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



MEDIA MONITORING

13 October 2015

GENERAL NEWS

SADC countries excel in good governance

REPORT

Source: The Southern Times (The newspaper for Southern Africa)

Southern Africa dominates the 2015 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) top 10 list of the most best governed countries in Africa, according to the report released this past week.

Windhoek, 12 October 2015 – Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) has the most best governed countries in the top 10 in Africa according to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) which was released this week.

The report shows that Southern Africa is the best performing region, with an average score of 58.9, followed by West Africa (52.4), North Africa (51.2) and East Africa (44.3).

Central Africa is the lowest ranking region with an average score of 40.9, and is the only region to have deteriorated since 2011.

Although the report indicates that over the last four years, governance progress in Africa has stalled, and reveals a shifting landscape, SADC countries have recorded high points with Mauritius (1), Botswana (3), South Africa (4) and Namibia (5) making it into the best five governed countries with only Cape Verde (2) preventing SADC from having a clean sweep of the top five. Seychelles is ranked sixth.

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Mauritius has a score of 79.9 out of 100, Botswana 74.2 while South Africa and Namibia have 73 and 70.4 respectively.

Lesotho also made it into the top 10 with the overall score of 61.1 while other SADC countries, Zambia (12) and Malawi (17) fall short of the top ten having achieved 59.5 and 56.7 respectively.

Although SADC has the most countries in the top 10, chairperson of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Mo Ibrahim said 21 countries, including five in the top ten, have deteriorated in overall governance performance since 2011.

“Only six countries register an improvement across each of the four categories of the IAG which are Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia and Zimbabwe.

The marginal improvement in overall governance at the continental level is underpinned by positive performances in only two categories, Human Development (+1.2) and Participation and Human Rights (+0.7). Both Sustainable Economic Opportunity (-0.7) and Safety & Rule of Law (-0.3) have deteriorated,” he said.

The good performance of the SADC region comes as no surprise as the bloc’s leaders have also dominated the Mo Ibrahim prize for African leadership.

Former Namibian President Hifikepunye Pohamba was awarded the prize in March this year becoming the third leader from a SADC member state to win the award after former Presidents Festus Mogae of Botswana (2008) and Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, the first winner in 2007.

The late Founding President of South Africa Nelson Mandela, also from SADC, was awarded an honorary prize in 2007.

Former Cape Verde President Pedro Pires was also once a recipient of the prestigious award.

And if Pohamba had missed out on the award, chances were still high that a former leader of a SADC country would still bag it as the immediate past President of Mozambique Armando Guebuza was also in the running for the prize as was former Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki.

The US\$5m award, sponsored by Sudanese British mobile communications mogul Mohamed Ibrahim’s Foundation, is given each year to an elected leader who governed well, raised living standards and then left office.

The award is paid over 10 years and US\$200 000 annually for life thereafter.

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To cement the region's good governance record Pohamba's successor President Hage Geingob was last month awarded the African Political Leader of the Year Award.

He received the award during the seventh African Leadership Summit and Award themed "Rethinking social responsibility and governance in Africa" in Washington DC, the United States.

The African Leadership Awards are conferred on an annual basis by the African Leadership Magazine, which is headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria.

The awards recognise achievements made by selected high profile leaders in Africa and honour their contributions towards their countries' economic development.

Receiving the award President Geingob said:

"It is not my award, it is an award for leadership.

You do not wear leadership like a necklace, it comes with responsibilities and accountability."

The Namibian leader said Africa was on the rise.

"It is Africa's time. We have dropped the ideas of coups d'état, we now believe in democratic elections. African leaders now serve terms.

Former African presidents are now highly respected unlike in the past when they were either exiled, imprisoned or killed," President Geingob, who is hardly a year into his first term in power said.

Ibrahim also said while Africans overall are certainly healthier and live in more democratic societies than 15 years ago, the 2015 IIAG shows that recent progress in other key areas on the continent has either stalled or reversed, and that some key countries seem to be faltering.

"This is a warning sign for all of us.

Only shared and sustained improvements across all areas of governance will deliver the future that Africans deserve and demand."

Other key findings of the report show that the African average score for overall governance in 2014 was 50.1, a slight improvement since 2011 (+0.2).

Over the last four years, only half of the top ten governance performers managed to improve their overall governance score, and 21 of the 54 countries have deteriorated.

