

Report # 105
Region: Southern Africa
BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

Weekly Report: 31 January – 06 February 2010
Presentation: 10 February 2010
Zahid Aqil

Table of Contents

Summary of Report.....3

Headlines

Political Developments

- **ANC defends Jacob Zuma over 'love-child' claims.....8**
- **Tsvangirai Says Early Elections Could Solve Zimbabwe's Political Problems...10**
- **Harare Judge Rules E-Mails Can Be Used as Evidence in Bennett Case.....11**
- **De Klerk Announced Release of Mandela Two Decades Ago.....12**
- **Botswana Official Dismisses Resignation Calls as 'Nonsensical'.....13**
- **Mugabe allies block Zimbabwe land audit.....14**
- **Nelson Mandela dinner celebrates 20 years of freedom.....17**
- **Botswana recalls Zimbabwe envoys.....18**
- **Is Zuma's sex life a private matter?.....18**
- **South Africa: State is Urged to Go On With Nuclear Project.....20**
- **Africa: UN to Hold MDG Summit.....22**
- **South Africa: Christian Parties Call On Zuma to Quit Over 'Love-Child'.....23**
- **Southern Africa: SADC Optimistic about Solution to Madagascar Crisis.....24**
- **Zimbabwe: Constitution-Making Hits New Snag.....25**

Economic Developments

- **Zimbabwe Braces for a Disappointing 2010 Maize Crop After Dry Spell.....25**
- **Namibia: Govt Entry Into Mining 'No Threat'.....27**
- **South Africa: Ecobank Opens Representative in Country.....29**
- **South Africa: Even More Local Trade Mooted At Canton Fair.....30**
- **South Africa: Manufacturing Survey Expected to Show Continued
Expansion.....31**
- **South Africa: S Africans Urged to Borrow Money Responsibly.....32**
- **South Africa: Unions Upset Over Import of Chinese Labour.....33**

Social Developments

- **Zimbabwe's Civil Service Workers Go On Strike.....35**
- **Ousted from Church, Harare Anglicans Worship Outside.....36**
- **Africa: SA Scientists Win Top AU Award.....37**
- **South Africa: Health Posts Open in KZN.....37**
- **South Africa: Police Plan to Respond to Letter Writers' Gripes.....38**
- **Zimbabwe: City Loan to Boost Water Supplies.....39**

Summary of Report

Political Developments

ANC defends Jacob Zuma over 'love-child' claims

South Africa's governing African National Congress has defended President Jacob Zuma over claims that he fathered a child outside marriage. Opposition parties and newspapers have accused Mr Zuma, who has three wives, of setting a bad example in a country battling an epidemic of HIV and Aids. But ANC was of the view that Mr Zuma had broken no laws and that there was "nothing shameful" in a relationship between two people.

Tsvangirai Says Early Elections Could Solve Zimbabwe's Political Problems

In an interview with VOA, Prime Minister Tsvangirai said that early elections could be the only way to solve the country's political problems. And he was of the view that election must be contested after removing all intimidations and all the violence.

Harare Judge Rules E-Mails Can Be Used as Evidence in Bennett Case

Justice Chinembiri Bhunu said the e-mail purported to come from the laptop computer of the prosecution's star witness Michael Peter Hitschmann's can be used as evidence in senior Movement for Democratic Change politician Roy Bennett's sedition trial.

De Klerk Announced Release of Mandela Two Decades Ago

Twenty years ago, in a move that stunned his political opponents, and the world, South Africa's then-president F.W. de Klerk announced he had legalized all outlawed organizations and said he would soon unconditionally release, after 27 years in jail, Nelson Mandela.

Botswana Official Dismisses Resignation Calls as 'Nonsensical'

A leading opposition figure is demanding the resignation of Botswana cabinet minister Ramadeluka Seretse, saying it is obvious the minister has been influencing the government's bidding process.

Mugabe allies block Zimbabwe land audit

A two-year land audit was due to begin in Zimbabwe in February - but an angry reaction from President Robert Mugabe's allies and more attacks on white farmers has put that in doubt.

Nelson Mandela dinner celebrates 20 years of freedom

Nelson Mandela has celebrated the 20th anniversary of his release from prison with a special dinner, inviting ex-wife Winnie and one of his former jailers.

Botswana recalls Zimbabwe envoys

Botswana says it is recalling two senior diplomats based in Harare in protest against the detention of three wildlife officers in Zimbabwe.

Is Zuma's sex life a private matter?

South Africans have largely accepted President Jacob Zuma's polygamy - but revelations that he fathered a child out of wedlock have highlighted a gaping cultural divide.

South Africa: State is Urged to Go On With Nuclear Project

The government should have the courage to proceed with the development of the pebble bed modular reactor technology, nuclear expert Kelvin Kemm said yesterday.

Africa: UN to Hold MDG Summit

United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has announced that the UN will hold a summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September.

South Africa: Christian Parties Call On Zuma to Quit Over 'Love-Child'

Two Christian political parties have urged South African President Jacob Zuma to resign for fathering a child out-of-wedlock, saying he is undermining government efforts to fight HIV and AIDS.

Southern Africa: SADC Optimistic about Solution to Madagascar Crisis

The Executive Secretary of SADC (Southern African Development Community), Tomas Salomao, believes that the political factions in Madagascar will return to the negotiating table very soon to achieve a lasting solution to the crisis that erupted when the mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, seized power last March.

Zimbabwe: Constitution-Making Hits New Snag

The constitution-making process hit yet another snag yesterday when Parliament's Select Committee rejected a new project document crafted by the management committee and the UNDP, and referred the deadlock to their party principals.

Economic Developments

Zimbabwe Braces for a Disappointing 2010 Maize Crop After Dry Spell

Agriculture Minister Joseph Made says Zimbabwe must import 500,000 tons of maize to ensure food security, citing a protracted dry spell that left crops withered across much of the country.

Namibia: Govt Entry Into Mining 'No Threat'

Government's entrance into the mining sector through the 100-per cent state-owned Epangelo Mining is "no major threat", Extract Resources Chairman Steve Galloway said at Swakopmund this weekend.

South Africa: Ecobank Opens Representative in Country

ECOBANK has opened a representative office in Johannesburg, making South Africa the 30th African country in which the pan-African bank has a presence.

South Africa: Even More Local Trade Mooted At Canton Fair

South African businesses are again expected to increase their presence at, and generate more business from, China's biggest Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou in April and May.

South Africa: Manufacturing Survey Expected to Show Continued Expansion

A key manufacturing survey today is expected to show that the economy's second-biggest sector continued to expand last month.

South Africa: S Africans Urged to Borrow Money Responsibly

The National Credit Regulator (NCR) has urged consumers to borrow money responsibly and wisely.

South Africa: Unions Upset Over Import of Chinese Labour

South African trade unions are up in arms over visas granted to over 50 construction workers from mainland China who are building new premises for the Chinese consulate in Cape Town.

Social Developments

Zimbabwe's Civil Service Workers Go On Strike

Zimbabwe's civil servants said Friday they are going on strike for better wages. This strike is a serious blow to the year-old unity government which says it has no money to increase their wages.

Ousted from Church, Harare Anglicans Worship Outside

Thousands heeded call by Anglican Church to attend outdoor service in Harare to protest not being allowed to worship by former bishop, followers.

Africa: SA Scientists Win Top AU Award

President Jacob Zuma has congratulated two South African scientists for winning the prestigious African Union (AU) Scientific Awards. They were chosen from 48 contestants from across the continent for the outstanding work in their fields.

South Africa: Health Posts Open in KZN

Due to a shortage of health care workers in the province, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health has decided to "un-freeze" clinical posts in seven institutions and a component of head office.

South Africa: Police Plan to Respond to Letter Writers' Gripes

Police commissioner Bheki Cele has recommended the formation of a committee consisting of police communication officials to respond to writers of letters to the newspapers complaining about the service provided by the police.

