hoisting of the flag, the Cameroonians sang their traditional music and the Nigerians too sang and danced. A Nigerian woman offered me smoked fish, even though I insisted on paying for. You could see a woman who wanted a Cameroonian to go back with a good impression about the Nigerians living in that part of the country. So, relations between Nigerians and Cameroonians are very good.

Much has been said of Bakassi's richness; did you see signs of richness such that if money is invested in the area, both people could reap from it?

Bakassi is very lucrative; it has 20 percent of the world's gas. We might not see what is underground but for the ordinary eye one can see the vast waters, the beautiful land, the creeks and the mangroves. Just before the Bakassi conflict, there was a big population there and people were carrying loads and tons of fish, which they harvest from the seas; smoke and take them to sell in Nigeria. It was very lucrative; I have spoken to people who have educated their children in the best universities just from the revenues they get from fishing. Interestingly, some soldiers told me that some people who were living in Kombo Ajaeni had come there on August 13, to settle but they were advised to go and come back after August 14. It is indicative that people are anxious to come back and reap from the economic potentials of the place.

There was an allegation that you had been captured. What happened?

Well, there were shooting incidences in Bakassi on that August 14 and the international media learnt about it. I didn't even know about it while I was out there in the seas. However, I had trouble contacting the BBC on August 14 to file my report for Focus On Africa because we were extremely mobile and to set up my satellite phone took some

time. It was also raining and the mobile phones network was not available. And so the BBC tried to get in touch with me and I tried to get in touch with them but then nothing would work. So, they were a bit worried because there were reports that a boat had been attacked and it was even alleged that seven people had been killed. I later learnt that evening that a boat was going to Bakassi carrying a lot of people including the Mayor of Ekondo Titi, without the knowledge of the military. While they were approaching, the military opened fire, firing gunshots into the air. As I was told, the boat was finally stopped and when it was found out that these were Cameroonians, the military made a u-turn. But concerning myself coming in contact with danger, there was one really bad experience. When we took off to return to main land Cameroon, we reached near the military post and dozens of soldiers suddenly rushed towards our boat pointing their guns at us. Meantime, two other boats had emerged from behind us while dozens of guns continued to point at us. I was in the boat with eight others and they were screaming; "Nous sommes Camerounais, ne tirez pas". But it took sometime for them to ascertain that we were not rebels.

After witnessing the handover in Bakassi, do you see the ceremony as the end of dispute? Is there any sign that Bakassi will be peaceful in the days ahead; or was the handover a mere formality?

From the point of view of ordinary Nigerians, that Bakassi is Cameroon is not in doubt. They have come to terms with the fact that Bakassi belongs to Cameroon, but their only worry now is the aftermath; what happens to them after the handover. The picture I got out of Bakassi is that Nigerians there feel that Cameroon is imposing its authority while it is still a disputed area. They said after the August 14, 2006, partial handover, all Nigerian soldiers withdrew from the area but suddenly they saw Cameroonian soldiers and war ammunitions. It is very worrying to them and they are wondering if this is how they are going to live throughout. However, some Nigerians told me that they are so happy that the Cameroonian soldiers are on the ground because it would give them more security. They said this would dissuade some Niger Delta militants whose activities have reduced business activities in the area. According to them, the rebels have brought insecurity in the area and have caused their business activities to slow down. I think very soon Bakassi would be a hot place for people to go and invest. Yet many things have to be done. The place has to be accessible by road. There has been a lot of talk about a road project there but the sooner that is realised the better it would be for the people.

How did you feel when you came back to land after your water experience?

Just before we took off, my heart was really beating against my chest. Going on the seas without the basics like life jackets was quite risky. I would have taken precautions to have my own life jacket but after my preliminary findings I was told that life jackets would be available. Nobody in the boat had a life jacket except a gentleman. You can imagine what it is like getting back on mainland in Cameroon. The experience was as exciting as the trip itself. This is not to say that I was frightened; it is a bit normal for anyone to be jittery when taking that kind of trip. But I think I enjoyed myself on the seas when my nerves finally calmed down. In as much as I enjoyed myself in water, I think it

was a great idea coming back to land. Going on the sea was like testing my faith in God. I do not doubt God's protection on the sea but I have more experience with God on land.

- **Congo-Kinshasa: Peace Remains Elusive in East Despite Deal: [The East African](#) (Nairobi): 9 August 2008.**

Six months after the signing of a peace agreement, violence continues to rock eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, a coalition of 64 aid agencies and human rights groups says in a new report. The report, DR Congo: Peace Process Fragile, Civilians at Risk, says attacks against civilians and their property occurred at an alarming rate in the six months following the signing of the various peace agreements. Assessments conducted by different organisations in eastern Congo indicated that the civilian population continues to experience widespread attacks, sexual violence, looting and forced labour. "The peace agreement has failed to silence the guns, and the people of eastern Congo continue to suffer," says Juliette Prodhon, head of Oxfam Great Britain in DRC. "The parties to the agreement must urgently redouble their efforts to act on the commitments they made to protect civilians." More than 200 civilians were killed in indiscriminate firing by armed groups or as a result of summary executions in North Kivu, particularly in Masisi and western Rutshuru territories. Sexual violence against women and girls has continued at its previous horrifying rate. Women and girls were raped by combatants of all armed groups and soldiers of the Congolese army, as well as by civilians. Over 2,200 cases were registered in June 2008 in the province of North Kivu. One community in Rutshuru reported over 150 cases of rape in April alone. On January 23, the Congolese government signed a ceasefire agreement with 22 armed groups in Goma, North Kivu, facilitated by the European Union, the United States, the African Union and the United Nations. The agreement followed the November 2007 Nairobi Communiqué between the governments of Congo and Rwanda meant to address the problem of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a Rwandan armed group whose combatants have also attacked Congolese civilians. The two agreements, together with recommendations from the Conference on Peace, Security and Development in North and South Kivu organised by the government in January, form the basis of the Congolese government's peace programme for eastern Congo, known as the Amani Programme, led by the national co-ordinator Abbé Apollinaire Malu Malu. The signatories agreed to a ceasefire and committed themselves to protect civilians and respect international humanitarian and human rights law. "The Amani Programme hasn't yet made life better for the citizens of eastern Congo. The international community and the Congolese government should do what it takes to make the peace programme a reality, not just a nice idea." They need to ensure it's funded properly so it reaches those most in need," says Anneke Van Woudenberg, senior Africa researcher at Human Rights Watch. In July, a group of local and international non-governmental organisations established the Congo Advocacy Coalition to track progress on these commitments and focus attention on areas where improvements are urgently needed. The coalition decided to track six key commitments related to protection of civilians, including ending attacks against them and their property, ending further displacement and encouraging the return of displaced persons and refugees, disarming armed groups, ending further recruitment and demobilising child soldiers, facilitating humanitarian access and ensuring accountability for those accused of

serious human-rights abuses. Fighting and targeted attacks on civilians targeted led to the displacement of nearly 100,000 civilians in North Kivu since January 2008, with another 50,000 displaced in South Kivu. The UN estimates a total of 1.1 million people are currently displaced in both provinces, including those who fled previous fighting. The Congo Advocacy Coalition says many displaced people expressed a desire to return to their villages if security permitted, but very few have been able to do so. "Those who have returned often spend the night in the forests surrounding their villages as a protective measure. Some returned only temporarily, fleeing again days or weeks later," the report adds. According to the report, recruitment of combatants, both voluntary and forced, among armed groups in North and South Kivu, continued despite the ceasefire and intensified during the past three months. Some of these groups were largely dormant before the peace talks. Former demobilised soldiers and combatants have been targeted for re-recruitment, raising concerns about the effectiveness and sustainability of previous demobilisation programmes. While there are no reports of large-scale recruitment of children since the signing of the Goma agreement, sporadic recruitment by some armed groups has continued. Moreover, there has been limited progress on the demobilisation of the estimated 2,500-3,000 children who remain in the ranks of armed groups and in some units of the Congolese army.

- **Rwanda: December Deadline for Regional Governments to Brand All Arms:** [Rwanda News Agency/Agence Rwandaise d'Information \(Kigali\): 19 August 2008.](#)

Nairobi: Countries in the war-ridden great lakes and horn of Africa are to put marks (brand) on all their weapons as a measure to control proliferation of illicit arms, the governing body says. Officials from the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) announced on Monday in Nairobi-Kenya that by the end of this year, all these countries should have complied with program. The countries including Rwanda, Burundi, Djibouti, DR Congo, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda are already signatories to the Nairobi Protocol on small arms, and that obliges them to mark up the weapons, said Dr. Francis Sang - the Executive Secretary of RECSA. RECSA is an institutional framework arising from the Nairobi Declaration to coordinate the joint effort by the 12-member block to prevent, combat and eradicate stockpiling and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa. "All fire arms belonging to a given state must be marked with the country code and the serial number, such that if at all that particular weapon is found in another country, we can trace it", Dr. Sang told journalists on the sidelines of a six-day workshop that started Monday. Experts with the Geneva Small Arms Survey say that there are up to 30 million small arms and light weapons circulating in sub-Saharan Africa. Seventy-nine percent of those weapons were in the hands of civilians, 19 percent were held by the police and the military and an estimated two percent were in the hands of armed groups and insurgents. According to Human Rights Watch, war ravaged DR Congo has suffered the brunt of what uncontrolled flow of arms can bring. The campaign group has maintained that large quantities of arms that continue to flow into DRC have fueled gross human rights abuse including killings, rape and torture. The weapons coming from Eastern Europe are dealt in by the militia groups roaming the vast country. Very often, according to campaigners,

DRC's regional neighbours have been the entry routes for the illicit arms."Not only do these weapons prolong violent conflict, but their uncontrolled propagation equally poses a serious threat to stability, or long-term development - at national and regional levels", said Dr. Sang. He said the countries have been given up to December 30 to brand all light and small weapons in their possession as a means of checking on soaring proliferation of illegal guns. According to the report presented to the conference, Uganda has destroyed the highest number of illegal weapons in the Great Lakes and Horn Africa regions with 60,000, followed by Kenya with 20,000 between 2005 and 2007. Djibouti has destroyed the least, 100, followed by Burundi which has burnt 200 in the same period. The report says: "The illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons remains one of the most pressing security challenges in the Great lakes region and East Africa." Rwanda could be lagging behind, but last month some 160 tones of ammunition were put beyond use. Some 7,500 small arms and unexploded ordinances have been destroyed for the last two years.

- **Congo-Kinshasa: UN Peacekeepers Deployed to East After Rebel Attacks: [UN News Service](#) (New York): 20 August 2008.**

United Nations peacekeepers and soldiers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have been jointly deployed in the eastern provinces of Ituri and Orientale to protect civilians after attacks by the rebel group known as the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). A spokesman for the UN Mission in Congo (MONUC), Michel Bonnardeaux, told a press briefing today that the Ugandan rebel group had attacked and robbed villages around Duru over the past week. He said the Ituri Patriotic Front had also launched sporadic attacks in the Irumu area, and remained a serious threat. MONUC went on to report further unrest in eastern DRC, including continued regrouping and recruitment by the Mayi-Mayi in North Kivu. Meanwhile, the head of MONUC in Goma, Alpha Sow, has welcomed a decision by the Congolese armed forces to set up committees to deal with rapes and other human rights abuses by their soldiers. These committees, which will be established in all DRC's military regions, will include officers from the regional military unit and from MONUC. They will be charged with monitoring human rights violations by DRC forces, caring for victims and ensuring that the legal process takes its course. "MONUC's mission here is to support every effort to protect the population, particularly women and children," Mr. Sow said. "Our support for these committees is unconditional." Aid agencies say that eastern DRC continues to be plagued by serious human rights abuses, seven months after the signing of peace accords at the Kivus conference in January.

