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Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes in Africa



MEDIA MONITORING

18 August 2014

Ebola crisis: In pictures

Source: New Vision (Uganda)

18 August 2014 - On Sunday, a student of International University in Uganda was retained at Entebbe International Airport after showing symptoms of the deadly Ebola disease. The student, a top health official said, was traveling from Lagos, Nigeria aboard a Kenya Airways plane. Uganda has been on alert since the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa.

The virus has claimed more than 1,000 lives in West Africa

(PHOTOS by AFP)

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A girl suspected of being infected with the Ebola virus has her temperature checked at the government hospital in Kenema, Sierra Leone, on August 16, 2014. Kenema hospital estimates that 15 of their staff have died treating Ebola patients, at least 12 of them were nurses.

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A fresh bushmeat roasts at the Ajegunle-Ikorodu market in Lagos, Nigeria. Infected animals such as chimpanzees, gorillas, fruit bats, monkeys, forest antelope and porcupines found ill or dead or in the rainforest are being considered to be the natural host of the Ebola virus.

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The outbreak of the deadly Ebola fever has rekindled concerns about the health risks of age-old African hunting and eating traditions that bring humans into close contact with wild forest animals. Here, a woman roasts a fresh bushmeat at the Ajegunle-Ikorodu market.

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Vivian Koshefobamu, a 45-year-old bushmeat seller, speaks in front of dried bushmeat, at the Ajegunle-Ikorodu market.

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The death toll from an Ebola outbreak that began at the start of the year stands at 1,145 in four afflicted west African countries: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria. Kailahun, the traditional home of around 30,000 mainly Mende tribespeople, and Kenema account for the lion's share of Sierra Leone's 810 cases and 384 deaths.

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A Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) medical worker wearing protective clothing incinerates contaminated items after handling the body of an Ebola victim at the MSF facility in Kailahun.

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An MSF medical worker feeds an Ebola child victim at an MSF facility in Kailahun. More than 1,000 lives has been lost in West Africa due to the Ebola virus, according to official reports.

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An MSF medical worker checks his protective clothing in a mirror at an MSF facility in Kailahun.

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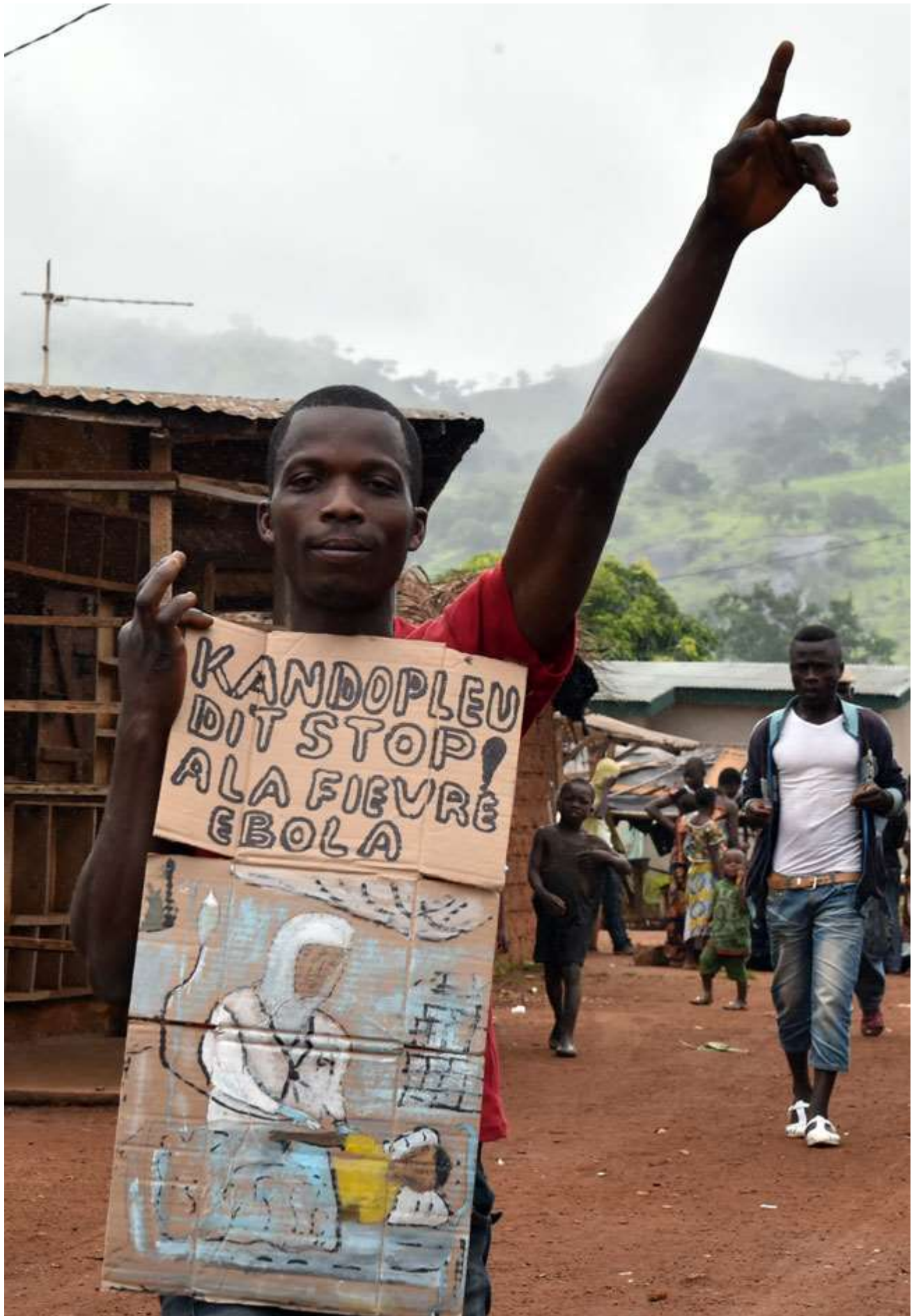
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A woman looks at the obituary notices for medical staff who have died from the Ebola virus at the Kenema government hospital, in Sierra Leone, on August 16, 2014. Kenema hospital estimates that 15 of their staff have died treating ebola patients, at least 12 of them were nurses. Kailahun, the traditional home of around 30,000 mainly Mende tribespeople, and Kenema account for the lion's share of Sierra Leone's 810 cases and 384 deaths.