Zimbabwe: City Loan to Boost Water Supplies

The upgrading of key infrastructure using the US\$150 million loan extended to Harare City Council by EximBank of China will result in the production of an extra 144 megalitres of water per day.

Detailed Report

Political Developments

ANC defends Jacob Zuma over 'love-child' claims

(BBC News)

2 February 2010

South Africa's governing African National Congress has defended President Jacob Zuma over claims that he fathered a child outside marriage.

The ANC said Mr Zuma had broken no laws and that there was "nothing shameful" in a relationship between two people.

Opposition parties and newspapers have accused Mr Zuma, who has three wives, of setting a bad example in a country battling an epidemic of HIV and Aids. One Member of Parliament urged him to seek treatment for "sex addiction". Kenneth Meshoe said Mr Zuma should get help like "Tiger Woods did".

'Disingenuous'

South Africa's Sunday Times newspaper reported that the president, who is engaged to a fourth woman, had fathered a girl born on 8 October 2009 with Sonono Khoza, 39, the daughter of the 2010 World Cup Local Organising Committee boss Irvin Khoza.

Mr Zuma, 67, was said to have paid compensation for the pregnancy, suggesting that he was not denying paternity.

In several South African cultures, the father of a child born out of wedlock pays damages known as *Inhlawulo* to the family of the baby's mother. Mr Zuma has so far not commented but Ms Khoza has denied having had a baby last year, reports the Sowetan newspaper.

On Monday an ANC spokesman issued a statement tacitly confirming the president had fathered a child and asserting that it considered the matter private. "We are of the view that the media and some political commentators are making a mountain out of nothing," Jackson Mthembu said.

"Why should a relationship between two adults be made an issue? Why should it make headlines? Why is it characterised by some media as a 'Shame to the nation'?" he asked, referring to the headline of an editorial in the Sowetan.

Mr Mthembu said the criticism of the president was "disingenuous". "There is nothing wrong that the president has done. There is nothing 'shameful' when two adults have a relationship," he said.

"By being involved with any other person, President Zuma is not guilty of any offence and he has not breached our constitution or any of our laws," he added. The spokesman also said the ANC saw no links between its policies on HIV/Aids and Mr Zuma's personal life.

'Sending a message'

South Africa has the highest number of HIV infections in the world - more than 5 million people.

Mr Zuma was praised last year when he announced major changes to the country's Aids policy, which included increasing the roll-out of anti-retroviral drugs. But opposition parties now say his behaviour contradicts the government's stance on HIV prevention - for example preaching regular condom use and faithfulness.

"He is the one who is always preaching responsible sexual behaviour, but it seems he is sending a message which says 'Don't do as I do, do as I say'," Independent Democrats leader Patricia de Lille said.

This is not the first time that the president's sexual life has been under the spotlight. In 2006, while being acquitted of rape, Mr Zuma admitted that he had made a mistake by having unprotected sex with a woman he knew to be HIV-positive. She was also the daughter of a family friend.

Mr Zuma has been married five times in all, most recently in January, and is also engaged to another woman. He has 19 children according to his office, but it is not clear if that includes the baby born last October.

Tsvangirai Says Early Elections Could Solve Zimbabwe's Political Problems

(Voice of America)

05 February 2010

Zimbabwean Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai has told VOA that early elections could be the only way to solve the country's political problems.

In an interview with VOA, Prime Minister Tsvangirai said talks about fully implementing the agreement that brought about Zimbabwe's unity government, set to resume Monday, are unlikely to resolve the outstanding issues.

"There is going to be a deadlock, and I have said to our party representative that let's finalize this, let's not procrastinate by saying we are going to have another meeting let's see what we have agreed and what we have not agreed," said Morgan Tsvangirai. "Therefore we are able to say to president Zuma and SADC that ZANU-PF is refusing to implement and therefore as far as we are concerned the only solution is that let's agree on a road map to an election."

Only last month the prime minister rejected a call by South Africa's President Jacob Zuma for elections next year. Mr. Zuma is mandated by the Southern African Development Community - or SADC - with facilitating talks on the implementation of the so-called Global Political Agreement (GPA) which brought about Zimbabwe's power-sharing government. SADC is a guarantor of the deal along with the African Union and South Africa. South Africa is a member of SADC.

Mr. Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change has disputed the results of every election it has contested since 2000, citing widespread fraud, intimidation and violence. He tells VOA the political and legal environment will have to change before any further poll is conducted in Zimbabwe.

"Absolutely not, we cannot go into an election under the same conditions it will not be an election it will be war as usual," he said. "Remove all the intimidation, all the violence we can undertake an election in this country and beat ZANU-PF. What we want is a new constitution, yes there have been some delays, but I think that the consultation will be in line for us to have a referendum by November or October. Then we can decide the date of election next year."

Mr. Tsvangirai says coalition governments are usually fragile but adds nearly a year from its formation the union is at its weakest. He says this is likely a consequence of a recent statement by British Foreign Secretary David Milliband indicating the European Union would only lift sanctions against President Robert Mugabe and senior members of his ZANU-PF party on the advice of the MDC.

Mr. Tsvangirai says he does not influence British foreign policy so he cannot do anything about the sanctions which ZANU-PF says are inhibiting economic growth in Zimbabwe due to the country's inability to access international loans.

Harare Judge Rules E-Mails Can Be Used as Evidence in Bennett Case

(Voice of America)

03 February 2010

Justice Chinembiri Bhunu said the e-mail purported to come from the laptop computer of the prosecution's star witness Michael Peter Hitschmann's can be used as evidence in senior Movement for Democratic Change politician Roy Bennett's sedition trial.

The prosecution alleges Bennett paid Hitschmann, an arms dealer, to buy weapons to assassinate Zimbabwe government officials.

Bennett is deputy Minister of Agriculture-designate but President Robert Mugabe has refused to swear him into office until he is cleared of the charges.

Justice Bhunu said the disputed emails which link Hitschmann to Bennett are relevant and vital to the determination of the case against Bennett. Hitschmann says he did not write the emails.

State counsel Attorney General Johannes Tomana hailed the ruling.

"We are saying that our link between Hitschmann and the accused person is in the communication between the two of them and those e-mails are the basis upon which the state finds the connection between Hitschmann and Bennett," he said.

Defense lawyer Beatrice Mtetwa argued the e-mails in question could have been written by anybody. In an attempt to show how easy it is to generate what she described as fake e-mails, she got a state witness to read an email, which turned out to purport to have been written by the prosecutor.

The prosecutor furiously argued that the cross examination was designed as a personal attack on him.

The defense lawyer Mtetwa argued she was merely trying to demonstrate the ease with which emails can be faked.

"We are trying to demonstrate that they are fake by placing before the judge emails that are in the names of people who know they did not make them and what better way to demonstrate that they are fake," she said.

The judge postponed the trial to Monday so he can decide on the acceptability of Mtetwa's cross-examination.

De Klerk Announced Release of Mandela Two Decades Ago

(Voice of America)

02 February 2010

Twenty years ago, in a move that stunned his political opponents, and the world, South Africa's then-president F.W. de Klerk announced he had legalized all outlawed organizations and said he would soon unconditionally release, after 27 years in jail, Nelson Mandela.

In just five months in office after ousting his predecessor P.W. Botha, then-president F.W. de Klerk had, by February 1990, already begun to loosen the tenacious grip of South Africa's security machinery on the running of the country.

Imprisoned ANC veteran Walter Sisulu was released and massive peaceful demonstrations had been allowed in Cape Town, Pretoria and Johannesburg. The new president's publicity machine began hinting that his maiden opening address to parliament on February 2 would be a complete break with the past. Even so, expectations were that the speech would perhaps pave the way for negotiations with South Africa's black majority without conceding too much.

And then Mr. de Klerk's words came across the country's airwaves. "I wish to put it plainly that the government has taken a firm decision to release Mr. Mandela unconditionally," he said. "I am serious about bringing this matter to finality without delay."

But Mr. de Klerk had gone a great deal further than announce the impending release of his government's most powerful foe. In one stroke he also swept aside widespread restrictions on free political activity, freedom of association; and, he legalized outlawed organizations.