- **Burundi: Restarting Political Dialogue: [International Crisis Group](#) (Brussels): PRESS RELEASE: 20 August 2008.**

Burundi's political crisis is not solved and may yet jeopardise the country's future stability. Burundi: Restarting Political Dialogue, the latest briefing from the International Crisis Group, points out that disarmament has barely started, and no consensus has been reached on integrating former rebels into state and security institutions. Burundi cannot afford to have wasted three years in legislative gridlock and then move directly towards

the preparation of the 2010 elections without delivering peace dividends. “The absence of a constructive dialogue between the ruling CNDD-FDD party and opposition parties is harmful for the country’s governance and its long-term stability”, says François Grignon, Crisis Group’s Africa Program Director. “Local political actors and Burundi’s international partners must recognise the dangers of running the country unilaterally”. The current political impasse stems from the crisis within the CNDD-FDD leadership and President Pierre Nkurunziza’s refusal to conclude a power-sharing agreement with the leaders of opposition parties. Against a backdrop of mounting insecurity, tensions between political parties have heightened in the National Assembly to the point that government action was paralysed. In early June 2008, the Constitutional Court, under pressure from CNDD-FDD, authorised the replacement of 22 dissident CNDD-FDD parliamentarians with loyal supporters of the party leadership, in violation of the constitution. The CNDD-FDD’s authoritarian move illustrates a clear desire to limit all checks on its power. To avoid any violence in the run-up to the 2010 elections, it is essential that political consultations are carried out to choose the members of the Independent National Electoral Commission and begin revisions of the electoral code. Any constitutional changes should follow recommendations of a National Committee for Institutional Reforms, whose membership should reflect all political camps and ethnic-regional groupings. “The CNDD-FDD’s authoritarian tendencies are pushing opposition parties towards radicalisation”, warns Daniela Kroslak, Deputy-Director of Crisis Group’s Africa Program. “They could be tempted to pursue alliances with the Palipehutu-FNL during the next election, which could lead to a renewed ethnic tone to political discourse and put into question the progress achieved by Arusha”.

- **Burundi: Land Remains Key Challenge in Reintegration of Returnees: UN Integrated Regional Information Networks: 19 August 2008.**

Although he looks frail, Cossan Ntabwigwa, in his late 60s, is a determined man. He recently returned from Tanzania, where he had been a refugee since 1972, and is seeking to resettle on a piece of land he left years ago. Despite finding someone else occupying the land, Ntabwigwa is determined to reclaim it, and he says sharing it with the current occupant is out of the question. “I left two other brothers there [in Tanzania] who are married and with children and who must also get a share of this land,” he said. When he repatriated from Gatumba settlement in Tanzania at the beginning of August, Ntabwigwa, who heads a 10-member family, spent three days at the commune headquarters in Nyanzalac, Makamba province, waiting to go home. Like most Burundians, Ntabwigwa’s strong attachment to land means he is unwilling to share his piece of land with the current occupant, whom he considers an outsider since he is not a family member. Also in Nyanzalac, Alexis Anthony Kifumu, his wife and six children, have been squatting at an elementary school for two weeks. He returned to Burundi to find part of his land occupied by the school while a businessman had used another portion to put up a pub and a shop. Local administrative officials advised Kifumu to use the remaining 30 metres to build himself a house. “I have started making bricks, I think it will take me 14 days to get them ready and if I build a house, I will try to work and live as best as I can while waiting for my case to be settled,” he said.

Sharing land

Although Kifumu calmly accepted the situation, in line with his Christian faith, he seemed disillusioned. "I am surprised to find that I am not even authorised to use a classroom while waiting to build my house; when there is a disaster, people seek shelter in schools yet they have no pity for us," Kifumu said. In March, the UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, launched a repatriation operation for up to 46,000 "old caseload" refugees from the Tanzanian old settlements of Katumba, Mishamo and Ulyankulu. According to a UNHCR factsheet for July, 11,020 of the returnees in 2008, estimated at 59,877, are refugees from the 1972 caseload. While returnees who fled the country in 1993 find it slightly easier to resettle, the case is not the same for the 1972 caseload, as exemplified by the cases of Ntabwigwa and Kifumu, for whom disputes over land ownership can at times take long to resolve. Indeed, the complex problem of land remains a major challenge to the reintegration of returnees. Not only do many, if not all returnees have a land-dispute related story to tell, but land has become a scarce commodity. Bernard Ntagumuka, an advisor of the administrator at the commune of Nyanzalac, said the number of returnees who have resettled was insignificant compared to the number of returnees who find their land occupied by others, "either legally or illegally". "Others [returnees] find that the government used them [their land] for social infrastructure; take the urban centre of Nyanzalac for instance, it was built on people's land," Ntagumuka said.

Ownership hitches

In other instances, returnees find their land has been resold and divided to the extent that reclaiming it becomes difficult since it has passed from one owner to another. In some cases, refugees returned home, sold their land and went back to Tanzania. When civil war broke out in Burundi 1972, thousands of Burundians fled to neighbouring countries, leaving their property behind and their lands vacant. In many regions of Burundi, especially the southern provinces of Bururi and Makamba, the then government encouraged people from other regions to occupy the land. Nestor Niyonkuru, an information officer for the Commission on Land and Other Properties, said: "Logic would dictate that the new occupant vacates the land and return it to the owner, but it is not as simple as it seems." Some were given title deeds to the land, others have exploited it for more than 30 years and under Burundian law, this entitles them to the land; others have lived on the land for generations and simply have nowhere to go."

Complicity by past governments

With the increasing number of returnees, land disputes have increased sharply. In the past, the different governments that have controlled the country did not settle the land issue comprehensively, sometimes even complicating the situation. Some government and army officials were allocated title deeds for houses and land left by those who fled the civil war, especially in the southern regions, which are rich in oil-bearing palms. William Hamenyimana, who fled Burundi in 1972, returned in the 1980s to find his land in Rumonge, Bururi province, occupied. "My land was given to a senior army

officer, when I returned home, I was forced out; I had left a whole plantation of palm oil but I accepted [not to claim it] just to save my life and was given another piece of land in Nyanzalac," he said. "Now that the owner of this land is back, they are telling me to share the small piece with him or leave it, if the occupant of my [original] land leaves, then I will leave this one." Hamenyimana said while they were in Tanzania, they were made to believe that they would reclaim their land. "Now they come and force us out overnight, that is not the way it should be done," he said. Such actions build anger in people who were forced out of their land for one reason or another and who now have to share or to be moved once again. Ntagumuka said local administrative officials handle about 10 cases of land dispute daily but they are often overwhelmed, with no solution at hand. "We only sensitise them telling them to share land whenever possible but it is not always easy," Ntagumuka said. According to Niyonkuru, one third of land disputes in the country are presently registered in the provinces of Bururi and Makamba, the two areas to which most of the 1972 refugees are returning. However, some of the returnees and those internally displaced prefer to avoid confrontation and simply share the land. Niyonkuru said by June 2008, some 657 cases of land disputes had been settled, and 394 of them did not require the intervention of the land commission, which only endorsed the decisions as the parties signed agreements. The Burundi government set up the land commission in 2006 to help returnees recover their land and other property lost during the civil war. If the land issue is not dealt with adequately, it can be the source of potential violence. The commission was not only intended to lighten the load of law courts overwhelmed by land disputes but to also simplify the procedures and spare the returnees the delays and costs. However, the commission does not have the power of a court and only mediates between the parties. If it fails, the parties still have to go to court. Since its creation, the commission has registered 10,541 cases, but only 657 had been settled as at June 2008, prompting criticism from human rights activists. "If the land issue is not dealt with adequately, it can be the source of potential violence," Joseph Ndayizeye, the deputy chairman of the Human Rights League in the Great Lakes Region, said at a press conference in August. Ndayizeye proposed the creation of a specialised court to deal with land disputes, saying it seems the commission's competence was limited. A survey conducted by the commission in December 2007 found more than 34,000 hectares of land belonging to the state in the hands of individuals who appropriated or received the land from local chiefs illegally. Human rights activists say if such land was to revert to state ownership, then perhaps the landless, including returnees, could be resettled.

110. REBEL, MILITANCY AND "WAR ON TERROR"

WEST AFRICA

- **Nigeria: Group Calls for Release of Henry Okah, Others: [Leadership](#) (Abuja): 21 August 2008.**

The Coalition for the Freedom of Dokubo, Uwazuruike and Okah (COFDUO) yesterday called for the unconditional release of their member, Henry Okah, the leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), who was arrested and detained by the Federal Government. The Chairman of the group Comrade Ayodele Akele, made

this call during the world press conference held at NUJ secretariat, Lagos .According to Akele, it was only equitable, fair, just and expedient that Henry Okah be also granted a temporary bail in whatever guise, saying anything short of this was not only against the rule of natural justice, it was discriminatory and against the spirit of Nigeria's 1999 constitution.It would be recalled that Henry Okah was arrested on September 3, 2007, in Angola on a business trip with a companion, a mariner, Captain Edward Atatah when they were arrested at Luanda International Airport in Angola while boarding a flight back to South Africa .Akele revealed that President Umaru Yar'Adua and the Bayelsa State Governor, Mr. Sylva Tiempreye had a telephone conversation with Okah saying that he should restore peace to the Niger Delta.He said Okah was arraigned on a 55-count spurious and frivolous treason charge that cannot be proved openly with the main allegation that he received assorted firearms to wit: AK 47 rifles, sub machine guns and other ammunitions from certain military officers and distributed them to Niger Delta militant groups between 2003 and 2007.Akele and his group also demanded that Okah should be released because of his present health condition.'Henry Okah should be released forthwith for urgent medical attention over his deteriorating health conditions as a result of atrocious, inhuman and degrading detention conditions."He, therefore, called for the release of the activist for there to be peace in the crisis-torn region.Also speaking, the President of Niger Delta non-violent movement, Mr. Onengiye Erekosima, said government should not consider them as the troublemakers because their plan was to restore peace to Niger Delta.He said those people arrested should be released by the government to support their quest for peace.

- **Nigeria: Bayelsa Vows to Tackle Militancy: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 19 August 2008.**

Bayelsa State government has assured the people of the state that the problem of militancy would soon be a thing of the past.Secretary to the State Government (SSG), Gideon Ekeuwei, gave the assurance while speaking at his induction as a patron of Boys Brigade at St. Peter's Anglican Church yesterday in Yenagoa.News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Ekeuwei said that the situation currently being experienced was only a passing phase in the history of the state.Ekeuwei likened the current situation to similar challenging moments nations go through in the phases of their development.The SSG said that government would solicit the support of the Boys Brigade in its efforts to eliminate militancy in the area.In his sermon, Ven. I.A. Kune said that the neglect of parental role and failure of leaders to set worthy examples were responsible for youth restiveness in the society.He enjoined youths to see themselves as a blessed generation and not squander their future.Also speaking, the South-south president of the Brigade, Justice Francis Tabai, said that total investment in youths remained a solution to militancy, youth restiveness and dented the image of the state.Tabai also called for a change of strategy in the agitation for better deal for the Niger Delta region.Chief Judge of Bayelsa, Justice Kate Abiri, called for the formulation of a youth development policy to address the problems facing the youths.Earlier, the brigade's president in Bayelsa, Ebisinte Awudu, urged the newly inducted patrons to always uphold the Boys Brigade charge.