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A man carries a placard reading "Kandopleu let's say stop to Ebola fever" in Kandopleu near Biankouma. Ivory Coast announced on August 11, 2014 that it has banned all flights from countries hit by Ebola as part of steps to prevent the deadly virus from reaching the west African nation.



An Ivorian policeman wears a face mask and gloves to protect himself from the Ebola virus in Kandopleu near Biankouma close to the border with Guinea and Liberia.

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Denis Diomande, the "Griot" (storyteller) of the village of Kandopleu speaks in a megaphone to inform inhabitants of the prophylactic measures against Ebola fever near the border with Guinea and Liberia.

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Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) medical staff wearing protective clothing treat the body of an Ebola victim at their facility in Kailahun last week. The Ebola epidemic in West Africa claimed a fourth victim in Nigeria on August 14 while the United States ordered the evacuation of diplomats' families from Sierra Leone and analysts warned of a heavy economic toll on the stricken region.

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Health Organisations are looking into the possible use of experimental drugs to combat the latest outbreak in West Africa. Here, an MSF medical worker wearing protective clothing washes his gloves in chlorine at an MSF Ebola treatment facility in Kailahun. Kailahun along with Kenema district is at the epicentre of the world's worst Ebola outbreak.

Kenya Suspends Flights in Response to WHO's Ebola Statement

Source: China Topix

17 August 2014 - Kenya Airways officials said they will suspend flights to and from countries badly affected by the Ebola outbreak as a measure to prevent the spread of the virus. The flight restriction is designed to limit the entry of passengers who have visited Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. However, Nigeria is not included on their list of direct flight ban as it only has few Ebola cases.

The suspension is temporary but the officials did not say how long it will last.

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According to reports, this measure undertaken by Kenya Airways is a result of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s statement that Ebola toll is "vastly underestimated."

In the same statement posted on its website last Thursday, the WHO classified Kenya as one of the nations with high risk of Ebola infection, albeit with zero cases at present. The health agency added that this classification is due to Kenya Airways' direct flights to Monrovia and Freetown, capital cities of Liberia and Sierra Leone respectively.

On Friday, Kenyan Transport Minister Michael Kamau said he "regretted" the WHO statement and that they will not ban flights to the said destinations. But now, it has joined the nations enforcing tight measures in terms of transport ban and border control.