"The prohibition of the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress, the South African Communist Party and a number of subsidiary organizations is being rescinded," said Mr. de Klerk. "People serving prison sentences merely because they were members of one of these organizations or because they committed another offense which was merely an offense because a prohibition on one of the organizations was in force, will be identified and released."

"Moment of real joy"

Mr. de Klerk's announcement caused tens of thousands South Africans to spill into the streets in spontaneous celebration. Among those on the streets of Johannesburg, appearing stunned but still broadly smiling was Jay Naidoo, then General Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

Naidoo, now Chairman of the Development Bank of Southern Africa tells VOA it was a moment of real joy. "So, we exploded with joy, I mean it was a significant movement

forward, and it put a peg onto the ground that this transformation to democratic state was now unstoppable," he said.

Naidoo, who also heads the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, says Mr. de Klerk's decision was courageous.

"And the fact that De Klerk made that announcement I think was a very brave step on his part to bring white society that felt under siege, and felt in terms of apartheid superior to the black population, to bring them in to the camp of a negotiated political settlement," he said.

Realism

But Naidoo says that along with the joy there was also an underlying sense of realism that the powerful state security machinery that often used illegal violent methods to quell opposition, still remained in place.

"So obviously there was a sense of nervousness on our side because we had borne the brunt of the violence against us really perpetrated by the security forces acting on behalf of the apartheid state. So that was certainly a big area of our concern," he said.

Mr. de Klerk's announcement signaled the start of a four-year period of sometimes turbulent negotiations which propelled South Africa toward a fully inclusive democracy. But the same period was also beset by unprecedented levels of violence, in which thousands died.

Even so, Naidoo says that for millions of South Africans the promise of that day was not false, and they now live in a stable, peaceful democracy, where they have real choices. But he says far too many still live in abject poverty without access to good health care, good schools and decent jobs.

Botswana Official Dismisses Resignation Calls as 'Nonsensical'

(Voice of America)

02 February 2010

A leading opposition figure is demanding the resignation of Botswana cabinet minister Ramadeluka Seretse, saying it is obvious the minister has been influencing the government's bidding process.

Opposition member Dumelang Saleshando says minister Seretse "unethically" benefited from his ministry's budget.

But Seretse, the cabinet official in charge of Defense Justice and Security, says it is "nonsensical" for the opposition to demand he step down amid accusations of graft and conflict of interest. Seretse says he did nothing wrong and he challenges the opposition to prove his complicity.

“I think it’s nonsense. I heard he (Saleshando) is calling for my resignation because there is a conflict of interest. But you know, in all resolutions of conflict of interest, one doesn’t resign because there is a conflict of interest. If that conflict of interest is not manageable, then obviously, one may have to resign. But a conflict of interest that does not necessarily result in corruption would not require one to resign,” said Seretse.

The minister said he formed the company RFT in 1998 before he became politically active. Some of his clients include the Botswana Police the Defense Force and other security agencies.

Minister Seretse said he respected the law by declaring his assets to President Seretse Khama Ian Khama.

“Of course, we have a system here where we declare for the president what our financial interests are. And I have indeed declared that I do have a company and have been declaring since 2004,” Seretse said.

Botswana’s media reports that minister Seretse and his wife Sandra Salome Seretse are owners of the company (RFT) that supplies ammunition, firearms, surveillance cameras and electronic security equipment to the country’s security agencies that directly fall under the minister’s supervision. Saleshando backs up the reports.

“What has recently emerged and has been confirmed by the minister is that he has been awarded tenders by security agencies, which forms part of his portfolio. And our view is that this amounts to a conflict of interest, given that he has insider information as a minister in terms of what procurement the department is looking at,” Saleshando said.

Recently, a study conducted by the Institute of Security Studies and commissioned by the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime stated that "The risk of (people in political positions) abusing their positions for personal gain has been noted to increase significantly in jurisdictions like Botswana, where there is no obligation placed on them to declare their assets. The government has consistently rejected calls to consider legislation to compel declaration of assets."

Mugabe allies block Zimbabwe land audit

(BBC News)

4 February 2010

A two-year land audit was due to begin in Zimbabwe in February - but an angry reaction from President Robert Mugabe's allies and more attacks on white farmers has put that in doubt.

One of the first casualties was Raymond Finnaughty.

Just before Christmas, a 15-strong group armed with sticks and traditional weapons confronted him at his farm in Mashonaland East province and ordered him to leave.

The armed men were accompanied by a central bank employee who claimed the property.

Although the High Court granted Mr Finnaughty an order to stay and told the new occupant to leave, she stayed put.

In early January, he was forced off the farm - abandoning more than 150 workers and livestock including chickens, cattle and pigs.

"We are totally gutted. We are farmers, we all know - everyone in the world knows - that the country is totally desperate for economic revival. That's what we're here for," says Mr Finnaughty.

"I'm a Christian and I live on my faith, [but] at this moment I'm not talking to [God] because I'm very bitter at this stage."

He and his family fled to Harare where they now fear for their lives.

Uncovering rot

White farmers say at least five other farms have been attacked since Finance Minister Tendai Biti, from the former opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), allocated \$30m (£18.8m) for the land audit in his December budget.

The audit is intended to clarify who owns what and ensure no-one owns more than one farm, 10 years after Mr Mugabe's government embarked on its programme to hand over mainly white-owned land to black people.

Mr Mugabe says he is carrying out his land reform programme to right the wrongs of the colonial era, when black farmers were forced off their land and forced into less fertile areas, while the best land was reserved for white farmers.

But the scheme has been widely blamed for destroying Zimbabwe's agriculture-based economy and turning the country into a net importer of food.

On Wednesday, Agriculture Minister Joseph Made said the country needed to urgently import 500,000 tonnes of maize to avert food shortages.

As part of the 2008 deal to form a unity government, both Mr Mugabe's Zanu-PF party and their new partners in office, the MDC, agreed to a land audit.

But many of Mr Mugabe's allies have benefited from land redistribution, and it seems some fear the audit will uncover a lot of rot.

In northern Mashonaland Central province - a hilly region with prime agricultural land - ownership of farms reads like a who's who in government.

And many top officials own more than one farm - in violation of the "one man, one farm" policy Mr Mugabe set down several years ago.

"They are registered under different names, relatives - even children," says one resettled farmer.

Milk militias

It is common knowledge that Mr Mugabe owns Highfield Farm, in Norton, about 40km (25 miles) outside Harare.

He and his wife have also appeared on state TV declaring that they jointly owned Gushungo Dairy Farm in Mashonaland Central.

Swiss-based food giant Nestle almost pulled out of Zimbabwe last year after they came under political pressure from militias to buy milk from the Gushungo Farm.

But such issues are hardly mentioned within Zanu-PF circles.

The audit is charged with fishing out those who own more than one farm - but it does not specify any punishment.

The only official pronouncements on the subject have come from Mr Mugabe himself, who promised in the past that anyone owning more than one farm would have the surplus ones repossessed.

One cabinet minister, who did not want to be named, defended the president's conduct, saying: "If it's true that Mugabe owned more than one farm, we mustn't forget he is the father of the nation.

"He spent over a decade in jail fighting for your freedom. Don't compare yourself, or even me, with him."

Who's hiding what?

Leaders of the so-called war veterans - pro-Mugabe militias - have already said they will not co-operate with the audit.

And Mr Made has been lukewarm on the audit - saying it was premature to judge the land-reform programme.

Like most Mugabe allies, he blames a decade of plummeting agricultural output on harsh conditions and sanctions imposed by the West.

"We might be wrong to say that there are large tracts of land lying idle, [the farmers] need to be capacitated and sanctions removed," he said.

But other Zimbabweans believe the audit's timing is perfect.

Deon Theron of the Commercial Farmers Union, which represents white farmers, says if the audit is held up many things "will be swept under the carpet".

"Anyone who is resisting the audit has something to hide - it's as simple as that," he said.