- **Nigeria: Two Killed in JTF, Militants' Gun Duel: [This Day](#) (Lagos): 20 August 2008.**

The relative peace which security agencies had engendered in Port Harcourt, Rivers State capital was again shattered yesterday when sporadic shootings by suspected criminal elements sent people scampering in different directions. At the end of the Fracas which pitched the policemen of the Joint Task Force (JTF) against the criminals two of the hoodlums were allegedly killed while several others were injured. Also, one of the lieutenants of Soboma George called Awala was alleged to have been arrested which in the first instance, sparked off the firing by the hoodlums before they were routed by the security agencies. Police however denied the arrest, saying that they only know of sporadic shooting by hoodlums at the waterside while their men have dispatched well armed policemen to ensure peace and tranquility returned to the area. The Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Rita Abbey, confirmed the shooting but said everything was under control. When THISDAY called the Spokesman of the JTF, Lt. Colonel Sagir Musa, he simply replied with some urgency that "We are in an operation, I will get back to you later". However, Action Congress in Rivers State unequivocally condemned the attack which it said was an "unwarranted invasion of Port Harcourt by some unholy men shooting and terrorising innocent residents for no just cause". The party through its Media consultant, Chief Eze Chukwuemeka Eze thanked the police for bringing the situation under control and advocated that criminals who indulge in the disturbance of the peace should be made to face the law. Although the attack was initially alleged to have been carried out by the leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante Movement, Tom Ateke, when THISDAY called him to ask why he launched such an early morning attack, he denied involvement in the shootout. Ateke said while it was true that he was abused by Governor Rotimi Chibuike Amaechi, shooting at innocent people who were not the governor was of no use and said neither himself nor his boys had a hand in the shooting. "We are not responsible for the attack. It is true that the governor abused me but we do not shoot like that. If you shoot, did innocent people abuse me? Innocent people should not die. Since the shooting did not affect the governor, we will not shoot. My boys were not involved" he clarified. Information said the shooting started in the early hours of yesterday at the Abuja quarters where eye witnesses said the hoodlums killed two people and stuffed their remains in the boot of their car and started driving towards Aggrey road before they were confronted by security men. Police yesterday arrested Soboma's kingpin while JTF killed two militants at Aggrey Road Roundabout at about 1030hrs. JTF also recovered four AK47 rifles, 11 AK47 magazines and 200 rounds of 7.62mm", security reports said.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Angola: MPLA Urges Militants to Avoid Conflicts During Campaign: [Angola Press Agency](#) (Luanda): 19 August 2008.**

The first provincial secretary of ruling MPLA in Lunda-Norte, Ernesto Muangala this Tuesday exhorted militants for a behaviour without racism, tribalism, religious partiality during the electoral campaign, so as to avoid conflicts among political parties, ANGOP learnt. That entity said so at rallies held in the districts of Capenda Camulemba and Xá-

Muteba, and appealed to militants, sympathisers and friends of MPLA to vote for this party."MPLA is a party of workers, with an unquestionable experience in governance, capable of continuing the programme aimed at improving the population's living standards", he said. Ernesto Muangala also said that his party is aware that it was not possible to solve the problems of the population in the past, due to the long period of war that affected the country.

- **Zimbabwe: Manicaland Province Under Siege By War Veterans And Militia: [SW Radio Africa](#) (London): 19 August 2008.**

The violence and intimidation against MDC activists has continued in Zimbabwe as efforts to reach a power sharing arrangement between the opposition and ZANU PF have thus far failed. MDC officials in the Manicaland province have reported another abduction, following the kidnapping and assault of the wife of an opposition activist in Buhera South. Juliet Dakacha, wife of activist Killian Chirau, was abducted on Thursday and then released the same day after she was severely beaten and tortured. Chirau's younger brother, Moses has since been kidnapped by suspected war veterans and ZANU PF militia over the weekend and is believed to be held at the notorious Mutiusinazita torture base. The MDC spokesman for the Manicaland constituency, Pishai Muchauraya, told Newsreel on Tuesday that Juliet Dakacha has been unable to receive medical care or be transported to hospital because most of the party's vehicles are in the hands of police who confiscated them during the turbulent period following the March 29 elections. Muchauraya added that hundreds of MDC supporters around the country have yet to receive medical care for election-period injuries, due to lack of transport and other problems. Muchauraya confirmed that war veterans are still carrying out a violent campaign against MDC supporters in the Manicaland province. He said Buhera South is the worst affected area as groups under the leadership of the notorious Joseph Chinotimba are "terrorising the area" and "brutalising our supporters". MDC MP-elect for Buhera South, Naison Nemadziva, remains in hiding in Mutare, after serious threats against his life by ZANU PF militia. Muchauraya said the thugs have threatened to kill Nemadziva, saying his seat belongs to ZANU PF. Meanwhile, as the war veterans and militia continue their reign of terror, Muchauraya said people are beginning to starve to death. He said in Makoni South alone, five people have already died of starvation, and added that in the next two weeks, "without humanitarian aid, you can count on thousands more dying". He added that ZANU PF "manipulation" is forcing people to give up their livestock for meagre amounts of maize meal, and the militia are controlling people's lives by stealing their limited food supplies. He said that the severe lack of food in the province is "not sparing anyone" and even those with money are starving.

- **Mozambique: Plain Clothes Policeman Takes On Gang of Armed Robbers: [Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique](#) (Maputo): 20 August 2008.**

A police officer in plain clothes was strongly applauded by the passengers and crew of a minibus taxi travelling from Maputo to Xai-Xai, capital of the southern Mozambican province of Gaza on Saturday evening, when he single handedly defended them against a

gang of three thieves who were trying to steal their money and other valuables. According to a report in Wednesday's issue of the Maputo daily "Noticias", the three thieves were disguised as passengers. They boarded the minibus at Macia, about 80 kilometres south of Xai-Xai, and claimed they were going to this city. However, half way to Xai-Xai they asked the driver to stop because they wanted to get off. Then one of them pulled out a pistol, and ordered every passenger to hand over all their money, mobile phones and other possessions, threatening to shoot anyone who tried to resist. But among the passengers there was a policeman, in plain clothes, who used the gun he was carrying and attacked the criminal. In the ensuing fight a shot was fired, wounding the criminal in the head, and the policeman seized his firearm. Realizing that they were facing a determined opponent, the thieves fled into the nearby bush. Later that night, they caught another bus back Macia, to seek medical care for their badly wounded companion. But the medical team on duty at the health unit requested police intervention. When the police arrived, they arrested the three of them. The wounded man was left under medical care, but with a police guard, while the other two were taken to the police cells. The police say that they are looking into where the criminals obtained their pistol. So far, the police only know that it is of Brazilian manufacture.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Somalia: Pirates Seize Two Ships off Coast: [Shabelle Media Network](#) (Mogadishu): 21 August 2008.**

Armed Somali pirates with two speed boats were reported to have kidnapped an Iranian and Japanese commercial vessels on Thursday officials said. The two ships have been hijacked at Gulf of Aden. Noel Choong of the International Maritime Bureau says pirates opened fire on the Iranian vessel before boarding it. He says that less than an hour later a Japanese-operated tanker with 19 crew was also attacked and seized near the same area. Choong says a multi-coalition naval force has been informed and is taking action. He heads IMB's piracy reporting center in Kuala Lumpur and says the situation has become "very dangerous" in the Gulf.

- **Somalia: Death Toll Hits 20 As Al Shabaab Capture Kismayo: [Garowe Online](#) (Garowe): 21 August 2008.**

Fighting between clan militias and the Islamist group al Shabaab in southern Somalia killed at least 20 people, Radio Garowe reported Thursday. A Radio Garowe correspondent in the southern port city of Kismayo reported that 22 wounded persons are currently being treated at the local hospital. "Al Shabaab now control 80% of Kismayo," according to our correspondent. The situation in Kismayo was calm on Thursday but businesses remained closed, citing security reasons. The fighting erupted yesterday when a landmine hit an armed truck full of clan militias. Three people - all of them civilians - were killed and eight others wounded, witnesses said. Street battles pitting al Shabaab insurgents against militias loyal to clan warlords who controlled Kismayo since April 2007 then began, killing at least 17 people. "I saw 11 dead bodies...all of them fighters," said a witness who did not want to be named. Al Shabaab commanders declined

comment, but one fighter confidentially told Radio Garowe that their fighters "control most of Kismayo." Kismayo's clan rulers have not spoken publicly, with emerging reports saying some of the leaders have fled the town. Interim Somali President Abdullahi Yusuf has long maintained that Kismayo is not in the hands of the Ethiopian-backed transitional government. There are no Ethiopian forces present in Kismayo and the Jubba regions as a whole, although clan militias there claim they are part of the government.

- **Kenya: Fazul Escapes Arrest Again: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 18 August 2008:**

Wanted suspected terrorist Harun Fazul escaped the anti-terror dragnet for the second time in two weeks. The police had planned a normal search at a house near Sabasaba without knowing that the terror suspect was holed up in the building, sources said on Monday. They said they learnt later that Fazul had escaped through the kitchen in the four-storey building that is still under construction as the police were trying to break open the ground floor door. Fazul is said to have escaped through the support of scaffolds while the police were busy trying to break the grilled door. The police, over 40 in number, had planned to search the house for explosives and had "sent a message" to the house owner that he was under watch. They went to the house with two sniffer dogs. According to sources, the search, which was led by anti-terror chief Nicholas Kamwende, did not yield any results. No explosives were found. The police got to the place around 9pm, but could not get access until two hours later when they managed to break the door open. By that time, Fazul is said to have already sneaked out. This is the second time the police have targeted the same individual suspected to be close to the terror mastermind. On Monday last week, the anti-terror police stopped a van he was driving near Kijipwa Police Station on suspicion that he was carrying Fazul.

Detained him

He was coming from Malindi with his wife and a friend. The police, however, mistook Fazul for a known cleric and let him pass the police roadblock. But on learning that they had allowed to pass a van they had been instructed to stop, they hurriedly mounted another roadblock near Bamburi Police Station and detained him, his wife and the friend for close to three hours. On Monday, a senior police source said they were closing in on him and it may be a matter of time before they arrest him. "We will get him. We are monitoring various people that we suspect he could be visiting both in Mombasa and Nairobi," said the source.

- **Kenya: Four Arrested in City Over Fazul Link: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

The search for terrorism fugitive, Abdalla Fazul, suspected to be in the country has led to the arrest of four more people in Nairobi. The four family members were arrested at their home in the up-market Loresho estate on Wednesday morning. Sources at the elite Anti-Terrorist Police Unit intimated that the family is believed to have close links with the

man suspected to have masterminded various terrorist attacks in the country and the region and may know of his specific whereabouts.