For example, Korean Air Lines suspended flights to Kenya, following WHO's statement. Other nations in West Africa also enforced similar transport control measures.

Kenya Airways' ban on direct flights, however, has an exemption. They will allow entry of Kenyan citizens and health professionals coming home from the affected countries but they will have to endure tight screening.

The deadly Ebola virus has already infected more than 2,000 people in West Africa since the outbreak's onset in March. It can easily be transferred through an infected person's bodily fluids and secretions.

Rwanda: ICGLR Should Not Waste the Opportunity to Pacify Region

Source: The New Times via AllAfrica.com

18 August 2014 - Over the last one month, the United Nations and Western capitals have expressed strong support for peace efforts in the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

The international community finally seems to be realising that the single most important factor behind the cycle of insecurity and human rights abuses that have dogged the Great Lakes region for the last two decades, shattering hopes and dreams of millions of civilians, is genocide ideology and those that represent it.

The flight into the Congo by thousands of militiamen responsible for the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda served as a launch pad for years of suffering, conflicts and tensions that have gripped the region, with varied levels of involvement by countries and other actors near and far.

The Congo became the battlefield with hundreds of thousands of ordinary Congolese and other ordinary folks bearing the brunt of ensuing high-level politicking and inaction that have characterised discussions about the active presence of a militia group whose cardinal objective is to complete the genocide it set in motion two decades ago.

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To disguise its identity and hoodwink an unsuspecting and naive world, these genocidal forces have, over the years, adopted new names, sometimes baptising themselves with attractive names such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR).

Nonetheless, their mission and actions have remained chillingly intact, as they continued to recruit and indoctrinate underage fighters, who represent continuity in the eyes of their elderly genocidaires.

A few months ago, these terrorists, in a last-ditch effort to avoid military action by UN peacekeepers whose principal reason d'être was to dismantle FDLR, lied to the whole world that they had started voluntary disarmament, only to send a few dozens of frail and elderly fighters to assembly points.

Now the world seems to have realised it was being duped after all.

Indeed strong statements from international actors urging expedited military action to disarm the genocidal outfit are a welcome departure from usual indifference.

For the last few years, regional leaders under the auspices of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), have sought to pacify the Congo. Yet during last week's mini-summit in Luanda, Angola, the ICGLR made decisions that fell short of making the most of increased international goodwill to finally eliminate this inherently brutal genocidal militia.

FDLR has had 20 years to lay down arms and return home peacefully - indeed more than 11,000 combatants have denounced the genocidal ideology and returned home and have since been re-integrated in society.

Those that remain in the Congo preying on ordinary folks do not need more time, but to be forcibly dismantled as soon as yesterday, as allowing them to buy time is playing in their hands and endangering the lives of all those in their vicinity.

Rwanda to Host Meet On Regional Standby Force

Source: The New Times via AllAfrica.com

18 August 2014 - Ministers for Defence and Chiefs of Defence Staff from the region will convene in Kigali starting today [Monday, 18 August 2014] for the Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) meetings for policy organs.

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According to a statement from the Ministry of Defence, the officials will be meeting for the 12 ordinary policy organs meetings which will be held under the theme: "Eastern Africa Standby Force towards Full Operational Capability".

"These four-day meetings follow the decision of the EASF Assembly of Heads of State held on June 26 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on the sidelines of the AU Summit, to fast-track EASF full operational capacity by December 2014," the statement reads in part.

For the first time, the EASF meetings will be attended by police chiefs and foreign affairs ministers of partner states.

For the past ten years, the regional force has been preparing a multi-dimensional force by building capacity in the military, police and civilian components to address security threats and challenges in the region.

Rwanda is the Chair of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of Eastern Africa Region, Council of Ministers for Defence and Security of Eastern Africa, and the Committee of Eastern Africa of Chiefs of Defence Staff and Security.

Established in 2004 with the primary mandate to enhance peace and security in the region, EASF draws its membership from ten countries; Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

Pressure mounts on FDLR

Source: The Independent

By Raphael Esupu

18 August 2014 - UN tells DR Congo rebels to disarm or face military action The UN mission chief in the Democratic Republic of Congo has warned the last remaining rebel group in the east to lay down arms or face military action. The FDLR, a Rwandan Hutu militia that includes perpetrators of the 1994 genocide of Tutsis, has been given a six-month deadline to disarm and to hand over those wanted for war crimes, Martin Kobler told the UN Security Council. "To the FDLR: Seize this last opportunity and move forward with this process. All combatants, including leaders, must disarm now," said Kobler.