"If you have nothing to hide, let's do the audit to establish what has happened."

There have been land audits before in Zimbabwe.

Mr Mugabe's Land Review Commission looked into the issue in 2003, and the Charles Utete Commission also undertook an audit.

Neither has published its results - with insiders saying they would "open a can of worms".

Nelson Mandela dinner celebrates 20 years of freedom

(BBC News)

5 February 2010

Nelson Mandela has celebrated the 20th anniversary of his release from prison with a special dinner, inviting ex-wife Winnie and one of his former jailers.

Mr Mandela, who became South Africa's first black president, was freed on 11 February 1990 after 27 years in jail, served mostly on Robben Island.

Mr Mandela has said he developed a friendship with warder Christo Brand that cemented his views of humanity.

The Nobel Prize winner, 91, was also joined by children and grandchildren.

'Inspiration'

Mr Mandela's daughter, Zindzi, and a number of anti-apartheid activists who were there when he walked free, also attended the small gathering on Thursday night.

Zindzi Mandela filmed the dinner for a documentary called *Conversations About That Day*, which will be shown on the anniversary next week.

Key anti-apartheid politician Cyril Ramaphosa toasted Mr Mandela as "tata" or father.

He said: "You are still an inspiration. We are forever indebted to you, for the leadership and inspiration you provided. We are happy you are a free man, because as you became free, you made us free."

Mr Mandela said of his friendship with Mr Brand that it "reinforced my belief in the essential humanity of even those who had kept me behind bars".

He said he still did some exercise, but added: "I do feel like I am getting old. Time is flying. I'm not really worried."

South Africa's parliament will open next Thursday on the exact date of the anniversary.

Also coinciding with the anniversary is the release in the UK of the film *Invictus*, which draws on Mr Mandela's efforts to unite South Africa in the run-up to the 1995 Rugby World Cup.

Botswana recalls Zimbabwe envoys

(BBC News)

5 February 2010

Botswana says it is recalling two senior diplomats based in Harare in protest against the detention of three wildlife officers in Zimbabwe.

The government of Botswana said it would withdraw its intelligence and defence attaches.

It also asked Zimbabwean intelligence officers to leave Botswana.

The diplomatic row began three weeks ago with the arrest of three Botswana gamekeepers who had strayed across the border while tracking a lion.

Botswana has been one of the few neighbours of Zimbabwe to criticise the human rights record of President Robert Mugabe.

Is Zuma's sex life a private matter?

(BBC News)

3 February 2010

South Africans have largely accepted President Jacob Zuma's polygamy - but revelations that he fathered a child out of wedlock have highlighted a gaping cultural divide.

In battling South Africa's HIV/Aids epidemic, the government advocates regular condom use and faithfulness to one partner.

Mr Zuma has three wives. And now a four-month-old daughter with another woman - 39-year-old Sonono Khoza whose father is a senior football official.

Opposition parties and newspapers, Aids activists and women's rights groups are up in arms - they accuse Mr Zuma of setting a bad example.

But the government has denied suggestions that his actions contradict his government's policies on Aids.

And the spotlight on Mr Zuma's sex life has once again opened the debate about his polygamy.

Some have questioned whether it should still be allowed in a country where more than five million people live with HIV.

'Mischievous'

Political commentator Adam Habib is among those who called for Mr Zuma to clarify his position.

"If Mr Zuma is convinced that there is no contradiction between his extramarital relationship and government's message on safe sex then he should explain this," Mr Habib says.

But Mr Zuma has responded by saying he has acted responsibly by acknowledging the paternity of the child and paying damages known as inhlawulo to the family of the baby's mother.

"It is mischievous to argue that I have changed or undermined government's stance on the HIV and Aids campaign," he said in a statement.

Mr Habib says while a "significant group of citizens" do not have a problem with Mr Zuma's polygamy because he has been "transparent" about it, the gap between those "for it" and those "against it" seems to be widening.

Zulus and Xhosas are among the groups where polygamy is practised, but it has largely become a rural phenomenon.

Traditionalists in rural areas embrace polygamy as an important part of culture.

Moses Twala, of the the Kara Heritage Institute, does not believe there should even be a debate about Mr Zuma's wives, or alleged mistress.

"It is un-African to discuss private matters publicly. It makes me question what purpose this serves except to degrade someone," he says.

"It is a normal for a man in our culture to be married but have children outside of his marriage, that has often been how other marriages have formed."

'Cultural intolerance'

But many South Africans believe polygamy perpetuates inequality between men and women.

The debate is raging even among friends and colleagues on Johannesburg's streets. Security guard Golden Mushwana says the practice is outdated - asking why a man would ever need three wives.

"Just because polygamy is part of some cultures doesn't mean it is good for society," he says.

But his colleague Tebogo Motshabi disagrees.

"We don't practise polygamy in [my] culture but if we were allowed to I would marry more than one wife, I don't think there is anything wrong with it if that's what you want," he says.

Mr Zuma's supporters have always rebuffed criticism of his polygamy - and they have been less receptive to critics linking his sexual habits to Aids policies.

To them, such criticism shows "cultural intolerance" or an attitude of "cultural superiority" against black people.

During white minority rule, black cultural practices had no place in society - the government of the time viewed them as inferior.

But black South Africans have for years defined themselves by their cultural values, beliefs and customs and it is important to many black people to retain that.

Cultural and ethnic leaders have been careful not to criticise Mr Zuma's lifestyle in public, lest they be accused of cultural intolerance.

South Africa's constitution recognises the practice under customary law.

And Mr Zuma has always been open about his embracing of Zulu cultural beliefs.

He recently defended having "many wives" at the World Economic Summit in Davos, calling for people to be more accepting of his culture.

"That's my culture. It does not take anything from me, from my political beliefs, including the belief in the equality of women," AFP news agency quoted the president as saying.

Some argue that this kind of openness is vital to the appeal he holds for many rural South Africans and traditionalists.

South Africa: State is Urged to Go On With Nuclear Project

(BUSINESSDAY)

1 February 2010

Johannesburg — THE government should have the courage to precede with the development of the pebble bed modular reactor technology, nuclear expert Kelvin Kemm said yesterday.

He warned the country could ill-afford to lose intellectual skills invested in developing pebble bed modular reactor technology, and the project would be vital in cutting SA's carbon emissions as international pressure mounted.

Kemm's comments follow speculation that the government could pull the plug on the experimental project after the Department of Public Enterprises said yesterday it was reviewing the project due to a lack of funds. Spokeswoman Ayanda Shezi said the department would communicate the decision of the review "in due course".

Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR), the company set up to develop and supply the reactors, has spent about R8bn since 1999. PBMR said recently said that it had less than R1bn left, enough until the end of next month.

Advocates of the project have punted it as a solution to SA cutting its carbon footprint, promising less gas emission than from existing and future coal-fired power stations. PBMR was established to develop and market small-scale, high-temperature reactors locally and internationally.

Commenting on the possibility of the government abandoning the technology, Kemm said yesterday such a move would be a mistake given the pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. "Nuclear is the only way to go for SA and the rest of Africa. There is a huge export potential for (the pebble bed modular reactor). It is an investment with a huge return. We have invested a lot in human capital in the project. We will lose all of that. I do not believe the project should be stopped.

"Even the biggest of projects must start somewhere. SA should have the courage to proceed with this project. There is too much caution. With fear, we would not have built Sasol , Richards Bay and Coega. We need courage," he said.

Earthlife Africa is among the critics of the project. Yesterday, Tristen Taylor, Earthlife Africa Johannesburg project co-ordinator, said: "PBMR is a waste of money and should be cancelled".

It remains unclear how canning the project would affect state plans to create a nuclear industry. The government is expected to spell out its nuclear plans soon. "The matter is before a committee of ministers and decisions, and communication thereof will be made in due course," the Department of Minerals and Energy said last week.