Police custody

But the manner in which the officers conducted the raid at the home, point to a possibility that they believed Fazul may have been in the house at that very time. The officers raided the home on Mukabi Road in the interior of a fairly guarded estate at 4 am. The anti-terror cops turned the house belonging to the Nairobi businessman upside down before taking the male owner of the house, his daughter and two sons for what they termed further interrogation at an undisclosed location. Wednesday's search is believed to be the third close shave for Fazul but the anti-terror squad could not explain his possible movement from the Coast to Nairobi.

- **Kenya: Combine Anti-Terror Teams – US: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

The United States has proposed that Kenya merges its security agencies to deal effectively with terror threats. The proposal would see the National Security Intelligence Service, Criminal Intelligence Department, the military and other agencies fall under one body for easier sharing of information and coordination. The idea was mooted at a meeting between US Congressmen and Internal Security minister George Saitoti on Wednesday.

Bombing

Mr Bennie Thompson, the head of the US delegation, said focus should be on "fighting a common enemy." Citing the US experience after the 9/11 bombing in New York, Mr Thompson said such mergers would help step up the war on terror. Prof Saitoti said sharing information would help pre-empt future terror attacks. The proposal comes amid claims that police leaked information to Fazul Abdullah, the mastermind of the August 7, 1998 bombing of US embassy in Nairobi, resulting in his escape. Police have since denied the accusations.

- **Kenya: Government, U.S. to Share Intelligence in Terror War: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

The Government's war on terror can only be won through intelligence-sharing, a Cabinet minister has said.

Internal Security minister George Saitoti has said the Government will collaborate with the United States Government in fighting terror networks. Speaking when he met a delegation of US congressmen, Prof Saitoti said that the Government was ready to commit resources and time to fight terror, with emphasis was on the exchange of security and intelligence data between the various anti-terror units. He refuted claims that Kenya was acting under US command in the fight against terror, terming the remarks as "mere

rumours""Who said Americans are leading the fight (against terror) on our soil? All we have to do with the Americans is what we call collaboration."The minister termed terrorism as a "big threat" to the security of the country, saying that although the country had returned to normalcy after the post-poll crisis, absolute security would mean pre-empting all terror attacks.Prof Saitoti took the US team through the events that rocked the country following the controversial 2007 General Election to the present situation.Mr Bennie Thompson, the head of the US delegation, floated the idea of merging all security agencies since the focus is on "fighting a common enemy."Borrowing from the US experience after the 9/11 bombing in New York, Mr Thompson said that such mergers have proved successful in the war against terror.Prof Saitoti's remarks come at a time when the police are facing accusations of leaking information to the mastermind of the August 7, 2001 Nairobi bombings, Harun Fazul to evade arrest.Police have since denied the accusations, although the suspect has eluded police dragnets at least three times within a month.

CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: Fight Against Small Arms in Country On Track: [The New Times](#) (Kigali): 19 August 2008.**

Rwanda has adequately tackled internal proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons that were rampant in the country due to the 1994 Genocide revealed Army Spokesman, Major Jill Rutaremara.

Rutaremara is part of the Rwandan delegation attending the three-day conference (18-22 August) on Small Arms and Light Weapons proliferation in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa taking place at the Imperial Royale Hotel in Kampala.

"The situation is now under control but our biggest problem remains proliferation of arms in the neighboring country of Congo. It is our only worry and this needs regional political co-operation and diplomatic solutions," Rutaremara said in an interview with The New Times.He pointed out that before the 1994 Genocide, the then Rwandan government had supplied these arms to Interahamwe militias who led the 1994 Genocide of Tutsi which caused the lives of over one million people.Organized by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies based in the U.S, the conference aims at developing a comprehensive strategy to combat small arms and light weapons proliferation within the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa.To curb proliferation in the region, all member countries are expected to brand all light and small weapons in their possession. The branding of guns will ease identification of state owned arms that are illegally acquired by criminals.According to Rutarema, the process of branding will soon begin in Rwanda after she acquired a new computerized branding machine."The initial machine was manually operated and poor. We hope the process will soon begin, now that we have a new machine and a technical team in place to handle the exercise," explained Rutarema."Every gun imported to this region will be branded so that when a criminal is arrested with it, we can easily say that this gun is from Kenya or Uganda," Dr.Francis Sang, the Executive Director of the Regional Centre for Small Arms -Nairobi Chapter, told participants during the opening ceremony on

Monday. The national focal point that deals with small arms and light weapons proliferation though an independent body is located within the national police. The branding machine will insert an information bar code that can only be detected by computer to avoid manual alterations by criminals. Member countries have been given up to December 30 to brand all their weapons.

- **Rwanda: Suspects of Bwindi Tourists' Massacre Seek U.S. Asylum: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): 21 August 2008.**

Three rebels of the Liberation Army of Rwanda accused of killing gorilla tracking tourists in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in 1999 have applied for asylum in the United States. According to a report published in the Washington Times over the weekend, Mr Francois Karake, Mr Gregoire Nyaminani and Mr Leonidas Bimenyimana whose cases were dropped by the US government prosecutors in August 2006 want to remain in the US fearing that the law back home might not necessarily be friendly to the crimes they committed. The three rebels who in 2003 confessed to brutally killing two American tourists on vacation in Bwindi in 1999, were since their confession transferred to the US to stand trial. They had been indicted a week earlier by a federal grand jury in Washington D.C on charges of murder and conspiracy in the killings of Americans, Robert Haubner and his wife Susan Miller in Bwindi. Bwindi is a remote, rain-forest area in the extreme southwest Uganda near the borders of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda. The three were also among the 10 men named as suspects and returned from Uganda to Rwanda after the killings. According to the Rwanda News Agency (RNA) they were handed over by the Ugandan government to Rwanda's chief of external security Joseph Nzabamwita in Kibale in western Uganda and later detained at the Remera Military Barracks in the Rwandan capital, Kigali. The fourth suspect Jean Paul Bizimana, was sentenced in January 2006 in Uganda to 15-years in jail for the murders. According to Washington Times, the trio's "fear of persecution" is outlined in a memo to US Judge Ellen S. Huvelle filed by defense attorneys, who disclosed the asylum applications. The same judge is said to be the one who dismissed the case against the three ruling that evidence comprising testimonies from the men were obtained after they had been tortured while imprisoned in Kigali. While dismissing the case in 2006 Judge Huvelle's 150-page ruling said the confessions were "extracted" after repeated questioning, lengthy periods of solitary confinement, torture and other physical abuse, adding that US prosecutors could refile the charges only if they obtained additional evidence. Officials in Rwanda are yet to comment about the rebels' asylum applications. According to the US daily the memo said, "This will assure that once charges are dismissed, the defendants will not be at risk for being taken from the country without the opportunity to address their fear of persecution, which would await them when they return." The indictment read in 2003 that 15 tourists were kidnapped in Bwindi and forced to march into the jungle, where with six other tourists including four British citizens and two New Zealanders, were savagely beaten and hacked to death with axes and machetes. The records also show that two of the victims were found with handwritten notes which read, "This is the punishment of the Anglo-Saxon who sold us. You protect the minority and oppress the majority."

NORTH AFRICA

- **Egypt: Killings of Border Crossers Must Stop: [Amnesty International](#): PRESS RELEASE: 20 August 2008.**

Amnesty International has written to Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak this week urging him to end the use of lethal force against African migrants attempting to cross Egypt's borders into Israel. The organization has called on the Egyptian authorities to end abuses against Sub-Saharan migrants who continue to be killed, imprisoned and forcibly returned to countries where they are at risk of serious human rights violations, in its latest overview of the situation which was published today. According to Amnesty International's count, 25 people have been shot and killed trying to cross the Egyptian border into Israel since mid-2007. Nineteen of them were shot dead between January and August 2008 in 16 separate incidents in which tens of others were injured. More than 1,300 civilians have been tried by an Egyptian military court on a charge of "attempting to exit unlawfully the Egyptian eastern border". To date, none of those tried have been allowed access to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representatives in Egypt despite the fact that many are considered to be refugees or asylum-seekers in need of international protection. In June 2008, up to 1,200 Eritreans were forcibly returned from Egypt to their country of origin, where they face the risk of torture and other serious human rights violations. This was done in complete contradiction to UNHCR guidelines calling on all governments not to forcibly return refugees and asylum-seekers, including rejected asylum-seekers, to Eritrea. Many of those forcibly returned had fled from Eritrea to avoid indefinite military service or because of religious persecution against Christians. Following their return, most of the men have been detained by the Eritrean authorities in military training camps at Wia.

Amongst other things, Amnesty International is calling for the Egyptian authorities to:

- Instruct security forces not to use firearms or other lethal force except when strictly necessary;
- Cease all forcible returns of Eritreans in line with UNHCR guidelines and cease all forcible returns of people to all countries where they face human rights violations in line with Egypt's obligations under
- international human rights and refugee law;
- Stop trying civilians in military courts in breach of international standards of fair trial;
- Ensure that migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers are not detained for migration control purposes and that detention is only permissible when the authorities can demonstrate, on individual basis, that it is necessary and proportionate and is used for a legitimate purpose under international law.

- **Sudan: Government Rejects Arab League's Proposal Over Bashir Warrant: [The Nation](#) (Nairobi): 20 August 2008.**

The Sudanese government for the first time unveiled disagreements with the Arab League on a plan it formulated to counter a move by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to indict Sudan's president Omar Hassan al-Bashir. In mid-July, the ICC's prosecutor Luis

Moreno-Ocampo announced that he will seek an arrest warrant against Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes in Darfur. Following the move, Sudan has been looking into ways that would allow it to avoid confrontation with the international community over the ICC. Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa carried a number of proposals to President al-Bashir last month which included conducting internal trials for Darfur war crimes suspects. These proposals were rejected. Sudanese presidential adviser Mustafa Ismail was quoted by the daily Al-Hayat newspaper as telling reporters in Cairo after meeting with Mr Moussa "that there are some parts of the plan that need more discussions". Mr Ismail also insisted that the Sudanese judiciary is capable of looking into the Darfur war crimes and noted the recent appointment of a special prosecutor for Darfur by Sudan's justice minister. The Sudanese official also accused the ICC of targeting third world countries only. "We did not see that the court looked into what superpowers did in Iraq, Palestine or Afghanistan" he said. Mr Ismail reiterated his country's refusal to hand over any Sudanese citizens abroad and stressed that local investigations into Darfur crimes "will not exclude the president, ministers or janitors". However Sudan's presidential adviser refused to say what will be the next steps if an arrest warrant for al-Bashir is issued by the ICC. Sudan's appointment of a special prosecutor was seen as concession that would provide leverage to the Arab League and African Union (AU) when requesting a resolution from the UN Security Council (UNSC) deferring Al-Bashir's indictment under Article 16 of the ICC Statute. The Arab League and the African Union already have asked the Security Council to suspend the case for 12 months, something that only the UN body can do under the ICC statute.