"I suggest joint military actions against those FDLR factions not willing to disarm." Disarming the FDLR, of which only 1,500 combatants remain, took on added urgency following the defeat of the mainly Tutsi M23 rebels in the eastern DR Congo late last year.

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FDLR military commander Sylvestre Mudacumura is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes, including torture, in connection with a murderous rampage in North and South Kivu in 2009 and 2010.

In May, the Kinshasa government presented a plan to resettle the remaining FDLR fighters outside the country, giving them 22 days to turn up at two camps from where they were to be taken to a third site for their relocation.

A total of 186 combatants and 430 dependents took the government's offer but the plan has since stalled.

Several UN, Kinshasa and other regional envoys have sought to convince the FDLR leaders to move forward, but they are refusing to give the order to move to the third site, according to Kobler.

Slow progress

Angolan Defence Minister Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco, whose country wields influence in the region, said he was "concerned by the slow progress of the voluntary surrender of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda."

Angola is hosting a summit that is expected to see leaders decide on a tougher stance to disarm the FDLR.

The US special envoy to Africa's Great Lakes region, Russ Feingold, called for flushing out the FDLR during a US-Africa summit in Washington recently.

Feingold said the United States believes there is "no justification" for the FDLR's demand for a political negotiation, and that the group should demobilise "no later than the end of the year."

Two FDLR leaders, Ignace Murwanashyaka and his deputy Straton Musoni, went on trial in Germany in 2011, charged with mass killings and rape in the eastern DR Congo. A verdict has yet to be handed down.

UN exit strategy

DR Congo Foreign Minister Raymond Tshibanda told the Council it was time for the 20,000-strong UN mission MONUSCO to wind down, allowing the UN to focus on trouble spots elsewhere.

"Considering the fewer security risks and progress accomplished by the strengthening of our national capacity in all sectors, I call on behalf of the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo, for a substantial reconfiguration and downsizing of the MONUSCO force," said Tshibanda.

The UN mission chief said, however, that there were no immediate plans to scale back the operation, although UN peacekeeping officials are looking at an "exit strategy."

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Questions about MONUSCO, the UN's biggest mission and operating in the DR Congo for 20 years, are being raised as the UN prepares to launch a new peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic in September.

La CIRGL lance un ultimatum aux FDLR

Source : ARI

Kinshasa, 16 Août - Le mini-sommet des chefs d'Etat de la Conférence internationale sur la Région des Grands Lacs(CIRGL), tenu à Luanda en Angola, s'est prononcé sans plus de tergiversations sur le désarmement et le rapatriement dans leur pays des rebelles hutu rwandais des FDLR.

Un ultimatum a été lancé aux FDLR concernant la période de reddition volontaire arrêtée à six mois à partir du 02 juillet 2014 par la réunion conjointe des ministres des Affaires étrangères et de la Défense CIRGL-SADC.

Tenant compte du fait que les activités des FDLR et des autres forces négatives sont encouragées à travers le commerce illicite des ressources naturelles, le mini-sommet de Luanda a instruit le Centre conjoint de fusion des renseignements (CCFR) à identifier les chefs des forces négatives en vue de leur infliger des sanctions et de les mettre sur une liste noire et éventuellement les arrêter.

Le mini-sommet a aussi décidé, eu égard aux coûts financiers élevés, qu'avant octobre 2014, le gouvernement de la RDC fournisse une feuille de route relative au processus de rapatriement des ex M23 se trouvant en Ouganda et au Rwanda.

Le Rwanda a été représenté à ce mini-sommet par sa Ministre des Affaires Etrangères Louise Mushikiwabo.

Le président de l'Angola, Edouardo Dos Santos; de la RDC, Joseph Kabila Kabange; de l'Ouganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni; et de l'Afrique du Sud Jacob Zuma ont pris part à ce mini-sommet de Luanda.

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DR Congo opposition figure Tshisekedi medevaced to Belgium

Source: AFP World News

Kinshasa, Aug 16, 2014 - Etienne Tshisekedi, an 81-year-old prominent opposition politician in the Democratic Republic of Congo, left Kinshasa for Brussels early Saturday on a specially-arranged medical flight, an AFP journalist witnessed.