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Also with a 79.9 score for overall governance in 2014, Mauritius stands over 70 points higher than the continent's weakest governance performer, Somalia, which achieved a score of 8.5.

Ibrahim said the top three countries, Mauritius, Cape Verde and Botswana, all exhibit a decline in overall governance and in at least two of the four components over the last four years, calling into question whether these countries will continue to dominate the top of the rankings in future.

In contrast the bottom three countries in overall governance are Central African Republic (24.9), South Sudan (19.9) and Somalia (8.5).

Two of these, South Sudan (-9.6) and Central African Republic (-8.4), have also registered the most extreme deteriorations, along with Mali (-8.1).

The top ten improvers in overall governance over the last four years represent almost a quarter of the continent's population.

Five of these countries – Senegal (9), Kenya (14), Morocco (16) Rwanda (11) and Tunisia (8h), already rank in the top 20 of the IIAG, leading to the question of whether they might become the continent's next powerhouses, according to the report.

D.R. CONGO

Rebels kill at least 7 civilians in attacks in eastern Congo, civil society groups say

NEWS STORY

Source: The Associated Press

Kinshasa, 12 October 2015 - A representative of civil society groups in eastern Congo says rebels have killed at least seven civilians in two attacks.

Omar Kavota said Monday that rebels from the Allied Defence Forces-NALU launched attacks against Congo's military and during clashes in Mukoko four civilians were killed. He said members of the group also attacked the army in Tenambo, killing three civilians and injuring four. Fighting continued in the villages near the town of Beni in Congo's North Kivu province.

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Kavota, the executive director of the rights group, said many families were forced to flee.

The area has been the site of repeated attacks by the rebels, who have origins in neighbouring Uganda.

Eastern Congo is home to myriad armed groups, many vying for control of the region's vast mineral resources.

Ministère de l'Environnement : la Rdc bénéficie de plus de 250 millions de dollars pour préserver ses forêts

INFORMATION

Source: Forum des As (Kinshasa)

Ce financement entre dans le cadre de l'initiative forêt d'Afrique centrale et concerne outre la Rdc, le Cameroun, le Gabon, la République centrafricaine, la Guinée équatoriale, le Congo-Brazzaville.

Kinshasa, 12 octobre 2015 - Dans le cadre de l'Initiative Forêt d'Afrique centrale (CAFI), la République Démocratique du Congo a bénéficié d'un financement de 250.000.000 de dollars américains, sur un total de 1 milliard de dollars US sollicités. Toutes les formalités sont déjà terminées. Il ne reste qu'au ministre des Finances, Henri Yav Mulang, d'adresser une lettre d'intention du gouvernement de la République, au conseil d'administration de CAFI pour ce premier décaissement.

Cette initiative concerne six pays d'Afrique Centrale : le Cameroun, le Gabon, la République Centrafricaine, la Guinée Equatoriale, le Congo-Brazzaville et la RDC. Le pays de Joseph KABILA est le seul à boucler une stratégie nationale en adoptant un plan d'investissement qui identifie les programmes d'activité et des reformes à mettre en œuvre pour réduire les émissions de Gaz à effets de serre.

Ce plan d'investissement a été présenté devant le groupe de bailleurs de fonds constitués principalement de la Norvège, de l'UE, de la France, de la Grande-Bretagne, de l'Allemagne. Ces bailleurs de Fonds sont disposés à mobiliser des ressources pour financer la gestion durable des forêts de l'Afrique Centrale à travers le mécanisme REDD+, Réduction de la déforestation et de la dégradation des forêts.

Pour le Ministre des Finances et Chef de la Délégation de la RDC, Henri YAV Mulang, le gouvernement de la République a placé la lutte contre le changement climatique au

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cœur de la stratégie nationale de croissance et de réduction de la pauvreté. Le mercredi 29 septembre 2015, Henri Yav a signé la déclaration d'adhésion à l'initiative Forêt d'Afrique Centrale ; CAFI. Cette stratégie vise à stabiliser le couvert forestier à 63,5 pour cent du territoire national à partir de 2030. Elle promeut une politique de développement durable, basée sur un équilibre entre réduction des émissions dues à la déforestation et dégradation des forêts et réduction de la pauvreté.

Pour rappel, la RDC représente à elle seule 10 pour cent des forêts tropicales mondiales après l'Amazonie soit 70 pour cent ou mieux 146 millions d'hectares de son territoire national.