Neo-colonialist agenda

Yesterday, President al-Bashir, on his first trip abroad since the ICC moved to indict him for war crimes, denied that his forces had committed genocide in Darfur, adds Reuters. President Bashir, who calls the court's move part of a neo-colonialist agenda to protect the interests of developed countries, said that his government forces were not responsible for crimes in Darfur. "We are not committing genocide in Darfur," President Bashir told Turkish President Abdullah Gul during a meeting in Istanbul, according to a Turkish official close to the talks. "We are saddened by the events there," President Bashir was quoted as saying. The two men, who met for 30 minutes in an Ottoman-era palace by the Bosphorus Strait on the sidelines of a Turkey-Africa economic summit, did not discuss the ICC or the case against Bashir. Nato member Turkey has not ratified the treaty forming the ICC but is under pressure to become a member as part of negotiations to join the European Union. ICC judges could take weeks or months to issue a warrant, but have never failed to issue one after a prosecutor has requested it. Sudan has warned the United Nations of "serious consequences" for its staff and facilities if an arrest warrant is issued, a UN envoy told the Security Council on Monday. Mr Abdelmahmood Abdelhaleem, permanent Sudanese representative to the UN, echoed Bashir's defiance in comments to reporters. "The president can go anywhere and is not afraid of anything," he said. "Our president will never be arrested as long we are alive. As long as we are living nothing will happen to our president." African and Arab states are pushing for the suspension of moves by the court to indict Bashir and say they could hamper efforts to bring peace to Darfur. International experts estimate 200,000 people have died and 2.5 million have been

driven from their homes in Darfur since mostly non-Arab rebels took up arms in early 2003 accusing the central government in Khartoum of neglect. US-based Human Rights Watch has called on Turkey to express its support for the court during Bashir's visit. Mr Gul, who asked Mr Bashir to give priority to Turkish investors in Sudanese oil fields, said they had talked about Darfur and the suffering there. "We have to pay attention to human rights. The blood and the tears there must stop. Whatever happens the pain of the people there has to be put to an end," Gul told a news conference. The summit in Istanbul was attended by senior political figures from some 40 African countries, with which Turkey wants to build ties to tap into the continent's vast energy resources. Turkey, which has signed liquefied gas agreements with Algeria, is trying to boost investment in and trade with sub-Saharan Africa, following similar moves by emerging powerhouses China and India. Meanwhile, Lawyers for 38 people condemned to death for taking part in a shock Darfur rebel attack on Khartoum said today they had failed in their bid to have the sentences overturned. A spokesman for the defence team said judges on Sudan's constitutional court narrowly voted to reject their arguments that the controversial special courts that sentenced the defendants were unconstitutional and violated a series of laws. More than 200 people were killed and hundreds injured when Darfur rebels from the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) launched an unprecedented attack on the Khartoum suburb of Omdurman in May. The attackers drove across hundreds of miles of desert and scrubland to reach the capital and were only repelled at a bridge just a few kilometres away from the presidential palace. Khartoum set up three anti-terror courts to try people suspected of taking part in the assault or of supporting it. Human rights groups accused the Sudanese government of making hundreds of arbitrary arrests and torturing suspects after the attack, charges dismissed by government officials. Amin Mekki, coordinator for the defence team, told Reuters he was "obviously disappointed" that four out of the seven judges on the constitutional court had voted to reject their challenge against the special courts on Tuesday.

- **Algeria: AU Chair Condemns Terrorist Attack: [African Union \(Addis Ababa\)](#): PRESS RELEASE: 20 August 2008.**

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, has learned with great concern of the terrorist attack that occurred in the town of Boumerdes, in Algeria, on 19 August 2008. The attack highlights once again the gravity of the threat posed by terrorism to Africa. The Chairperson unreservedly condemns this attack as well as all forms of terrorist actions, and reiterates Africa's commitment to address this scourge. The Chairperson offers his condolences to the Algerian people at this difficult time, and expresses his solidarity and that of the African people with the Government and people of Algeria.

- **Algeria: Deadly Terrorist Attack Will Not Deter Algerians From Path of Peace – Ban: [UN News Service \(New York\)](#): 20 August 2008.**

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has condemned the terrorist attack that reportedly killed at least 43 people in Algeria, stressing that violence will not deter the country's people from the path of peace and reconciliation. A statement issued last night by Mr. Ban's

spokesperson noted that most of the victims of yesterday's suicide bombing at a gendarmerie training academy in Issers, some 60 kilometres east of the capital, Algiers, were between the ages of 18 and 20."The Secretary-General extends his condolences to the people of Algeria and in particular, to the families of the victims," the statement said, adding that Mr. Ban once again urges the international community support the Government's efforts to combat terrorism. The attack also sparked condemnation from the Security Council, which issued a presidential statement yesterday stressing the need to bring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the bombing to justice.

- **Tunisia: Joint Action - TMG Protests Attack On Journalist And Representative of Ifex Member Group, Sihem Bensedrine At Tunis Airport: [International Freedom of Expression Exchange Clearing House \(Toronto\)](#): PRESS RELEASE: 21 August 2008.**

Members of the Tunisia Monitoring Group (TMG), a coalition of 18 member organisations of the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) network, are appalled at the violent treatment on 19 August 2008 in the Tunis airport of journalist Sihem Bensedrine, Secretary General of the Observatory for the Freedom of Press, Publishing and Creation in Tunisia (OLPEC), IFEX's member in Tunisia, and an IFEX-TMG partner. She is also a member of the IFEX Council, IFEX's governing body. Border police at Tunis-Carthage International Airport barred Bensedrine from leaving the country as she prepared to board a Vienna-bound flight on 19 August, reports OLPEC. After submitting to a thorough search of her belongings, Bensedrine was told to follow the agents to an office. OLPEC reports, "Finding no valid reason to do so, she refused, at which point several plainclothes men who did not identify themselves took over." Then a team of political police moved in, when there were no witnesses left in the lounge. They were hostile, rude, and increasingly violent, roughing her up and throwing her to the floor and separating her from her belongings, including laptop and passport. Having been prevented from boarding the plane, which had taken off already, she was ordered to return home. "This is the third time this year Bensedrine has had trouble crossing the Tunisian border, and the second time she has received rough treatment at the hands of border police - when attempting to travel by land, sea or air," angrily noted IFEX-TMG Chair Rohan Jayasekera of Index on Censorship. In previous years, Bensedrine has been beaten and abused both in prison and by other people acting under the orders of the authorities. "This is completely outrageous behaviour to be meted out to any law-abiding citizen, and particularly disgraceful that a woman should be treated so poorly at the hands of a group of police officers. Once again we are forced to remind the Tunisian government that it is rapidly losing its reputation as a country that respects women's rights," said Jayasekera. Bensedrine and her husband Omar Mestiri, managing editor of "Kalima" online newspaper, were turned back by Algerian border police on 18 June 2008 while attempting to cross at the Oum Tboul border near Tabarka, in the northwest. They noticed an increased police presence on the road, including secret police. In March, Bensedrine and Mestiri received poor treatment upon their arrival in Tunisia from Europe in the port of La Goulette on 3 March 2008. They were held by customs for six hours, during which time Bensedrine was violently attacked, leaving bruises on her body. Her property was confiscated, including cell phones, documents and computer hard

discs. Bensedrine filed a complaint before the courts over the incident in March, but according to lawyer Raouf Ayadi, no enquiry has been opened. Reached by phone, Bensedrine said, "It was the first time they used such violent force to try to submit me to a full and humiliating body search, and that I was prevented from leaving the country. I had the feeling that they wanted to settle scores with me. I don't know how on earth they are under the illusion that I may represent a threat or a danger." Members of the TMG demand that Sihem Bensedrine be allowed to cross freely into and out of Tunisia, according to her legal right as a Tunisian citizen. Further, we would like to strongly protest the abusive treatment given to Bensedrine, which we believe to be a result of her outspoken activism in favour of increased human rights and democracy in Tunisia.

Bensedrine, who is also spokesperson of the National Council for Liberties in Tunisia (CNLT), is internationally known for her activism, was awarded the 2006 Index on Censorship/Hugo Young Journalism Award for bringing attention to human rights abuses in her home country. She was also awarded the 2008 Danish Peace Award and the Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) 2004 International Press Freedom Award.

Members of the IFEX-TMG:

Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (HRINFO), Egypt

ARTICLE 19, United Kingdom

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE), Canada

Cartoonists Rights Network International (CRNI), United States

Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), Egypt

Index on Censorship, United Kingdom

International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Belgium

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), Netherlands

International Press Institute (IPI), Austria

International Publishers' Association (IPA), Switzerland

Journaliste en danger (JED), Democratic Republic of Congo

Maharat Foundation, Lebanon

Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), Namibia

Norwegian PEN, Norway

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), Canada

World Association of Newspapers (WAN), France

World Press Freedom Committee (WPFC), United States

Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN (WiPC), United Kingdom

111. NEWS COMMENTARIES

NORTH AFRICA

- **Mauritania: Country's Power Usurpers: [This Day](#) (Lagos): EDITORIAL: 18 August 2008.**

For a continent battling to catch up with the rest of the developed world, the news of yet another coup d'etat in Mauritania, was indeed a bad one. So bad was it that it did not take the African Union (AU), the umbrella body of the African nations, more than 72 hours to suspend the arid nation from the Union. The coup which has attracted global umbrage and widespread condemnation came barely one year after the same Mauritanian military authorities organised a presidential election that produced the now ousted President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi. Only three years ago, there was a coup in this same country.

This is indeed one coup too many. There is no justification for it and the wrong signal it sends is condemnable. Mauritania has had a history of military putsches, the news of which was received in bad taste by the rest of the world. From all indications, the coups have combined to stunt the growth and development of the nation. Having gained independence from France in 1960 the country has been grappling with the bare fundamentals of a modern society, no thanks to frequent military coups. With a population of just about 3.1 million people, the country imports about 70 per cent of its food requirement. Unfortunately there are no deliberate plans by the country's leaders to overcome the natural challenges facing their arid nation. It is no surprise that the country remains one of the poorest in the world.

The latest coup can only worsen the economic predicament of the nation. The United States of America, for instance, has suspended her \$22 million worth of non-humanitarian aid to the nation. The European Commission has also declared sanctions against not only Mauritania but all Islamic African countries, as a result of the coup. Nigeria and South Africa, leading members of the AU, have declared their non-recognition of the new junta. The Mauritanian coup is a sad reminder that Africa is yet struggling to overcome the indiscipline associated with the continent's military forces. The coup leader, General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, former Head of presidential Guard, mobilized the junta against the president simply because four senior military chiefs (including himself) were sacked. This undisguised mutiny is absolutely condemnable and unacceptable. At this point in time in Africa's march to development, nothing can justify

its military usurpation of power. By the coup, Mauritania has suffered a serious set back in fostering its budding democracy. The oft-made promise of returning the country to democracy "within a short period of time", which this set of coupists has also mouthed, is as tenuous as it is nonsensical. The military cannot be trusted, as they do not have reliable credentials of mid-wifing a lasting democratic culture. Gen. Aziz and his fellow usurpers must return the country to full democracy without delay. They all must take practical steps to ensure that.

That said, the coup should serve as a wake-up call to other African leaders, and indeed all leaders that those entrusted with the mandate of the people must not betray it. They must justify the confidence the people reposed in them by delivering the fruits of good governance. This is sure to serve as a stronger de-motivation to coup makers. Leaders who either abuse their mandate or take it for granted, create room for military adventures eager to seize power. Such a temptation must however, be resisted.

WEST AFRICA

- **Africa: The New Nauseating Trend of Power-Sharing in Politics: Concord Times (Freetown): OPINION: 22 August 2008. Abdulai Bayraytay**

There is a scaring political trend unfolding in the recent post-colonial history of sub-Saharan Africa that if left unchecked will replace the heinous trend of social movements of rebel wars and guerilla warfare resorted to by losing politicians after they would have lost elections. And this drift is the scandalously nauseating power sharing gimmick of giving some concessions to the opposition, banking on the false premise that this would serve as a quick panacea to negotiate post-election disagreements.