Tshisekedi, who had not been seen in public for months, his wife Marthe, one of his children and a doctor boarded the plane, which took off at 0425 GMT.

He was too weak to walk and was helped into the Air Alliance jet, which was to make several stopovers on its way to the Belgian capital.

Previously, Tshisekedi's Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS) party had repeatedly batted away questions about the health of the politician, and denied that any medevac was being organised.

Publicly available documents said the medical flight had been authorised a week ago. But a government source said it had been delayed because of disagreement between Tshisekedi's doctor and his family over whether it should go to South Africa or Belgium.

Tshisekedi stood for election in a 2011 presidential poll but was beaten by the incumbent, Joseph Kabila. He had rejected that result and declared himself the president-elect.

Découverte de pétrole dans l'Est de la RD Congo

Source : PANA

16 août 2014 - Une réserve potentielle d'environ 03 milliards de barils de pétrole découverte dans l'Est de la RD Congo - Une filiale du groupe Fleurette, appartenant à l'homme d'affaires israélien Dan Gertler, a découvert une réserve potentielle d'environ 03 milliards de barils de pétrole après deux phases de tests sismiques au niveau du Bloc I et II du Lac Albert, dans la Province Orientale de la RD Congo.

Selon le communiqué publié jeudi par le groupe, les résultats des tests sismiques, qui ont coûté plus de 20 millions de dollars américains, montrent des ressources potentielles considérables, pouvant augmenter le PIB de la RD Congo si elles sont extraites et exploitées de façon sûre et économique.

D'après la société Oil of DRC, la filiale pétrolière de Fleurette, une production de 50.000 barils de pétrole par jour augmenterait le PIB de la RD Congo de 25 pc.

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Le groupe s'est fixé notamment pour la prochaine étape de forer des puits d'exploitation, indique le communiqué qui précise que ces activités nécessitent d'importants travaux dont des nouvelles routes, un nouveau port, ainsi qu'une délocalisation de certaines communautés locales de la région.

Le Lac Albert est frontalier avec l'Ouganda. Du côté ougandais du lac, l'exploration pétrolière est également en cours.

Israeli tycoon claims huge oil find in DR Congo

Source: AFP World News

Kinshasa, 11 August 2014 - A company owned by Israeli mining magnate Dan Gertler said it has discovered vast potential reserves of oil in the strife-torn east of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Oil of DR Congo, a subsidiary of the Fleurette Group, said in a statement that seismic testing from Lake Albert, which forms part of the northeastern border with Uganda, indicated reserves of around three billion barrels of oil.

It said exporting the oil from North Kivu province could boost the gross domestic product (GDP) of the vast central African nation by 25 percent.

Armed movements, including rebel forces from Uganda and its small but powerful southern neighbour Rwanda, have for decades battled in North Kivu over land and valuable minerals, in waves of ethnic bloodshed.

According to the World Bank, GDP in 2013 was \$30.6 billion for a nation of 67 million people.

Oil of DR Congo said it planned to conduct more tests and establish exploratory wells, but warned that further development was bound to affect people living by the shore of the lake in the restive territory.

Preparation for drilling "includes relocation of some local communities, transport to the site of the drilling equipment, installation of a base camp for staff, new supply roads, a new dock on Lake Albert and a landing strip for moving personnel and equipment," it said in a statement.

It said the enormous find on DRC territory "mirrors that of the Ugandan side" of the lake, but gave no further details.

The company highlighted efforts it has made in return to help local residents by building roads and schools and giving financial support to a medical and maternity centre.

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- 'Source of opportunity' -

Omar Kavota, a spokesman for civil society groups in North Kivu, said the reported oil find could be "a source of opportunity to boost the level of the economy".

But he insisted that "the wealth must be exploited in a legal way to benefit everybody", arguing that if this failed to happen, "neighbouring states could manipulate armed groups to make this part of the country ungovernable, to stop the DRC from benefitting from its natural resources."

Gertler, whose net worth is estimated at \$2.5 billion by US business magazine Forbes, is close to DRC President Joseph Kabila, and has a wide range of interests from mining to trade, according to the Fleurette Group.

He has reportedly helped create more than 20,000 jobs in the DRC after buying his first mine in the troubled country in 1997.