Energy Minister Dipuo Peters said SA could have a new nuclear power station by 2020. Public Enterprises Minister Barbara Hogan said last year the initiative could be instrumental in creating a strong nuclear industry. In 2008, Eskom abandoned plans to build a nuclear power station, citing financial constraints.

The government, power utility Eskom, the Industrial Development Corporation and US nuclear company Westinghouse are shareholders in PBMR.

Africa: UN to Hold MDG Summit

(Bua News)

1 February 2010

Ethiopia — United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has announced that the UN will hold a summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September.

In his opening remarks at the African Union (AU) Summit, Ban said the summit will focus on harnessing support for the success of the MDGs, identifying gaps that need urgent attention, emphasising priority areas for action and building a coalition capable of taking action.

The summit is to take place along with the opening of the General Assembly, where leaders of the 192 UN Member States meet each year at its Headquarters in New York.

"We have made great strides toward the Millennium Development Goals, but there is not much time to the 2015 deadline, and still much distance to travel," said Ban said.

He pledged to mobilise support to tackle the critical challenges threatening peace and prosperity across Africa, including extreme poverty, economic and social well-being, and the ravages of climate change.

The global recession, energy crisis, food insecurity and climate change have all made development more difficult and more urgent, he told more than 50 heads of State and Government attending the three-day AU meeting.

"Now is the critical time to mobilize action," he stressed, adding, however, that there has been a sharp decrease in malaria and measles deaths across the continent, vital gains in primary school enrollment and marked improvements in child health.

He noted that too many "women still die in childbirth, too many children still never live to see their fifth birthday, and too many women are unable to realize their full potential," underscoring the need for donors to deliver on their promises.

Productive employment and decent work for all Africans, especially for women and young people, should be the development priority for the continent, he said.

"The most important employment sector remains agriculture, with more than half of the workforce. And of course, we must invest in women and girls. When we empower women, we empower Africa."

Ban also announced the creation of the MDG Advocacy Group, consisting of eminent personalities from all walks of life who will "sound the global call for action" at the September Summit and put their influence to work for the cause.

South Africa: Christian Parties Call On Zuma to Quit Over 'Love-Child'

Ecumenical News International (Geneva)

1 February 2010

Cape Town — Two Christian political parties have urged South African President Jacob Zuma to resign for fathering a child out-of-wedlock, saying he is undermining government efforts to fight HIV and AIDSs.

"The African Christian Democratic Party is shocked by the report that President Zuma has fathered a love-child with the daughter of his close friend, Irvin Khoza. The birth of this child is a clear indication that Zuma is not using condoms and is undermining the safe sex message of his own government," said the Rev. Kenneth Meshoe, the party president, on 1 February.

Meshoe, a legislator in the country's parliament, said Zuma's behaviour sets a bad moral example, particularly for young men, and is unacceptable in a country that needs moral leaders.

South African newspapers reported the news that Zuma had fathered a child with a 39-year-old daughter of Khoza, the head of the country's top professional football league.

"We believe President Zuma needs counselling and sex addiction therapy, as was recommended for Tiger Woods, who has a similar problem of sleeping around," said Meshoe.

In an editorial headlined, "Shame of the nation", the mass-circulation Sowetan newspaper that has a mainly urban black readership said on 1 February, "In a different democracy, the latest scandal to hit President Jacob Zuma would have been enough for him to stand down as head of State."

The Rev. Theunis Botha, head of the Christian Democratic Party, said the country needs a leader acting as a moral compass. Botha urged: "Mr President, please resign for the good of the country." He added that, as South Africa gears up to host the 2010 World Cup football tournament, mockery of the presidency is the last thing it needs.

Zuma is a polygamist, who defended his lifestyle during the World Economic Summit in Davos, Switzerland, on 28 January, saying his multiple marriages are part of his Zulu culture and do not detract from his belief in the equality of women.

The 67 year-old Zuma wedded his fifth wife in a traditional ceremony on 4 January and also announced an impending union with another fiancée, raising criticism from those who support monogamy.

The president is married to Sizakele Khumalo, whom he married in 1973, and to Nompumelelo MaNtuli-Zuma, after a 2007 wedding. He had been married to home

affairs minister, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, whom he divorced in 1998, and to the Kate Mantsho Zuma, who committed suicide in 2000. Zuma is said to have about 20 children.

Southern Africa: SADC Optimistic about Solution to Madagascar Crisis

Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique (Maputo)

2 February 2010

Addis Ababa — The Executive Secretary of SADC (Southern African Development Community), Tomas Salomao, believes that the political factions in Madagascar will return to the negotiating table very soon to achieve a lasting solution to the crisis that erupted when the mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, seized power last March.

Speaking on Monday to Mozambican reporters covering the summit of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Salomao said that the mediating team, headed by former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, is doing all in its power to bring the factions back into dialogue in order to implement the agreements which they reached in two rounds of talks in Maputo last year.

Those talks involved Rajoelina, the elected president whom he overthrew, Marc Ravalomanana, and two previous heads of state, Didier Ratsiraka, and Albert Zafy. The four leaders agreed to set up a transitional government, but Rajoelina boycotted the third Maputo meeting, in December, which divided government portfolios between the four factions.

Rajoelina unilaterally appointed a new prime minister, and scrapped the power sharing deal. This, of course, ensured that Madagascar remains suspended from both SADC and the African Union.

"What SADC should do is work to find a lasting solution", said Salomao. "This is not easy, and we are all aware of this. We never imagined it would be easy. But with the support of all countries, I think we can be successful".

Asked whether there was an "outside hand" meddling in Madagascar, Salomao replied that, even if there is such interference, "the most important thing is that we do our job. Let's concentrate our attentions on helping the Madagascans solve their problems, showing them that taking power through the streets is not the way forward. There are democratic means of attaining power".

Salomao said that if Rajoelina thinks he is the best candidate with the best programme, then he should prove it by standing in free elections.

Madagascans are quite capable of choosing their leader, and if they choose Rajoelina "then he will have the support of all of us", said Salomao. "What is not acceptable, in the SADC region and on the continent, is to come to power by means of a coup d'etat".

He warned that, if Rajoelina and his group do not respect the agreements signed last year, SADC and the AU would mobilise the international community to "pass onto the next stage, which will be more difficult for him and which I think will put the Madagascan people in a difficult situation". He did not specify what measures might characterize "the next stage".

But he believed that good sense would prevail and that that Madagascan leaders would return to the negotiating table, and implement the decisions which they had already taken.

Zimbabwe: Constitution-Making Hits New Snag

(The Herald)

4 February 2010

Harare — THE constitution-making process hit yet another snag yesterday when Parliament's Select Committee rejected a new project document crafted by the management committee and the UNDP, and referred the deadlock to their party principals.

The Select Committee said the new proposal would "render it useless" and donors would have direct influence on the outcome of the new constitution.

Sources who attended yesterday's Select Committee meeting said the new document provided for a project board with three representatives of foreign countries financing the process.

"Other members of the committee suggested that the matter be referred to the GPA principals for guidance," said the source.

The project document provides terms and conditions of funding the programme. Select Committee co-chairperson Cde Munyaradzi Paul Mangwana yesterday briefed his colleagues on the management committee-UNDP document.

Cde Mangwana said: "I was reporting on progress made by the Zimbabwe Government and UNDP on the new project document.

"I don't want to pre-empt the ongoing discussions by talking to the media, because there is no agreement yet. We have made some progress, but I don't want to mess things up."

However, Select Committee sources said the document was thrown out.

"The Select Committee rejected the new document because it renders us useless. According to the GPA, we are the ones who are supposed to spearhead the writing of the new constitution, but we are being sidelined.

"The new proposal is advocating for a project board that will have three foreigners sitting on it.

"This is where the bone of contention is because we are saying this is a Zimbabwean project. Why should foreigners hijack it?"

Another source said: "There was a stalemate over the new project document, which they felt was slowly but surely taking away their GPA mandate of spearheading the constitution-making process.

"The Select Committee is the legally mandated institution to deal with the constitution-making process.

"The financiers should not be anywhere near the crafting of the new constitution because our interests are different.