Aujourd'hui cette réserve demeure pratiquement intacte et contribue à l'atténuation des changements climatiques. D'où cet enjeu pour la RDC qui doit se positionner par rapport aux différents financements pour la préservation des forêts dans le maintien des équilibres mondiaux de l'écosystème. Cette rencontre intervient un mois avant les Assemblées annuelles du groupe de la Banque Mondiale et du FMI à Lima au Pérou sur le changement climatique.

RWANDA

Rwanda to open debate on third-term for Kagame

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP via New Vision (Uganda)

Rwanda's parliament was set to open a debate Monday on amending the constitution to let strongman and President Paul Kagame run for a third term in 2017.

12 October 2015 - MPs were due to "examine the relevance of the draft of revision of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda as amended to date," said a parliamentary statement.

Kagame has run Rwanda since his rebel army ended the 1994 genocide.

He won elections in 2003 and 2010 and, under the current law, is due to step aside in 2017 at the end of his second consecutive term.

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But earlier this year, more than 60 percent of voters signed a petition calling for constitutional changes to be drafted that would allow Kagame to stand again in 2017, an initiative that has already rubber-stamped by both houses of parliament.

Rwanda: Ugandan, Rwandan Businesses Urged to Venture in Emerging Sectors

NEWS STORY

Source: The New Times (Rwanda)

By Moses Opobo

12 October 2015 - The Ugandan community living and working in Rwanda on Friday met in Kigali to celebrate their country's 53rd Independence Day, with a call on the private sector to take a lead in the emerging sectors such as oil and gas.

The call was made by Uganda's High Commissioner to Rwanda, Richard Kabonero, at the celebrations that drew officials from government and members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Kigali.

Uganda gained her independence on October 9, 1962, attaining self-rule from Britain.

Kabonero said various investment opportunities in the oil and gas sector are open to the private sector, including in upstream and downstream oil production, refineries, pipelines, and associated industries, among others.

Uganda-Rwanda relations

On bilateral relations between Uganda and Rwanda, Kabonero saluted Rwanda's unwavering commitment to the protection of vulnerable persons and victims of conflict all over the world, a commitment he said Uganda also shares.

He further commended the government and the people of Rwanda for the visible accelerated pace of development in the country.

"These achievements have positively impacted the whole region," he said.

At the regional level, the envoy thanked partner states in the East African Community for their commitment to implementation of the Northern Corridor Framework, which has in turn accelerated the implementation of infrastructure projects that have increased access to the port of Mombasa, which serves both Rwanda and Uganda.

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The initiative has also, among others, helped eliminate barriers to cross-border trade.

Foreign Affairs Minister Louise Mushikiwabo described as "very special" the relationship that exists between Rwanda and Uganda:

"Uganda is one of the countries with which Rwanda does a lot on a daily basis in many different sectors. The people of Rwanda remain mindful of this substantive and symbolic cooperation amongst our people that together we have extended to the region," Mushikiwabo explained, adding: "Our bilateral relations have indeed existed for a long time. We have blood ties, we have family ties, we have business ties ... we have a lot that we share as nations and as peoples. This relationship has stood the test of time, and we have maintained a very good level of mutual understanding and respect."

Mushikiwabo also took time off to eulogise three senior Ugandan officials who recently succumbed to different ailments in a space of one month.

"I would like to take a moment to express the government and people of Rwanda's sympathy to the government and the people of Uganda and the bereaved families for the immense loss that the people, the government and families in Uganda have suffered recently with the passing on of their beloved ministers and army officers," said Mushikiwabo.

She mourned Gen. Aronda Nyakairima, the Minister of Internal Affairs; Dr James Mutende, the State Minister for Industry; and Maj. Gen. Ali Bamuze who all passed away in just a month.

This was followed by the observance of a minute of silence for the deceased.

Kabonero added that Uganda would continue its commitment to the democratic process, with presidential and parliamentary elections due in February next year.

Rwanda commits to rapid intervention to crises in Africa

NEWS STORY

Source: Rwanda News Agency

Kigali, 12 October 2015 - Rwanda signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the African Union to formalise her commitment as African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) Volunteer Nation. The signing ceremony of the MoU took place on 9 September 2015 at African Union Headquarters, Addis Ababa (Ethiopia).