The most worrying precedent this power-sharing craziness is setting is that all an opposition leader needs to do after s/he loses an election is to ignore the results, provoke violent unrest and lobby for mediators to swoop in for a so-called government of national unity in order to defuse tensions. This, by all indications is nothing but a bastardization of the whole political process that upholds the political norm of "when you lose an election, you have to step down". The paradox of Africa's fledgling democracies is just a starting point for negotiations. The above premise is predicated on the fact that even though the Kenyan political crisis is potentially different from Zimbabwe by virtue of incumbent President Robert Mugabe's defiance of all clarion calls not to hold elections that later culminated in his proclamation as the grand winner, the South African Development Community (SADC) under the auspices of the African Union seems to be on the path to prescribe the Kenyan dose as a solution to resolve Zimbabwe's political crisis. What the African Union has failed to contend with is the more or less reason to believe that Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai, two political arch rivals who dastardly loathes each other could ever form a workable partnership. This means any sort of power-sharing deal is little more than a fantasy as leaders of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) continue to fear for their lives.

And, this brings to mind the recent political skirmishes between the opposition Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) and the ruling All Peoples' Party government that has the potential to blur the credit rating of Sierra Leone as a country to have held very transparent and credible elections in her post-war period. This is where parallels could be drawn to the sordid Kenyan and Zimbabwean examples as the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) is reported to have adopted as policy the fomenting of trouble for self aggrandizing political gains. This accusation was editorialized in the August 20, 2008, (page 3) of one of Sierra Leone's prestigious dailies, Peep Newspaper thus: "...sections of the SLPP have openly declared that their only political objective is to render the country ungovernable and, in the process, work for a power sharing deal to bring the SLPP back to government..." Even if one would buy arguments by some commentators on Sierra Leone's politics that the recent spate of violent skirmishes between the ruling APC Party and the opposition SLPP were as a result of the psychological denial on the part of the latter to accept that it has indeed lost the presidency, what one would scoff at is any pre-matured insinuation of power-sharing that has the semblance to the Kenyan example through hoodwinked political intimidation and violence. This is against the background that the politics of power-sharing in Africa in recent times will not only succeed in undermining the values of democracy, but that it will make mockery of the very legitimacy of political sovereignty and the essence of elections.

What further makes the option of power-sharing a rather feeble and cosmetic solution is its temporariness as evidenced in Kenya where the violence might have been stalled but left in its wake a highly divided government that remains highly dysfunctional. This is a situation where ascendancy to power through the barrel of the gun and warfare is fast replacing blackmail and coercion. The above was exactly the tactic employed by the mercurial Revolutionary United Front (RUF) as it unleashed mayhem, brutality and the most heinous of crimes from March 24th, 1991 to the declaration of the war over in 2002. In spite this, the International Community, namely the United Nations exerted pressure on the meekly former President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his SLPP Government into negotiations with the RUF that culminated in a power-sharing deal under the terms of the Lome Peace Agreement of 1999.

Even though the adoption of multiparty democracy is being suspiciously perceived by some Africanist scholars as yet another attempt by the West to foster the unfinished work of domination through neo-liberal prescriptions, yet it is the only way through which the one party politics of winner take all (the Machiavellian version of politics) was mitigated. Therefore, any form of blackmail through political violence, intimidation and blackmail should be seen to be robustly resisted.

Note: The author, Abdulai Bayraytay holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honours and a Master's degree in Political Science & International Relations from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone and Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada respectively

SOUTHERN AFRICA

- **Africa: Proving Ground for International Criminal Court?: [Inter Press Service](#) (Johannesburg): 20 August 2008: Miriam Mannak**

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."

Last chance saloon

Was it Thabo Mbeki's 'quiet diplomacy' finally bearing fruit; or the harsh words from some of Africa's most powerful political leaders; or threats from the EU or the printing of a Z\$100bn banknote or indeed the country running out of paper on which to print money that finally tipped the scales and brought Robert Mugabe to the negotiating table? No doubt all the above played some role in softening the stances all parties had taken. This was victory for commonsense and the common good. The question however, as the negotiators lock themselves into hard bargaining, is whether the main players now have the courage and are big enough to carry through this rapprochement and begin the daunting task of trying to piece a shattered Zimbabwe together again. Morgan Tsvangirai emerges with great credit. Earlier he had been emphatic that he would not discuss any issues unless Mugabe ceded the presidential victory to him. Now he has shown that the terrible condition of the people of his country weighs far more heavily on him than sticking stubbornly to his word. The images of a badly battered, but unbowed Tsvangirai holding fast and prepared to undergo any pain, any humiliation for the sake of his people, could well make him out as another Mandela or even more appropriately, a modern Gandhi. But Tsvangirai could be brought crashing to the ground unless he can somehow rid himself of the British albatross around his neck. Whatever relief the MDC camp felt in secret when British Prime Minister Tony Blair left the stage, evaporated when Gordon Brown made a series of clumsy anti-Mugabe declarations only to be humiliated when China and Russia vetoed a UN Security Council resolution urging greater sanctions against Zimbabwe. Brown and some of his supporters in the Western world are seen throughout the developing world as exhibiting the old colonial traits of wanting to 'whip' the natives into submission as they did in practise for centuries before liberation.

- **Zimbabwe: Just Whose Tune is Tsvangirai Singing? : [The Herald](#) (Harare): OPINION: 19 August 2008.**

PERCEPTION is everything. We know that the devil is in the detail, but the issue is to really identify who exactly is holding the people of Zimbabwe to ransom, and at what

cost? Should we read too much into the latest developments that the inter-party talks have once again failed to produce a deal? Despite assurances from South African President Thabo Mbeki, mediator in the talks, at the just-ended SADC Summit that negotiations would proceed under the facilitation of the regional bloc's Troika on Politics, Defence and Security, should we trust that a deal will eventually be sealed? It was also heartening to hear President Mbeki saying that, "while negotiations are continuing, it may be necessary to convene parliament to give effect to the will of the people as expressed in the parliamentary elections held on the 29th of March 2008".

Angolan Foreign Minister Joao Miranda put his finger on the pulse when he made the following observation: "The gap between the parties is narrower. Points of disagreement are not so wide . . . The parties still are far from each other though on one point, and that is the executive powers that should go to the President and the Prime Minister. That is the stumbling block." Thus the thrill of victory still seems elusive since it is dictated and manipulated by outsiders with set agendas, one of which is reversing the Land Reform Programme. This writer was stunned when Tsvangirai's spokesperson George Sibotshiwe said: "We're finished." This probably was the most devastating news for Zimbabweans, irrespective of political affiliation. One wonders once again what has happened to the talks from the time when MDC-T leader walked out of the Harare meeting last Tuesday to the time he reaffirmed at the weekend that the talks were going "well" to Sunday when they said: "We are finished?" A BBC reporter last week remarked: "Brave as he is, constancy is not one of Tsvangirai's virtues." Two days after the walkout from the meeting of all three principals, Tsvangirai was busy doing some damage control claiming that the talks would be successfully concluded, and that a deal was imminent.

In keeping with the spirit of "quiet diplomacy", President Mbeki said Tsvangirai left the talks last Tuesday in order to have time to "reflect and consult". Some people joked and said was this reflecting on whether "to be or not to be". However, what has puzzled this author is what happened to the MDC-T leader between the first marathon meeting which lasted until the wee hours of Monday morning and the second meeting when the meeting resumed after both President Mugabe and MDC leader Arthur Mutambara returned from the National Heroes' Acre? In fact, as the nation watched Mutambara at the National Heroes' Day commemoration, there were high hopes that all three principals would be present. Such a public show would have instilled confidence that the talks were indeed on track.

Still, the million-dollar question remains, what has Tsvangirai been reflecting on, and who was advising him since his principal negotiators had not left the conference room with him? In retrospect, we ask whether the nation was witnessing a return of the pre-June 27 fiasco when he pulled out of the presidential run-off at the last minute? Whose interests are being served when Tsvangirai makes it apparent that the interests of the people in this democratic process are inconsequential? People have been patiently waiting for an outcome so that they can get on with their lives.

Since the harmonised elections and the presidential run-off, the Western media and their governments have used a caveat, which has been transformed into a regime change policy

agenda. One of them reads: "The opposition chief boycotted the June run-off election despite finishing ahead of Mugabe in the March first round of the vote, citing violence against his supporters that had killed dozens and injured thousands. Tsvangirai believes he has the right to the lion's share of power based on his first-round total, while the ruling Zanu-PF party argues Mugabe must be recognised as President in any deal, as he won the June election." For the West, this dialogue was never supposed to be since March 29 should have seen the MDC-T leader in power. This therefore should be translated as the West's agony of defeat. Despite the snags it would be folly for Zimbabweans to lose hope. History has taught us that such hitches are a normal part of any negotiations. As he left Harare for Luanda to brief Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos last week, President Mbeki made some poignant remarks that indicated undue outside interference in Zimbabwe's internal affairs. He also pointed out that the Zimbabwean leadership had shown their commitment to resolve the current impasse and that Zimbabweans should be left alone to find solutions to the challenges they are facing. It was in that spirit that the South African leader said if it meant him staying in Zimbabwe for six months, he would do so until a deal was reached.

Thus despite all the West's machinations, a settlement will eventually be reached by all three parties. Therefore, the West has to contemplate on the agony of their defeat since it is evident that the SADC region and the people of Zimbabwe will not be forced into something they do not want. By refusing to recognise June 27, the West has tried to create a crisis of legitimacy in Zimbabwe, which would see their continued meddling until their agendas are achieved. On his way to the G8 summit last July, US President George W. Bush claimed he cared a lot about the people of Zimbabwe and hoped that there would be a settlement. However, in the same breath, the Bush administration and the European Union have imposed more sanctions on Zimbabwe. The American president needs to be reminded that if sanctions are his best expression of love for Zimbabwe then we can do without that love. Zimbabwe has since 2002 criminalised sanctions imposed against it under the veil of semantic terms such as "targeted sanctions" or "travel bans". Zimbabwe argues that the sanctions are criminal and illegal since the United Nations did not endorse them. They are also criminal since they are being imposed by rich and white Western nations who feel that they have every right to interfere in and influence events and policies in Zimbabwe. They also think that they have unlimited rights to Zimbabwe's resources including land which they are desperate to reclaim.

There is no comparison to how much the West has hyped the inconclusive March 29 presidential election result which they claim should form the basis of a new government in Zimbabwe. Their obsessive claims on this poll result reached fever pitch on the run-up to the June 27 presidential run-off poll. Notwithstanding, the poll went ahead, and President Mugabe got an overwhelming mandate to lead Zimbabwe for the next five years. Despite what Zimbabwe's electoral law stipulates, they wilfully refuse to acknowledge, let alone respect the results from a credible due process. They also maintain that the result should be discredited since the conditions for holding a free and fair election were hampered by anti-MDC violence. The March 29 presidential poll result is also crucial to the West. It was the cut-off date for their open meddling in Zimbabwe's internal affairs since they believed that a Tsvangirai win would restore their original

position of control. What Zimbabwe's laws say is a non-issue to them for they want Tsvangirai at the helm at whatever cost.