"Some of these financiers want to manipulate the programme and are coming through the back door.

"We as the Select committee felt our role is being bastardised by continuing to make us insignificant. If it is necessary to have that board, it should be a sub-committee of the finance committee reporting to the Select Committee, not vice versa."

Earlier, the management committee had rejected a project document signed by Constitutional Affairs Minister Eric Matinenga and UNDP.

They argued that Minister Matinenga had clandestinely appended his signature to a "flawed document," as foreigners would have influenced the constitutional reform outcome.

The management committee subsequently met UNDP officials and came up with the document that was rejected yesterday.

On Tuesday, management committee co-chairpersons Cde Patrick Chinamasa (Zanu-PF) and Professor Welshman Ncube (MDC) described their meeting with the UNDP as "successful".

"The meeting was meant to review the project document and we agreed on the areas to be reviewed. There are improvements, which we agreed to which we felt would meet the expectation of the management committee and UNDP," Cde Chinamasa said.

Prof Ncube added: "We also agreed on the way forward on how UNDP will channel funds for the programme.

"They reiterated their commitment to bankroll the programme saying they never intended to pull out."

The UNDP pledged about US\$18 million for the programme last December, while the 2010 National Budget allocated US\$43 million; most of it from donors.

Financial constraints and bickering over rapporteurs have delayed the constitution-making process, which is already six months behind schedule.

Economic Developments

Zimbabwe Braces for a Disappointing 2010 Maize Crop After Dry Spell

(Voice of America)

04 February 2010

Zimbabwe must start importing grain before the end of the agricultural season because a prolonged drought has reduced projected food harvests.

Agriculture Minister Joseph Made says Zimbabwe must import 500,000 tons of corn or maize, as it is known locally, to ensure food security, pointing to the protracted dry spell that has left crops withered in much of the country.

Commercial Farmer's Union President Deon Theron told VOA his group had advised the government that crops should be planted early in the 2009-2010 season because the el Nino effect would lead to abnormal rains.

"If you look at the current crop, a lot of it was planted late and we are having dry periods in between, which is going to have a huge effect on the crop," he said.

Zimbabwe needs 1.8 million tons of the staple cereal annually. Theron says he would be very surprised if the country produces 500,000 tons.

Zimbabwe used to be an exporter of food, but has failed to produce enough to feed itself since 2000, when the country embarked on land reform which has driven out most of the former 4,000 white commercial farmers.

Meanwhile, the state-controlled daily newspaper The Herald reports the government has adopted measures to ensure food security, including the 500,000 imported tons Minister Made said is needed.

The Herald also reported the government is carrying out a crop assessment with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. The result of that exercise is expected later this month.

The paper also says the government will speed up distribution of fertilizer to farmers in areas that have reported better rainfall, but Theron says all this should have been done during preparations for the season.

"Agriculture is about forward planning, every week that you are behind schedule, your production drops," said Theron.

While drought has played a role in Zimbabwe's food security problems, critics of President Robert Mugabe blame the land reform exercise, which saw white farmers losing their farms ostensibly for the resettlement of landless blacks.

Critics say the government failed to support legitimate new farmers, while the bulk of the land seized from white commercial farmers ended in the hands of top officials of Mr. Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, who are producing little.

Namibia: Govt Entry Into Mining 'No Threat'

(The Namibian)

1 February 2010

GOVERNMENT'S entrance into the mining sector through the 100-per cent state-owned Epangelo Mining is "no major threat", Extract Resources Chairman Steve Galloway said at Swakopmund this weekend.

Galloway was easing concerns at an international analyst and media tour of the Rössing South exploration site, which the Australian (ASX)-, Canadian- and Namibian Stock Exchange-listed company foresees becoming the second biggest uranium mine in the world.

He has been assured by Mines and Energy Minister Erkki Nghimtina that Epangelo is not a "nationalisation initiative", Galloway said. Their involvement will merely entail "passive participation".

When the Minister officially launched Epangelo on December 3 last year, he marked it as the end of Government's role a "spectator of the (mining and exploration) game", especially in the strategic sectors of uranium, diamonds and copper.

Epangelo, which received N\$1,5 million as start-up capital from state coffers, is a commercial entity which will compete on a level playing field with other private companies in the exploration and mining business, Government has promised.

It is a business meant to make money for the fiscus and the people of Namibia, Nghimtina said.

Galloway said although it is not clear yet what exactly Government wants, local partnerships between the state and private mining companies are noting new and that Government is a "good partner".

The Namibian government owns 50 per cent of Namdeb, and has a three-per cent stake in Rio Tinto's Rössing Uranium.

Last year, Government, through Epangelo, also teamed up Swapo-owned Kalahari Holdings, the United Africa Group (UAG) and French state-owned Areva to form an uranium exploration company.

Areva is the majority shareholder with 51 per cent of the shares, followed by Epangelo with 25 per cent, Kalahari Holdings with 14 per cent and UAG with ten per cent.

Galloway said Extract Resources, owned 40,1 per cent by London-based Kalahari Minerals, is keen to get Government on board.

"As long as Government recognises its conflict of interest as a regulator and participator in the industry," he added.

The Top 200 ASX company currently also has Rio Tinto (14,7 per cent), Polo Resources (10,3 per cent), SGJ Investments (3,1 per cent) and Acorn Capital (2,6 per cent) as shareholders.

Extract Resources wholly-owns Swakop Uranium, the company set to develop Rossing South to produce 15 million pounds of uranium oxide per year.

South Africa: Ecobank Opens Representative in Country

(Vanguard)

1 February 2010

ECOBANK has opened a representative office in Johannesburg, making South Africa the 30th African country in which the pan-African bank has a presence.

The South African office will enable Ecobank to serve a growing number of its customers currently doing business in that country, as well as South African corporations seeking to expand or consolidate business ties with the rest of Africa.

"With the establishment of our Johannesburg representative office, we bring to the region our strengths in facilitating regional integration in the private sector," says Arnold Ekpe, Chief Executive of the Ecobank Group.

Ecobank representative in South Africa, Albert Essien, says "we believe that having successfully managed banking operations across different African cultures, nationalities

and languages, we have a competitive advantage in bringing these skills and competences to bear on banking businesses in the eastern and southern African sub-regions.

Our South Africa Representative Office will be an anchor point in this drive."

In December 2008, Ecobank entered into a strategic business cooperation alliance with the Nedbank Group. That alliance is already providing customers access to a combined pan-African banking network covering more than 30 countries (including South Africa) with over 1 000 branches and banking outlets across the continent.

ETI is listed on the stock exchanges in Lagos, Accra and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) - the BRVM. The Group is owned by more than 180,000 local and international institutional and individual shareholders. It has over 11,000 employees from 29 different countries in over 700 branches. Ecobank is a full-service bank providing wholesale, retail, investment and transaction banking services and products to governments, financial institutions, multinationals, international organizations, medium, small and micro businesses and individuals.

South Africa: Even More Local Trade Mooted At Canton Fair

(BUSINESSDAY)

1 February 2010

Johannesburg — SOUTH African businesses are again expected to increase their presence at, and generate more business from, China's biggest trade fair, the China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou in April and May.

SA has become China's biggest trading partner in Africa and China is now SA's biggest trading partner. The value of two-way trade between the two countries was worth 11,7bn in the first 11 months of last year.

Wang Run Sheng, the director of the China Foreign Trade Centre which organises the twice-a-year China Import and Export Fair, told a press briefing on Thursday that 1367 South African businesspeople attended the last fair, held in November.

That represented a 2,94% increase over attendance at the previous fair, in April last year, which in turn had seen a 12% increase in the number of South African delegates over the preceding fair.

The increase in attendance from SA was in spite of the effects of the global economic slowdown, which had reduced representation at the fair from other parts of the world last year, Sheng said. SA was now among the top 10 countries represented at the fair.

According to the trade centre's figures, South African businesses generated 584m of sales at the November China Import and Export Fair, compared with 437m at the April fair.