But critics claim that he has built his fortune by acquiring mining permits in the DRC in dubious circumstances, although he has always denied this.

The country has enormous potential mineral wealth, with huge reserves of cobalt, copper, diamonds, gold, silver, zinc and uranium.

But the almost relentless conflict, along with pillaging, illegal mining and a lack of investment, has kept the country classified as low-income, with 70 percent of people living below the poverty line.

Kony's LRA still holding on in Central Africa

Source: AFP World News

Libreville, 15 August 2014 - Down, but not out, the guerrillas of the Lord's Resistance Army, led by one of Africa's most brutal militia leaders Joseph Kony, are holding on in the Central African Republic with support from the rebels who temporarily seized power last year.

"Each week, the LRA raids a village in the bush, steals, rapes, kills and kidnaps," said Guillaume Cailleaux, a coordinator with the US group Invisible Children.

Kony, who is sought by the International Criminal Court (ICC), is "still active" in the southeast of the Central African Republic (CAR) at the head of Africa's oldest surviving rebel group, responsible for eight to 10 incidents per month, Cailleaux said.

"But the LRA no longer has any political or religious vision. It is in survival mode ... and has never been so weak."

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One of the factors keeping the group alive, said Cailleaux and other analysts, is the support of the mostly Muslim Seleka rebel group that took power in the CAR last year for nine months.

The LRA first emerged in northern Uganda in 1986, where it claimed to fight in the name of the Acholi ethnic group against the regime of President Yoweri Museveni. But over the years the LRA has roved across the porous borders of the region.

It moved from Uganda to sow terror in southern Sudan before shifting to northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, finally crossing into southeastern CAR in March 2008.

Combining religious mysticism with an astute guerrilla mind and bloodthirsty ruthlessness, Kony has turned scores of young girls into his personal sex-slaves while claiming to be fighting to impose the Bible's Ten Commandments.

While battling the Ugandan government, he and a dwindling band of expert guerrilla fighters earned a grim reputation for the abduction of children and mutilation of civilians.

But under growing pressure, the LRA is now split up into small groups of five or 10 combatants, operating in the Haut-Mboumou province -- an immense territory where they are still tracked by the Ugandan army and around 100 members of US Special Forces.

They also take refuge across the border in DR Congo, where the Ugandan army said on Wednesday it had freed 45 women and children from the hands of the rebels.

- Hit by defections -

"The number of fighters carrying weapons is now estimated at between 180 and 220," said Cailleaux, but each militia cell is accompanied by captives forced to work as porters, cooks and sex slaves.

Defections have increased over the past few months to around four of five a month, according to Invisible Children.

"In 2003, the LRA had around 3,000 fighters, compared to 200 now. Every month, there are defections. The LRA is on the point of disappearing. And yet, it survives," said Jose Carlos Rodriguez, an expert on the movement.

"There are several reasons for this. First of all, Kony has an extraordinary ability to adapt. He knows how to change strategy according to circumstances."

Secondly, "they didn't choose southeastern CAR by accident: it's an ideal refuge, a territory as large as Rwanda and Burundi combined, forest-covered, with a population of barely 40,000".

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The region is also close to the enclave of Kafia Kingi in neighbouring Sudan, where Kony has previously fled and can still count on the support of the dictatorial Sudanese regime, said Rodriguez.

- Seleka support -

Last but not least, the LRA has benefited in recent months from the backing of Seleka rebels, a mostly Muslim group that overthrew the CAR government in March 2013 and held power until it was forced out by international pressure in January.

Although Seleka's support for the LRA is "limited" and "opportunistic", said Rodriguez, there have been numerous contacts between the groups.

In November, the head of Seleka and then president of the country Michel Djotodia claimed he was "in the process of negotiating" Kony's surrender, but also revealed his government had given provisions, including food, to the LRA.

"There were certainly contacts between the former rebels and the LRA at Bakouma" in southeastern CAR, said Rodriguez. "These contacts were led by Seleka general Zaccaria Damani and Otto Ladeere of the LRA. They continued later."

"Seleka occasionally provides ammunition, medicine, food" to the LRA, confirmed Cailleaux.

This assistance is given in exchange for labour in mining areas, with LRA captives forced to work as "diggers" for the Seleka.