So why is March 29 so important to them, especially when their media came up with screaming headlines like "We have beaten Mugabe"?

As one colleague argued, if Tsvangirai won the first round, why then did he agree to participate in the run-off before pulling out or why is he not in power? Why are we going through this dialogue process? A scenario was created whose sole purpose was not only to discredit the presidential result, but also to embarrass President Mugabe, and create an impression that his presidency is illegitimate. It was a scenario meant to force President Mugabe to the negotiating table in order to first and foremost ensure that Tsvangirai (read the West) would be accommodated in any government. That the major architects (Tony Blair and Bush) of the regime change agenda should both leave office and leave President Mugabe still in office is also an untenable situation for them. Since the Memorandum of Understanding was signed, Western pundits have argued that if deal goes through, and Zimbabwe has an all-inclusive government, it is one that they should have a say over, and one which would be acceptable to their norms and standards of free and fair elections.

The bottom line is that it should be a deal where executive powers are vested in Tsvangirai and nobody else. Their main concern has also been when President Mugabe will step down and they also want to know how much power he is prepared to cede. For them, the most they can give the Zimbabwean leader is the post of a titular president. They would want to see Tsvangirai in charge of powerful ministries such as Defence and Security since they argue that these are the elements used by Zanu-PF to intimidate the opposition; Agriculture, in order to reverse the Land Reform Programme; and Finance for reasons to do with monetary control. On August 10, one Western analyst also argued that these were make-or-break talks, and that "if everything is not agreed, then nothing is agreed".

Who was he speaking on behalf of?

There is a fixation on how much power President Mugabe should retain, and how soon he would leave office after the deal is done. Therefore when Tsvangirai claims that he wants a position with "real" power, he is only mimicking what they have all along been saying. There are also very strong sentiments that President Mugabe should be a ceremonial president and that he be recognised as founding father of the nation and that he would be granted amnesty from prosecution. This again sounds very familiar since The Hague always features in arguments about Zimbabwe and human rights. Some media reports claimed that the delay in coming up with a deal was because service chiefs were negotiating to see that they are accommodated in the amnesty that would only be granted to President Mugabe. According to Columbus Mavunga of DW radio, MDC-T also wants a Cabinet line-up that reflects their March 29 "victory". However, Mavunga remarked that it was a somewhat naive for MDC-T to expect President Mugabe to just surrender all power after winning the June 27 run-off poll. Why is the West so subdued right now since they normally forcefully push their will on Zimbabwean issues? Apart from their media,

they have been conspicuous by their silence with the exception of a guarded statement at the weekend from British Foreign Secretary David Miliband.

Apparently, the last straw that has broken the camel's back is the geo-strategic events that have engulfed them. The Russia-Georgia conflict of the past fortnight has shown them that Russia is alive and strong, and there are fears of the re-emergence of the Cold War tensions. On August 8, China, another emerging power to reckon with, opened itself to the world and is doing a fantastic job hosting the Beijing Olympics. Then we have Pakistan, the United States' major ally in the "war on terror", where there is a leadership crisis, after President Pervez Musharraf announced his resignation yesterday. At the weekend, Poland went ahead in signing an agreement with the United States that should see the latter erecting a missile defence shield on Polish soil.

Ukraine is also edging closer to the West.

In the UK, Gordon Brown is in trouble. He is facing the mother of all leadership crises and it would take more than just a miracle to save him. The West's hands are thus tied and very full, and they would not care less if the people of Zimbabwe continue to live in misery. One Harare man, who spoke on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that dialogue was the beginning of a long and credible process that gives hope. However, it is high time that those who claim to be representatives of the people swallowed their pride, and work for the common good. He also pointed that it is also time that the MDC-T leader realises that the people have suffered tremendously under the decade-long sanction regime he called for. It is imperative for a leader who professes to have the people's interests at heart to work for the good of the people. We should remain hopeful though. And if Tsvangirai does not want to play ball then the nation should just leave him behind.

EAST AFRICA/HORN OF AFRICA

- **Africa: Education - The Source of African Disempowerment: [The Monitor](#) (Kampala): OPINION: 20 August 2008: Morris D. C. Komakech**

I intend to illustrate that Eurocentric education is the main source of disempowerment of the colonised lot. With the devouring powers of globalisation, I envisage that most prudent means left for Africans to compete favourably in the global arena is by producing and promoting Afrocentric knowledge. I will explore the critical perspectives that cast a gloomy prospect for Afrocentrism.

A lot of exploration of the concept of Afrocentrism in North American continent has flourished in the area of education. Influential works have been chronicled by Pollard, S. Dian et al, Keita Maghan, Freeman Kassie, S'Thembile West, Verharen, C. Charles, Hoschild, L. Jennifer, Molefi Asante and so on. They all indicate that Eurocentric systems are at the root of disempowerment for the Black man.

The works that have truly left enduring influence on my studies are the works of Mary Lefkowitz, *Not out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History* and Njubi, N. Francis' *African Intellectuals in the Belly of the Beast*; migration, identity and the politics of exile; *The Black Athena*, by Martin Bernal as well as George G. M. James' *Stolen Legacy*.

But as Michel Foucault asserted, control of the systems that produce, distribute as well as utilise knowledge, represents power control and its distribution at the periphery. The way power is controlled is based on the way knowledge is dispensed - processed and distributed. To maintain a tight control of the world order, the western system has been able to lower the status of non-western forms of knowledge by discrediting its production, distribution and thus, its validity. Leftkowitz interminably painted the world view of Afrocentrism as an intellectual leper not worthy the ink and paper on which it aspires to be written. Critiquing the works of George G. M. James (*Stolen legacy from Africa*) and Martin Bernal (*Black Athena*), Leftkowitz argued fervently that Afrocentrism is an excuse for which African myths, assumptions and innuendo will crystallise to shape and form. She exuded worries that such movement would unearth centuries of distortions about the history of Africa - key historic African achievements. The possibility of nurturing typically Afrocentric systems that are equally scientific, credible and objective are unfathomable.

This is because such consciousness threatens to reverse the trends in which history and knowledge have been displayed in the traditional world order. Leftkowitz then argues that Afrocentric knowledge would be largely invalid because it lacks capacity to withstand advances and rigours of established western style scientific researches. She defends the western standard of "honesty" and "accuracy" in interpretation of world order as better-quality, claiming that if such an order is left to Afrocentrists, it would face obliteration, thus stripping away the veneer of intellectual advancements. Furthermore, Leftkowitz argued that Afrocentrism is based on unsubstantiated opinions of myth makers and fiction writers. In her mind, she was making particular critic to works of George G. M. James, which asserted that early western philosophy (such as platonism), art and civilisation basically originated from Africa. The objective of the argument is to inscribe in our minds that any body of knowledge that defies western conventions, especially when it emerges outside of it is fantasy based on mere desire to be true.

Leftkowitz totally disregards works of black intellectuals such as Frederic Douglass (1818-1895) and Marcus Mosiah Garvey (1887-1940), the brains behind the early Black consciousness that authored Pan Africanism. At the root of this mentality is the fate suffered by Prof. Mahmood Mamdani who was head of University of Cape Town's Center for African Studies in 1997. Njubi (2002) recounted that Mamdani found it impossible to overcome his image as an outsider in academic turf battles that only recognised western authorities when his syllabus for an introductory course in African studies got rejected by an entrenched group of white "Africanists" (Excerpts from Mamdani's own paper dated Monday, 20 April, 1998 p.3-7). When Mamdani insisted on his project, he was swiftly suspended.

Prof. Mamdani's ambitious syllabus drew readings from key African intellectuals such as Chiekh Anta Diop, Mamadou Diof, Ife Amadium, Samir Amin and Wamba-dia-Wamba. This conflicted with the views espoused by the custodians of "conventional" systems. Dr Njubi concluded that this battle was inherent in the perspective of Eurocentric versus Afro-centric. The challenge of control of power through dissipating western generated and controlled knowledge in our learning institutions!

- **Africa: Internal Refugees Deserve Same Rights As the Fleeing People From Across the Border: [The Nation \(Nairobi\)](#): ANALYSIS: 21 August 2008. Patrick Mutahi**

The May xenophobic violence in South Africa, which left over 30,000 people displaced, posed a new challenge for the Africa Union (AU) in its quest to tackle the problem of refugees and Internally Displaced People in the continent. The carnage took place when the AU was revising the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969) and drafting an Internally Displaced Persons Convention.

The revised AU refugees' convention is intended to assist the continental body to grapple with the huge numbers of displaced people who, according to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, remain "arguably the most significant humanitarian challenge that we face." To improve refugee security, the continental body needs to revive the spirit and letter of the 1969 OAU Refugee Convention by utilising the existing legal and institutional regional framework to act on human rights crises as they unfold.

Noting the huge numbers of internal refugees in the continent, in 2006 the AU embarked on drafting a Convention on the Prevention of Internal Displacement and the Protection of and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. Unlike refugees, who fall under the protection of international instruments such as the AU and UN refugee conventions together with the specialist agency UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist them, there are no comparable standards or mechanisms to safeguard the rights of internal refugees. Their own state is often unable or unwilling to assist and protect them. Likewise, the international community is often powerless or unwilling to intervene. To date a draft text has been discussed among a group of experts drawn from AU member states and representatives of various UN agencies. The adoption of a legally-binding Convention on internal refugees will send an important signal to the rest of the world about the seriousness with which Africa considers the issue. In 2007, the UNHCR recorded 11.4 million refugees under its care, up from 9.9 million the previous year. This was the second consecutive year that the number of refugees had steadily increased. Sudan with 523,000 refugees and Somalia (457,000) recorded the highest figures in the continent.

According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre of the Norwegian Refugee Council, the estimated number of internal refugees passed the 26 million mark in 2007 -- the highest figure since the early 1990s. As in previous years, Africa was particularly hard hit. The continent hosted almost half of the global internal refugees population (12.7

million people) spread across 20 African countries. Sudan had the highest number of internal refugees (5.8 million) and generated nearly one in every two of the new displacements (1.6 million). Somalia and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were the worst affected by new internal displacements in 2007. In Somalia the violence that engulfed the capital Mogadishu and other parts of the country after the Ethiopian invasion in December 2006 displaced some 600,000 people. In the DRC, fighting between ethnic Tutsi rebels and the government army has uprooted an estimated 500,000 people in the east of the country. Against this background, there is urgency to review the IDP and refugee resettlement procedures in the continent. Drafted in the aftermath of anti-colonial struggles, the OAU Refugee Convention has been globally acknowledged as a land-mark contribution to the international refugee protection regimes through its broadening of the refugee definition in response to Africa's needs. It was a radical affirmation and expansion of the refugee definition contained in the 1959 UN refugee convention and its 1967 Protocol.

The OAU Refugee Convention allows for the group-based determination of refugee status. In addition, it expands the definition of "refugee" by stating that external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole country of origin or nationality of a person are a basis for claiming refugee status. This means that large groups of refugees fleeing mass human rights violations or generalised violence can be given protection on the strength of their nationality or their membership of a particular ethnic group.