In total, the China Import and Export Fair, which has been running since 1956 and was previously called the Canton Fair, now generated about 30,5bn of business, Sheng said.

The November fair attracted 188170 buyers from 212 countries and regions.

This year, 110 000 applications had been received from Chinese exhibitors for the 55000 booths available to them, he said, which meant the organisers could satisfy only half the demand.

The cost of a standard booth for a South African delegate was 30000 yuan, or about R33400 at prevailing exchange rates.

Sheng said China was looking beyond buying only minerals and resources from SA and was also interested in machinery and capital goods.

Keith Brebner, CEO of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said although SA's exports to China were traditionally resources, and it had bought textiles and clothing from China, in recent trade fairs there had been increasing interest in high-technology products from both countries.

SA also offered China a bridge to other Southern African Development Community countries, and the rest of Africa.

Brebner said the chamber was promoting the Soccer World Cup to 10000 chambers of commerce around the world so that visitors to the soccer event could also use the opportunity for business networking.

South Africa: Manufacturing Survey Expected to Show Continued Expansion

(BUSINESSDAY)

1 February 2010

Johannesburg — A KEY manufacturing survey today is expected to show that the economy's second-biggest sector continued to expand last month.

SA's purchasing managers' index (PMI), a reliable health gauge for the sector, is likely to have nudged further above the neutral 50 level last month, consensus forecasts from Bloomberg show.

The index is seen to have risen to 53,4 from 52,5 in December, supported by the rebuilding of local inventories and new sales orders, along with rising global demand.

"Rand strength is likely to have weighed negatively on the PMI but improving economic conditions in SA's major trading partners should provide some support," said Investec economist Kogotso Radira.

A recovery in factory output in the third quarter of last year helped to lift SA out of its first recession since 1992, after playing a key role in the economic downturn.

The sector, which makes up about 15% of SA's economy, is seen by many as vulnerable to gains in the rand last year, which erodes the competitiveness of local exports.

But the rand has weakened by about 3% against the dollar so far this year, and 2% against a trade-weighted basket of currencies.

Citigroup economist Jean-Francois Mercier thinks the PMI, sponsored by Kagiso Securities, fell slightly last month after rising for five months in a row. He attributes this to the narrower gap between the new orders and headline indices in December, and doubts about the sustainability of the strong increase during that month.

South Africa: S Africans Urged to Borrow Money Responsibly

(Bua News)

1 February 2010

Pretoria — The National Credit Regulator (NCR) has urged consumers to borrow money responsibly and wisely.

The NCR said although interest rates have come down by 500 basis points since December 2008, the economy has still not recovered. The regulator said it continued to see a monthly average of 9 000 consumers applying for debt counseling.

"Consumers still need to be highly responsible and conservative when borrowing money," said Peter Setou, who is a senior manager of Education and Strategy at the regulator.

He said consumers should rather use the interest rate cuts as an opportunity to pay off debt quicker.

Before signing any agreement, Setou said consumers should have a detailed plan on how debt will be repaid.

"Otherwise, consumers could find themselves significantly worse off. Particular attention should be paid to 'no-deposit required' offers as these can prove to be highly expensive in the long term.

"A key technique to wise borrowing is to shop around and compare interest rates and other costs. Consumers should be fully aware of what total monthly payments will be as well as what additional charges such as insurance will be," he said.

The NCR has also urged consumers when borrowing money to make loans with the shortest terms possible.

Consumers should also make sure that they understand the terms and conditions of the credit agreement.

South Africa: Unions Upset Over Import of Chinese Labour

(West Cape News)

1 February 2010

South African trade unions are up in arms over visas granted to over 50 construction workers from mainland China who are building new premises for the Chinese consulate in Cape Town.

But technically, they are not working in South Africa as the land on which the consulate is being built is considered to be Chinese territory, says the Department of Home Affairs.

"That's probably how they got permission (to import foreign labour). Technically, they are not working in South Africa," said Rebecca Bowman of the Department of Home Affairs."

And the law allows the Ministry of Home Affairs the power to grant a foreigner the right to reside in the country if special circumstances exist, according to immigration experts. Normally, foreigners applying for a work permit would need to prove that there are no South Africans with the necessary skills to do the job.

The Chinese workers have all been issued with special "staff member of consulate" visas, which are similar to diplomatic visas, according to the Chinese vice consul, Yan Li.

"The construction has been approved by the South African government. This includes the plans and the use of (foreign) workers," she said, adding it was "normal" for consulates and embassies to import Chinese labour for construction projects in foreign countries.

Lesiba Seshoka, spokesperson of the National Union of Mine workers (NUM) - under which the construction industry falls - said the union had lodged a written complaint with the Department of Labour.

"It is about cheap labour and exploitation", he said, adding that China had a reputation for exploiting workers' rights.

Page Boikanyo, Senior Executive Manager of Communication from the Department of Labour, confirmed the department would investigate the matter.

The workers, whose ranks include ordinary labourers, live in prefabricated accommodation on the site, where construction began in 2007 and will continue until April 2011.

Residents said it was not unusual to see Chinese workers walking down the roads in the area.

"They sleep in these prefabs, it's shocking," said a neighbour who lives close to the consulate. "Every single person on that site is from China, They are living and squatting there," the woman, who asked not to be named, said Patrick Craven, Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) national spokesperson, also slammed the importing of foreign labour.

"We argue strongly against it. We hope that the South African government finds a way of discouraging unnecessary employment of foreign labour," he said.

The use of cheap Chinese labour on projects funded by China in foreign countries is a growing problem, especially in Africa and Asia, where poverty is rife and unemployment high.

The Chinese government last year confirmed that there were almost 750 000 Chinese workers in foreign countries, and the figures this year are set to reach similar levels, according to the New York Times.

"From Angola to Uzbekistan, Iran to Indonesia, some 740 000 Chinese workers were abroad at the end of 2008," according to the NYT, with the Chinese Commerce Ministry reporting that 58 percent of these workers were "sent out last year alone".

The use of Chinese labour is causing increasing anger and resentment in some developing nations, sometimes resulting in violent protests. Vietnam and India have gone as far as to impose labour laws which restrict the number of Chinese workers entering their country.

This is not the only controversy affecting the new consulate. Residents in the area have complained about noise caused by the construction, which sometimes continued seven days a week. Several complained about the disruption and noise, but spoke on condition of anonymity.

When they complained to the Cape Town city council they were told "it is out of our hands" and that the issue needed to be addressed to national government, one resident said.

"As local rate payers, we pay a fortune and we have to conform to certain bylaws. But these guys come along and are granted this foreign soil status by the national government, and they can seemingly do as they please."

Residents said they were initially informed of the construction via a flyer placed in their post boxes by the consulate.

"This is an abnormal development. Why was there no compromising with the neighbours for the length of time and the duration?" asked another resident.

But people who complained admitted that the Chinese consulate has been cooperative "within reason" and have done what they could to accommodate neighbours' complaints about noise.

"They have said they will try and keep the noise down and they won't start before 7am."

Social Developments

Zimbabwe's Civil Service Workers Go On Strike

(Voice of America)

05 February 2010

Major unions representing teachers, health workers, state college and university lecturers as well as office workers, held a rally of more than 2,000 in central Harare, saying they would not return to work until the government addressed their demands.

Civil servants have been paid between \$150-240 a month since the unity government came to power a year ago. The ministers in the unity government are not paid much more. The government has offered a 10 percent wage hike, but the workers rejected it.

The strike comes amid efforts to revive key sectors that nearly collapsed at the height of Zimbabwe's crisis in 2008 when public schools and hospitals ground to a halt.

Dr. Amos Chizhande, president of the Zimbabwe Hospital Doctors Association, said the government has done nothing to improve working conditions for his sector.

"No matter how hard we try as an association to push for the improvement of the conditions of the health workers we are being ignored," said Chizhande.

Raymond Majongwe, secretary general of the Progressive Teachers Union of Zimbabwe, has been one of the most prominent critics of ZANU-PF rule, having been detained by the party many times in the past decade.