Seleka military chiefs would have seen the opportunity to gain a foothold in southeastern DR Congo, Rodriguez added.

The Ugandan army has reacted angrily to this collaboration and particularly to the arrival of a Seleka column in its southeastern province of Nzako at the end of June.

According to the official account of the incident, the Ugandan military opened fire after confusing the Seleka militia for the LRA.

Rodriguez said this was unlikely, saying the Ugandan army "knew perfectly well" what it was doing when it killed 16 Seleka rebels, including a colonel.

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The Hunt for Rwandan Genocidaires Continues

Source: Care2.com

By Lizabeth Paulat

17 August 2014 - Recently, an odd story broke about an accused genocidaire who was wandering around near the Canadian border in Maine. John Leonard Teganya, a Rwandan citizen, fled his country first to the Congo and then sought refuge in Canada. However, after being accused of killing nearly 200 Tutsis during a church massacre, his refugee claim was rejected. So it seems Teganya wandered into the United States in hopes of escaping removal from Canada.

This bizarre case has led many to wonder how many genocidaires are still out there wandering around.

[Learn more>>](#)

Amisom and One World Futbol Join Hands to Promote Peace in Somalia through Football

Source: Diplomat

By Tajudin

17 August 2014 - Mogadishu (DIPLOMAT)-The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) today handed over 4,500 indestructible footballs to the Federal Government of Somalia for onward transmission to children and youth groups throughout the country to teach them life skills and promote peace.

[Learn more>>](#)

South Sudanese rebels' delegation arrives in Kampala

Source: Sudan Tribune

Addis Ababa, 18 August 2014 - A high level delegation of the opposition faction of the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM-In-Opposition) has arrived in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, for talks with the Ugandan top leadership on the fate of Uganda army deployed in South Sudan.

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This is the second attempt by the rebels delegation after the first visit was thwarted as Ugandan authorities failed to receive them in June, prompting them to return to Addis Ababa.

Both sides blamed the failure of the visit on poor coordination and communication.

However, rebels spokesperson, James Gatdet Dak, told *Sudan Tribune* that the delegation left Addis Ababa on Monday morning and arrived Kampala at noon.

“A high level delegation led by the deputy chairman General Alfred Ladu Gore has arrived in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, on Monday,” Dak said.

He added that they will hold talks with the Kampala leadership on the withdrawal of Ugandan forces from South Sudan and Uganda support to the peace process.

Uganda has sent thousands of troops backed by tanks and helicopter gunships and fight alongside Salva Kiir’s government.

The rebel group has accused Uganda of fuelling the war and demanded the withdrawal of its troops.

Fighting erupted in mid-December between Kiir’s forces and rebels led by the former vice-president Riek Machar when the internal conflict in the ruling party turned violent.

UN debates protection for aid workers

Source: AFP via 3News

17 August 2014 - Aid workers trying to save lives in hostile war zones are increasingly becoming targets for attack.

Militias killed six aid workers in South Sudan this month, while 11 UN staff died in attacks on UN-run shelters in Gaza.

Over the past decade, the number of aid workers killed in attacks has tripled, passing 100 deaths a year, UN officials say.

Afghanistan, South Sudan and Syria now rank as the most dangerous countries for humanitarian staff.

The UN Security Council will on Tuesday discuss ways of better protecting aid workers at a meeting that coincides with World Humanitarian Day, which marks the 2003 attack on the UN compound in Baghdad when 22 UN staff were killed.

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"Fifteen years ago, the greatest risk to the lives of aid workers were road traffic accidents," said Bob Kitchen, from the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

"Violent incidents (now) claim the lives of more aid workers than anything else."

The IRC, which operates in more than 40 countries, has lost 12 staff over the past six years, including two who died in April in an attack on the UN base in Bor, South Sudan.

Kitchen, who heads the IRC's emergency response team, says the nature of warfare has changed, and more civilians are internally displaced.

"We are increasingly seeing the need for aid organisations to go into environments of war," he said.

Armed groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq target aid workers as a way to earn money or to punish those who help their enemies.

"Parties to conflicts around the world ignore the rules of war to achieve a political end," said John Ging, head of operations for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

UN aid worker Ken Payumo, a former New York police officer, stood up to armed soldiers who demanded access to the UN compound in Bor in South Sudan after thousands had sheltered there.