Stress eroding hospitality

Historically, the response of most African countries and communities towards the displaced has been generous, reflecting long-standing ethnic, political and cultural links between refugees and host populations. However, in recent years, the tremendous stress on the institution of refugee protection in Africa has eroded this hospitality. The large number of refugees in countries already experiencing remarkable social and economic hardships has brought into question the very capacity of African nations to cope with refugees. In addition, due to global recession and the increased number of persons seeking asylum and humanitarian assistance world-wide, the international community's capacity to shoulder the African refugee crisis has diminished. In many cases, the refugees have been arrested and detained without charge. Others have been repatriated against their will or restricted to refugee camps or to remote, inaccessible locations where they are sometimes exposed to banditry, rape and other forms of criminality. Generally, many have not been able to enjoy social, economic and civil rights. In a post-September 11 (2001) world, refugees have been caught in the intricate web of the Western-led war on terror. Now, they are pawns in a geopolitical game in which they are seen as agents of insecurity and terrorism.

During the battle for the heart and soul of Mogadishu in 2006/7, around 600,000 Somalis were forced to flee as the Transitional Federal Government, its Ethiopian allies and the insurgents of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU) fought for power. Following sustained bombardment and street battles, the number displaced from the city and other areas of

Somalia rose to one million people. Wary of the security repercussions of Islamic militants and their supporters flocking into its soil, Kenya barred over 7,000 deserving Somali refugees from crossing over, precipitating a humanitarian crisis and international outcry.

During the 1998-2003 civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), 4 million people were killed and an estimated 1.1 million Congolese displaced, including 400,000 refugees. The war created new security dynamics involving Rwandese refugees and Congolese citizens of Rwandese stock (the Banyamulenge). Rwandese refugees (the Interahamwe Hutu militias who fled to the DRC) accused of perpetrating the 1994 genocide, re-grouped in the refugee camps and started recruiting fighters. The Kinshasa onslaught by then Congolese rebel leader Laurent Kabila, Rwanda's Paul Kagame and Uganda's Yoweri Museveni was allegedly to counter the Hutu militias in the refugee camp. Considerable progress has been made in recent years in raising the awareness of internal displacement and refugees' protection. However, information gaps have remained on the size, composition and needs of displaced populations.

In many countries, where such gaps have existed, the host governments are neither willing to assist nor protect the internal refugees themselves. Such governments are also reluctant to let international humanitarian agencies get on with the job. The five-year conflict in Darfur, Sudan, has forced over two million people to seek refuge in camps within Darfur, while a further quarter of a million has fled to Chad. The huge internal refugee camps in Darfur are increasingly overcrowded and insecure, and humanitarian access remains severely limited. In other cases, internal refugees and refugees were forced to flee the camps and on several occasions forcibly relocated by government forces.

Darfur camps crowded

In Chad, the number of internal refugees increased from 100,000 at the end of 2006 to nearly 180,000 a year later. Continued fighting between the army, rebel groups and cross-border raids by Sudanese militias have all contributed to the increasing insecurity and forced more civilians to abandon their camps. Even in areas recovering from conflict, such as northern Uganda and Ivory Coast, durable solutions to internal displacement are still embryonic.

The 2005 UN World Summit Outcome Document titled Responsibility to Protect, recognised the responsibility of the international community to intervene in cases where governments manifestly failed to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Although the concrete application of this responsibility to protect is still controversial, some progress has been made in strengthening the international protection regime for internal refugees and other conflict-affected civilians. The UN Security Council set out a framework for action in Resolution 1674 (2006), and increasingly mandated peacekeeping operations to undertake activities in support of the protection of civilians. This is included in the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the UN missions in the Central African Republic and Chad. The AU has

viable instruments of addressing the refugee crisis, particularly its 1969 Refugee Convention which is under review and should take into account the new developments in South Africa.

AU member states should also hasten the conclusion of the draft Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. The coming to force, in 2008, of the Great Lakes Pact of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (IC/GLR) will go a long way in protecting internal refugees and refugees.

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CENTRAL AFRICA

- **Rwanda: France Drew Up Tutsi 'Kill List': [The East African \(Nairobi\)](#): OPINION: 9 August 2008: [Oscar Kimanuka](#)**

The recent report by an independent commission of inquiry into the role of France in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda has not only raised disturbing questions about French complicity in the tragedy, but also left a huge dent in the image of the French government.

It shows that while certain French politicians, diplomats and military leaders were complicit in the genocide, the French authorities abetted the gruesome events.

This was done through training of Hutu militias as well as laying strategy for Rwanda's armed forces. The report further shows how training and funding was provided to Rwandan intelligence services on how to establish a database that would later be used as a "kill list" of the Tutsi. Operation Turquoise, a French military intervention force that was sent to Rwanda in June 1994, ostensibly for humanitarian reasons and with the full backing of the United Nations Security Council, is said to have protected some of the leaders of the genocide and eventually assisted them to flee arrest.

WHILE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT dismissed the findings as "unacceptable accusations," the commission has clarified facts that were known at the time and should spur the international community and other interested parties not just to know the truth about the allegations of the French involvement but to hold all those involved accountable.

THE REPORT NAMES 13 SENIOR French politicians and 20 military officials as responsible and raises "the prospect of Rwandan legal action against them." There are lessons here. One is that there exists in some circles in the West, a deep neo-colonial hangover and utter disregard for the lives of Africans. Secondly, France must begin to put its act together and come to terms with what happened in Rwanda. They must accept the trial of all those mentioned in the report for the sake of establishing the truth. Finally,

there must be a clear and unequivocal apology from France for its shameful complicity in the genocide. Given the important role of France in humanity's quest for liberty, equality and fraternity, one would expect that this will be possible. But time alone will tell.

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- **Africa: Business Versus Political Power As Agents of Change in Post - Colonial Continent : [The New Times](#) (Kigali): OPINION: 19 August 2008: Mutumwa Mawere**

After 52 years, it must be accepted that the promise of a prosperous and dynamic continent that independence was expected to bring about remains elusive.

The construction of a post colonial order was premised on the belief that restoring political power to the majority through a constitutional democratic order was in and out of itself a necessary and sufficient condition for economic and social transformation. Business was perceived to be closely aligned to the colonial state and, therefore, in the construction of a post colonial state, the role of business in influencing the direction, rate, characteristics and consequences of physical innovations as they develop, events, activities, people by virtue of control over resources, particularly property; cultural values, habits, institutions such as family, work life, and buying habits of individuals, shape of the legal and constitutional order of post colonial Africa was and is treated with mistrust.

While there was consensus at independence that politics has a dominant role in post colonial Africa there was no consensus on what role business should play in advancing the interests of change and progress in reducing the frontiers of poverty. The founding fathers of postcolonial Africa shared a common belief that activity in the political and not economic sphere should be the primary force for change and from this, change was expected to automatically radiate into other spheres of human endeavour.

In the colonial state, political and business power was in the same hands whereas in the post colonial state, political power is theoretically vested in the holders of sovereignty i.e. citizens while business power remains predominantly in white hands. There is considerable debate on whether business power that remains outside the control of indigenous Africans is adequately checked and balanced for the public good. Views about the role of business and political power in post colonial Africa cover a wide spectrum but there are basically two opposing positions.

On one side is the theory which holds that in as much as business was pre-eminent in the colonial state that is blamed for contributing to African poverty primarily because of its control over the continent's resources, the post colonial state should be dominated by political power. It is argued that business power was and remains both excessive and inadequately checked in post colonial Africa. The self interest of corporations that are in the main foreign controlled is then deemed to be harmful to the general welfare of the continent calling for state intervention.

On the other side is the theory that holds that the organisation of the colonial state was such that business power was exercised in an environment in which institutions such as markets, government, labour unions (white), advocacy groups, and public opinion had great influence and power. Business power was counter-balanced, restricted, controlled and subject to defeat through market forces whereas political power in post colonial Africa is not easily subject to defeat because of lack of market-based pluralism. In post colonial Africa, ambivalence still exists against business power as an instrument of change in Africa. The role of corporate citizens in building institutions that underpinned the colonial state remains underappreciated but when the colonial state is properly contextualised it becomes self evident that companies in ascending industries changed African societies by altering all three of their primary elements - ideas, institutions and material things.

This effect is visible in the stories of dominant companies that have African origins like: De Beers, Anglo American Corporation, Impala Platinum, Old Mutual, Sanlam, Anglovaal; Rembrandt, JCI, Goldfields, Billiton, Sasol, Iscor (now Mittal), and many others.

It is not accidental that most of the key corporate drivers of African change originated from South Africa and the post apartheid era has seen the expanded role of South Africa's corporate sector in the continent's economic transformation. The role of white Africans in both the colonial and post colonial eras has to be understood in its proper context if the continent's development possibilities are to be fully exploited. It is important to ask the question: "What kind of Africa do we want?" so as to properly locate business and political power in a developmental Africa. The cumulative power of business in Africa is not as massive as it is in developed states and only South Africa has a significant industrial, mining, financial, and agricultural corporate base.

Business power is ordinarily a more dependable and irrepressible shaping force of the destiny of any society than changes brought about purely from the exercise of political power.

The use of power whether political or economic in changing human societies; cannot be overstated. There are many sources of power, including wealth, position, knowledge, law, arms, status, and charisma. However, power in post colonial Africa as it was during the colonial era is unevenly distributed and there appears to be no mechanism to control it for wider benefit. The mechanisms used by the post colonial state are as imperfect as they were during the colonial state and these include governments, laws, police, cultural values and public opinion. The promise of multiple and competing formations of power in the post colonial era to check and balance each other for public good has unfortunately not materialised not because of an imperialist conspiracy but rather the inherent inability of Africa's founding fathers to properly understand the utility of business power as an ally in the fight against poverty. Business power is the force behind an act by a company, industry or sector. Post colonial African founding fathers should have known that the greater this force, the more the action creates change or influences the actions of other entities in society.

To the extent that the basic origin of business power is a grant of authority from society to convert resources efficiently into needed goods and services, it should have been self evident that a social contract was required in order to energise business to take necessary actions from which profit can be generated. The existence of a social contract in the post colonial order ought to legitimise business power by giving it a moral basis. Regrettably in most African economies, business is regarded as an enemy of development and more emphasis is placed on the state as an engine of growth and development. Legitimacy is the rightful use of power. The power of a government or a corporation is legitimate when it is exercised in keeping with the agreed upon contract.

For governments, the opposite of legitimacy is tyranny commonly defined as the "exercise of power beyond right".

Many African governments and corporations breach the social contract when they violate social values, endanger the public or act illegally. Business or political power is legitimate when it is used for the common good. In the construction of a post colonial Africa, it is evident that the absence of a social contract distorts the basis on which legitimacy can be measured. It is common cause that corporate and political actions can have an impact on society in the sense that visible and immediate changes are caused by business and political power. However, the experience in post colonial Africa has shown that political power is not a reliable agent for change. Rather corporations expand and contract, hire and fire, make and sell products while African politicians build a business model on intimidation, force, and illegitimacy. It is instructive that victims of the colonial state inherited a functioning state but immediately after independence citizens find themselves unable to control the post colonial state. The state in country after country is seamlessly converted into a "monster".

On a deeper level, the laws of post colonial Africa - including constitutional, civil and criminal laws - have not been shaped by the consequences of economic activity rather by the consequences of political expediency. On the surface, African politicians acquire through state control, formidable resources that intimidate opponents as well as corporate actors. Corporate Africa to the extent that it remains controlled on visible racial grounds has not been able to influence meaningfully the economic, cultural, technological, political, and institutional transformation of post colonial Africa and yet without a dynamic business sector, the continent will remain condemned to poverty.

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