Majongwe believes Zimbabwe does have the resources to boost teachers' pay and references the lucrative diamonds mines in eastern Zimbabwe

"I think the position that has been taken represents the real feeling of the workers. We are going on strike demanding that money that we know is in Zimbabwe," said Majongwe. "We cannot be told there is no money when we have 300, 000 carats of diamonds sitting in some office. As long as those diamonds be sold and the money paid to civil servants then we will go back to work tomorrow," he said.

Finance Minister Tendai Biti, who was not available for comment, has said civil service pay takes up at least 60 percent of the country's revenues, and limited resources make it difficult for the state to increase wages significantly.

In the first eight months of the unity government, only \$2 million was contributed for educating three million students in Zimbabwe.

Ousted from Church, Harare Anglicans Worship Outside

(Voice of America)

01 February 2010

Thousands of people heeded a call by the Anglican Church to attend an outdoor service in Harare to protest their not being allowed to worship in their churches by a former bishop and his followers. Ish Mafundikwa attended the service and filed this report.

They came from all over the city and beyond to Africa Unity Square, the park across the street from the Anglican Cathedral in downtown Harare. The head of the worldwide Anglican Church sent a message of support.

"We pray with you that Anglican congregations will be able to worship in their churches unhindered and without disruptions. May God bless you all, Archbishop Rowan Williams," he said.

Outdoor services are nothing new for most of the 3,000-member congregation since the schism in the Harare diocese of the church, a few years ago. The split happened when Nolbert Kunonga, then bishop of Harare, tried to break away from the Anglican Church alleging, among other complaints, the church supports homosexuality.

The majority of the congregation did not support Kunonga, but this did not stop him. Current Anglican Bishop Chad Gandiya explains.

"He went on to start his own church, called the Anglican Church of the Province of Zimbabwe, and he went ahead to consecrate his own bishops, he had himself consecrated archbishop, therefore he has nothing to do with us and we have nothing to do with him," explained Gandiya.

Kunonga's acts of defiance led to the withdrawal of his pastor's license by the church in 2008. He responded by seizing church property, a move that was contested by the church in the courts.

Although Bishop Gandiya says the courts have ruled in the church's favor, Kunonga, who is said to be close to President Robert Mugabe, has defied the rulings. Gandiya says court orders that the factions share worship time in the churches - until a final ruling is made - have been defied with the help of the police.

"They tell you that they do not obey court orders, but they follow orders from above," said Bishop Gandiya.

The acrimony between the two sides runs so deep that incidents of violence have been reported and some of those opposed to former Bishop Kunonga have been arrested. Last

month, someone spread chicken waste on the lawn outside one of the churches where parishioners hold their services.

Bishop Gandiya says he invited President Robert Mugabe to Sunday's service, but says the invitation was not acknowledged.

Africa: SA Scientists Win Top AU Award

BuaNews (Tshwane)

1 February 2010

Pretoria — President Jacob Zuma has congratulated two South African scientists for winning the prestigious African Union (AU) Scientific Awards.

Patrick Eriksson and Diane Hildebrandt won first prize in the science, technology and innovation category. They were chosen from 48 contestants from across the continent for the outstanding work in their fields.

Zuma handed the scientists their awards during a ceremony on Sunday in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where the AU Summit is currently taking place.

The awards resonated the theme of the summit which focuses on improving Africa's Information and Communication Technologies infrastructure.

Zuma commended the two saying they had contributed in flying the South African flag internationally.

"Science, technology and innovation form indispensable tools for driving socio-economic progress ... and is sustained by adequate and competent human capital," said Zuma.

Hildebrandt is co-director at the centre for optimisation modelling and process synthesis at Wits University and Eriksson is head of the Geology department at the University of Pretoria.

The two will receive \$100 000 each for their achievements from the AU.

South Africa: Health Posts Open in KZN

(Bua News)

1 February 2010

Pretoria — Due to a shortage of health care workers in the province, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health has decided to "un-freeze" clinical posts in seven institutions and a component of head office.

This follows Provincial Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo's announcement in January that 26 institutions would begin recruiting and filling clinical posts.

The hospitals that have been granted permission to recruit and fill the critical posts include Christ the King, Dunstan Farrell, Hlengisizwe CHC, Mahatma Gandhi Memorial, Murchison, Tongaat CHC, Umzinto Clinic (under GJ Crookes) and Health Technology Services.

Dr Dhlomo said it was difficult to find solutions to the current human resource crisis, especially in a resource scarce country like South Africa and that the complex conditions under which the department was working demanded innovation and teamwork.

"While we are aware of the issues and are developing human resource strategies, the problem is that we are working in a fast changing context," Dr Dhlomo said.

He noted that other requests for unfreezing posts were still being considered by the relevant senior managers and would be submitted to him, once recommended by the head of department.

The government plans to overhaul the health care system, include ensuring that at all levels they are committed leaders and qualified human resource managers to translate strategies and frameworks for financing options and fast tracking of education and human resource reform into solutions on the ground.

South Africa: Police Plan to Respond to Letter Writers' Gripes

(BUSINESSDAY)

1 February 2010

Johannesburg — POLICE commissioner Bheki Cele has recommended the formation of a committee consisting of police communication officials to respond to writers of letters to the newspapers complaining about the service provided by the police.

This would enable the police to get in touch with the letter writers to address their complaints. The police would need to do this in order to obtain information about the nature of the complaints and specific details about the officials being blamed.

Cele's initiative would assist the public in matters that are not directly covered by the Independent Complaints Directorate, a government department that was established to investigate complaints of brutality, criminality and misconduct against members of the police.

Cele said the initiative was an attempt to deal swiftly and decisively with police members who did not subscribe to the South African Police Service's ethos of "to serve and to protect", and whose conduct brought shame to the organisation.

"The idea is not to harass or to victimise them, but to assist them in expediting the resolution of the many problems faced by the letter writers regarding poor service delivery ... in the organisation," said police spokesman Selby Bokaba.

"This move is intended to demonstrate to the complainants that the national commissioner and his top management are serious about improving service delivery and enhancing the image of the organisation."

Bokaba said newspaper s' letters pages could serve as a platform for the police to get to know what was happening and to take appropriate action.

"We will use your letters space to communicate progress being made on the complaints. Similarly, the letter writers will use the same platform to express their appreciation or gratitude resulting from this ground- breaking initiative."

Bokaba said the exercise would not result in a witch-hunt of any sort, but police management wanted to ensure that police officials behaved professionally, ethically and treated the public with respect.

Zimbabwe: City Loan to Boost Water Supplies

(The Herald)

2 February 2010

Harare — The upgrading of key infrastructure using the US\$150 million loan extended to Harare City Council by EximBank of China will result in the production of an extra 144 megalitres of water per day.

That water is enough to supply most of the Western suburbs.

The city supplies water to over four million people, including residents of the satellite towns of Chitungwiza, Norton, Ruwa and Epworth.

According to communications between the city and EximBank when the loan was applied for, the impact of the funds would be seen through the increase in water output from the "current 560ML per day to 704ML per day".

The city would, however, still not be able to meet the daily consumption demand of 1200ML. A megalitre is equal to one million litres of water.

From the loan facility, US\$47 million will be used to upgrade Morton Jaffray and Prince Edward water treatment plants.

This will include rehabilitation of clarifiers, installation of a chlorination plant, and replacement of filter valves and sand topping among other key improvements.

About US\$30 million will go towards repair of the water distribution network, which involves sealing water leaks.

Firle and Crowborough sewage treatment plants will receive US\$15 million, while US\$10 million will be dedicated towards revamping the sewage collection network.

Another US\$12 million will be used to purchase water treatment chemicals for a period of six months.

A breakdown given by council to the Chinese shows that US\$10 million will be dedicated to ICT and US\$16 million for revamping the waste management department, here the need for refuse collection trucks tops the list of priorities. US\$10 million will go towards the city's automotive workshops, where plant and equipment is gathering dust following years of neglect.