On January 19, Payumo stood unarmed with two other UN officials outside the compound refusing to let in some 80 soldiers.

"I remember making a decision at that time that everyone in that compound was really more important than I was," said Payumo.

The soldiers finally decided to leave, but a few months later and after Payumo's departure, the compound was attacked, leaving close to 50 dead.

Researcher Larissa Fast said that the rise in the number of attacks on aid workers is "just the tip of the iceberg".

Fast said aid agencies needed to pay more attention to risk management.

Many NGOs are developing "community liaison," relying on local residents to help keep their staff safe.

"They will say to us, 'Listen, it's not safe for you to come today.' That makes a massive difference for our security."

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Le Soudan se plaint d'une "campagne hostile"

Source : African Manager

17 août 2014 - Le Soudan s'est plaint de faire l'objet d'une "vaste campagne de dénigrement" visant ternir son image, mais il a déclaré qu'il va rebondir.

Le parti au pouvoir, le Congrès national soudanais, (National Congress Party, Ncp) a déclaré qu'il fait l'objet d'une campagne médiatique menée par des groupes de pression et visant à ternir son image, a appris dimanche l'agence de presse d'Etat, SUNA.

Il met l'accent pour identifier les présumés médias et groupes de pression.

L'agence de presse d'Etat a cité le vice-président du parti au pouvoir chargé des Affaires du parti, le Pr. Ibrahim Ghandour qui a déclaré que le pays avait commencé ces derniers temps à voir plusieurs de ces ressortissants perdre leurs postes dans les organisations internationales.

Dr Ghandour, qui s'exprimait lors d'une réunion du parti au pouvoir tenue samedi soir, a indiqué qu'il avait discuté avec les représentants de l'Union européenne et d'une proposition pour l'organisation d'un atelier à Hindenburg, en Allemagne, pour créer les conditions propices pour la convocation du dialogue national proposé conférence à une date qui sera annoncée dans les prochains jours.

Le responsable du Ncp a déclaré qu'ils vont bientôt mettre en avant des directives pour nouer de solides relations stratégiques étrangères sans renier les principes de base du pays. Il a souligné que le principal problème est comment coordonner les bénéfices que le pays espère tirer de ses relations avec les autres pays du monde et les principes qu'il chérit.

Dr Ghandour a révélé que le parti envisage de tenir un dialogue de haut niveau entre la direction du Ncp et le parti communiste chinois d'ici la fin du mois. Il a souligné que le Ncp avait élaboré sa vision pour réparer ses relations extérieures et va le soumettre au niveau du dialogue national.

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Dialogue Mechanism Calls on Mbeki to Convince Opposing Parties to Engage in Process

Source: Sudan Vision

By Al-Sammani Awadallah - Najat Ahmed

Khartoum, 18 August 2014 - The National Dialogue Mechanism yesterday called on South Africa's former President, Thabo Mbeki to convince the armed movements and opposing political forces to join the national dialogue process.

Following the meeting with the Mechanism, the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel on Sudan (AUHIP) chairman said in a press statement the mechanism's members have expressed their readiness to exert efforts to narrow the gulf of differences among all warring Sudanese parties.

"The Mechanism is seeking a regional and international role in the dialogue so that these quarters become witnesses for the process," said Kamal Omer, Political Secretary of the Popular Congress Party.

Omer also expressed hope that the African Union (AU) will undertake a positive role in the process, citing the AU and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) previous involvement in Sudanese issues.

He added that the Mechanism briefed Mbeki on the part the AU ought to play in the political process in Sudan, as well as the progress of dialogue and the conclusion of the roadmap.

"The roadmap worked out by the National Dialogue Mechanism is comprehensive because it covers all political issues," Omer said.

"Mbeki underscored the importance of continuing the dialogue to achieve its aims," said Ahmed Saad Omer Khadhir, Cabinet Minister and Mechanism member.

Meanwhile, ruling National Congress Party leading figure and Investment Minister, Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail emphasised the need to form internal agreements.

He said: "Solutions for Sudanese issues will not come from Paris, London or Washington, they will come from within."

"It is the Sudanese people who will make the decisions," he added.

Addressing the community dialogue conference in Kassala yesterday, the Minister expressed the government's resolve to proceed with the dialogue to address all concerns.

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"Those who think resolutions will come from overseas are under an illusion," he said, stressing the need to conduct communal dialogues on all issues.