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According to the Ministry of Defense, Rwanda is one of the 13 Nations who have volunteered to form the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) in Africa.

The Chargé d' Affaires a.i at Rwanda's Embassy in Ethiopia, Phillip Karenzi, signed the MoU on behalf of the Government of Rwanda. Rwanda formally committed one Motorised Infantry Battalion, one Artillery Battery and one Level two Hospital to ACIRC.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Commissioner for AU Peace and Security, Smail Chergui, who signed on behalf of AU thanked Rwanda for formally committing to ACIRC. He said he had no doubt that Rwanda would use her vast experience in peace keeping operations to keep ACIRC mechanism strong.

During a high-profile leaders' Summit on international peace operations on the sidelines of the 70th United Nations General Assembly in New York, on 28 September 2015, President Kagame announced that Rwanda will provide two additional infantry battalions totaling 1600 troops, two attack helicopters, and all-female police unit and a level two hospital to UN peacekeeping missions.

With more than 5000 military and police peacekeepers in different parts of the world, Rwanda is the fifth largest troop-contributing nation to UN peacekeeping missions globally.

Other countries that signed the MoU were: Uganda, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Senegal. ACIRC is an interim mechanism put in place by Africa leaders at the AU summit in 2013 to deal rapidly with crises in Africa and avoid reliance on foreign powers to intervene in crises on the continent. This was adopted as an interim measure, pending the full operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF).

ACIRC Volunteering Nations so far are Rwanda, Benin, Algeria, Angola, South Africa, Tanzania, Chad, Senegal, Sudan, Niger, Uganda, Egypt and Burkina Faso.

UGANDA

Official: Ugandan Troops Are Withdrawing From South Sudan

NEWS STORY

Source: Associated Press

By Rodney Munumuza

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Kampala, 12 October 2015 - Ugandan troops have started withdrawing from South Sudan to comply with a peace deal between South Sudan's warring factions, Uganda's military chief said Monday.

All Ugandan forces -- between 2,000 and 3,000 -- will have withdrawn from South Sudan by the first week of November, Gen. Katumba Wamala told reporters in Uganda's capital, Kampala.

Ugandan troops, deployed at the request of South Sudanese President Salva Kiir, prevented the rebels from taking South Sudan's capital, Juba, in December 2013, he said, adding that there was a risk of genocide when the Ugandans deployed.

South Sudanese government forces, possibly with the help of U.N. troops, are expected to keep the peace, he said.

"We think they have upped up their business by now," he said, referring to South Sudanese security forces. "We think things will hold."

South Sudan erupted into violence in mid-December 2013 when some security forces in Juba appeared to splinter along ethnic lines, plunging the world's newest country into civil unrest.

Kiir belongs to the Dinka ethnic group while rebel leader Riek Machar, who had been fired in July 2013 as Kiir's deputy, is an ethnic Nuer.

Machar is expected to return to South Sudan as Kiir's deputy under the terms of the peace pact signed in August, although both sides have repeatedly violated that agreement.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed by South Sudan's conflict and 2 million have been displaced, according to the U.N.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

UN mission in Central African Republic on 'high alert' as armed group threatens capital

NEWS STORY

Source: UN News Centre

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12 October 2015 – The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) has reported that it is on "high alert" as the situation in the war-torn country remains fragile, with armed groups threatening to destabilize its capital city, Bangui.

The Mission's update was provided by Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the Secretary-General at the regular press briefing at UN Headquarters, who said that MINUSCA "remains on high alert to prevent any attempts of armed ex-Séléka moving towards the capital, Bangui."

On Saturday in the Kemo prefecture, MINUSCA and Sangaris (French-led) forces "confirmed the presence of approximately 150 ex-Séléka or Front Populaire pour la Renaissance de Centrafrique (FPRC)," said the Deputy Spokesperson.

"MINUSCA engaged with their leader, Nourredine Adam in Kaga Bandoro and conveyed a strong message that the International Forces would not accept any movement of the armed groups towards Bangui."

Mr. Haq added that the Mission is "very concerned over what it calls the organized infiltration of several armed groups in Bangui and has condemned all attempts to destabilize Bangui."

"In accordance with its mandate to protect the civilian population from the threat of physical violence, the Mission, with support from Sangaris, has used force in reaction to attacks from FPRC elements around Sibut," continued the spokesperson.

He also noted that, "unknown persons targeted MINUSCA on two occasions on Saturday," although no casualties were recorded."

"MINUSCA is determined to continue to use all necessary means to protect civilians, strengthen State authority and support the political process," he said.

The 'ad hoc Committee on elections' agreed on a preliminary electoral calendar for CAR, which is scheduled to be presented to the National Transitional Council next week.

MINUSCA, set up in April 2014 to help bring peace after a breakdown of governmental authority and vicious intercommunal fighting between mainly the Muslim Séléka group and the mainly Christian anti-Balaka movement, currently maintains nearly 11,000 uniformed personnel in the country, one of the world's poorest.

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SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa pulling out of the International Criminal Court? Reactions and implications

ANALYSIS

Source: RFI

By Daniel Finnan

12 October 2015

South Africa's ruling African National Congress party has raised questions about the country's membership of the International Criminal Court, saying that the war crimes court had lost direction and no longer fulfilled its mandate. The comments are part of increasing criticism about the ICC's focus on African cases. South Africa's relationship with the court also soured after a spat over the arrest of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir. What does this mean for international justice? Is the rest of Africa likely to follow South Africa's lead?

REACTION

Sonia Robla, chief of public information and outreach, International Criminal Court

"Withdrawing from it is a voluntary and sovereign decision of a country. Actually it is something that is already in the Rome Statute. There is an article, which is article 127, which says that if a country decides to withdraw from the statute, this action would only enter into force one year after the state has deposited its withdrawal notification with the UN Secretary General. In principle, a withdrawal does not affect in any way the obligations arising from the Rome Statute while the state party was a party to the court. Nevertheless, general support for the ICC is necessary in Africa and outside for the International Criminal Court to fulfil its mandate."

Jacob Enoh Eben, spokesperson, African Union Commission chairperson Dlamini-Zuma

"Basically, the African Union is following the conversations that are ongoing in the ANC, which of course is a conversation which has happened within various members states. So, at this point in time it is very premature for the African Union to make any statement because these are sovereign decisions that go through their own internal processes. So

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the African Union would really not make any statement per se. But of course, related to the issue of Africa's relations with the ICC, the African Union Commission chairperson has been very outspoken about the double standard nature of the relationship between the ICC and African leaders. So this is that which the African Union holds as a position, to say that African leaders whilst they are still sitting heads of state will not be tried by the ICC."

ANALYSIS

Magnus Killander, head of research, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

How much of this is about the visit by President Bashir - maybe a further justification that not arresting him was the right thing to do?

Well, it's clearly a reaction to the whole Bashir debacle that's ongoing since June when the South African authorities didn't want to arrest Omar al-Bashir despite a request from the ICC. But obviously the history behind it goes further back. There's been a movement within the African Union to not collaborate with the ICC, in particular in relation to the indictment of heads of state, so in the case of Bashir, but also in relation to the Kenyan president and vice president.

What processes do the ANC talk of when it says it ought to share reasons and motivations with the rest of the continent?

I assume, but this is very much an assumption that the reasoning behind the decision - and in the discussion documents it's not very clear - it seems to be the decision-making by the ICC prosecutor and the perceived Africa bias in the selection of cases. But at the same time, while the ICC has focused a lot on Africa, a lot of those cases have been referred by the states themselves, acknowledging that they do not have capacity to deal with those particular cases. That's been the case in Uganda, in the DRC, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire and so forth.

The comments by the ANC point to powerful countries, maybe a veiled comment directed at the UN Security Council. But cases at the ICC aren't always a result of UN Security Council referral are they?

I'm not sure that they are really, because obviously there's a lot of opposition to the ICC within the Security Council powers. Neither Russia, nor China, nor the United States have ratified the ICC statute, but they have still referred cases. The cases that they have referred are in Africa, the Sudanese and Libya situation. From that perspective it might be in relation to the Security Council, but I also think it's a lot of the European big

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powers, that might not be that big anymore, they've perceived to wield the financial muscle behind the ICC.

Does South Africa have a problem with current ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, a Gambian?

There was perhaps more controversy directed specifically at the prosecutor under the old prosecutor Moreno-Ocampo. I think the focus has shifted more towards the court itself than the prosecutor. But at the same time it is the prosecutor who initiates investigations and so forth. So I guess it's not that open a criticism of the prosecutor as it used to be.

Africa has the largest regional representation as state parties to the Rome Statute, which established the ICC. Doesn't it then entail that it holds the most sway?

Perhaps there is a point, if you look at, for example, staffing of the ICC, is that now corresponding to the fact that Africa has the biggest component of the state parties? Europe also has a big membership in the ICC and it's lacking on many other continents.

What's the alternative to the ICC for South Africa, for Africa?

The purported alternative, last year the African Union adopted a protocol to the protocol on the African Court of Justice and Human Rights, to give that court - which deals with human rights complaints, as it is currently constituted - jurisdiction over a number of international crimes, including crimes which would fall under the jurisdiction of the ICC. What they didn't include, or what they explicitly excluded was jurisdiction over cases brought against senior state officials and/or heads of state and government, which is a clear rebuke to what they have signed up for under the ICC. But I guess there are many problems that one foresees before the entry into force of that protocol. For example financing, international criminal justice is something that is quite expensive. The Hissène Habré trial that's underway in Senegal was delayed for many years because of financing not being available and that is a trial that is taking place under the auspices of the African Union. So, one would have to see what happens when eventually this protocol has been ratified by a sufficient numbers of states.

What would withdrawing mean constitutionally for South Africa?

The first issue is whether a state can withdraw from the ICC statute. I mean one could construct an argument to remove that type of protection would be a retrogressive measure that could be considered to be unconstitutional under South African law. There are court challenges already in relation to al-Bashir in South Africa, so one will just have to see what comes out of this. And of course, this is a decision by the ANC, while the

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ANC is the majority in parliament and forms the government - it is not the same as the government, so we would still have to wait for a formal decision from government.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan nears joining East Africa Community: minister

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Juba, 12 October 2015 - South Sudan will soon become a member of the East African Community, currently consisting of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi.

South Sudan's foreign affairs minister, Barnaba Marial Benjamin said a technical committee recommended his country's admission into the regional bloc (EAC).

"The final session has actually shown the Republic of South Sudan is qualified to become a member of east African community," Marial told reporters on Monday.

South Sudan applied for the EAC membership soon after it attained its independence in July 2011. The admission, however, stalled due to institutional weakness, poor economic management and issues related to the rebellion, which broke out in mid-December 2013.

Marial, who co-chairs the 28 delegation of South Sudan technical committee, disclosed that the official admission will be done in November during the head of states meeting to be attended by leaders of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan.

The South Sudanese foreign affairs minister said he signed "final reports on behalf" of the world's youngest nation, paving way for its admission in to the five-member bloc.

"I think this is a great victory for South Sudan to become a member of East African Community," said Marial.

The EAC member countries often enjoy free travel across borders and share workforce.

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SUDAN

Sudan says 70 of its nationals have gone to join ISIS

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Khartoum, 12 October 2015 - The Ministry of Interior in Khartoum announced on Monday that about 70 Sudanese both males and females have went on to join the Islamic state (ISIS) franchises both in Libya and Syria.

ISIS infiltration into Sudan among the youths has become known last March after British media outlets confirmed that nine medical students from Sudanese origins entered Syria via Turkey to work in hospitals under the control of ISIS.

Last June, 18 college students also ran off to join ISIS in Syria including the daughter of senior diplomat. In late August, at least 4 female students flew off to Turkey including twins.

Most of these recruits are believed to be flocking to ISIS-controlled territories to work in their hospitals.

The Sudanese interior minister Esmat Abdel-Rahman said that this phenomenon is a source of concern for Sudanese families though it is not as developed compared to other countries.

Abdel-Rahman pointed out that security services spotted them departing adding that the focus in the past was on those headed to Mali in western Africa.

He claimed that they have noticed an outbreak of religious extremism in Khartoum state, especially among medical college students as well as in West Darfur.

The minister confirmed that his ministry has taken measures to curb ISIS expansion in the country.

Over the past two months, Sudanese authorities detained a number clerics who are ISIS-sympathizers.

The Sudanese official also spoke of coordination with the Turkish to prevent granting visas to Sudanese except under strict rules.

Last July, Abdul-Ilah, the son of the late leader of Jamaat Ansar al Sunnah, Abu Zaid Mohamed Hamzah, was killed in armed clashes in the ISIS stronghold of Sirte in Libya.

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Also, in June ISIS announced that one of its Sudanese fighters nicknamed Abu al-Fida al-Sudani was killed in their stronghold of al-Riqa.