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



MEDIA MONITORING

2 July 2015

GENERAL NEWS

The ICC now an instrument of imperialism

OPINION

Source: The Herald (Harare)

1 July 2015 - The Rome Statute is the treaty that established the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC was to be an international tribunal and intergovernmental organisation that would prosecute all individuals for international crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

One hundred and twenty states voted for it and China, Iraq, Israel, Libya, Qatar, the United States of America and Yemen voted against.

Twenty one states abstained. The Rome Statute entered into force on July 1, 2002. Almost all African countries ratified the Rome Statute; the largest number to do so. They agreed with its objectives of punishing those who commit crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes.

However, the ICC clearly targeted African leaders, turning a blind eye to countries like America and Britain, which committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in non-Western countries.

When the International Criminal Court was debated in the South African Parliament on June 19 2009, I participated as a member of parliament.

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“Madam Speaker, African leaders who have the propensity for tyranny and commit crimes against humanity must be severely punished in Africa through appropriate judicial institutions of the African Union. This is not to cast an aspersion on the integrity of the ICC.

“It cannot, however, be disputed that sophisticated weapons of war that kill Africans in civil wars in Africa and elsewhere, come from foreign powers. These are proxy wars fought for foreign interests. The African Union must be careful that it does not compromise the sovereignties of its member states in an international game, which is not clean and whose credo is ‘might is right’.

“The Pan Africanist Congress on whose behalf I was speaking observes that there is still a great deal of selective morality and legality in international politics. For instance, America and Britain occupied Iraq and killed thousands of Iraqi women and children under the false pretence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. But this did not attract the attention of the International Criminal Court. Former President George W. Bush and former Prime Minister Tony Blair were never summoned to appear before the ICC. A country like America has not even signed the Rome Statute.

“Meanwhile former Liberian President Charles Taylor, who claims to have been initially supported by the American government in his atrocities in Liberia and Sierra Leone, has been hauled before the ICC. Recently, another African leader in the DRC Mr Jean-Pierre Bemba is reported to have been arrested and sent to the ICC at the Hague in the Netherlands to stand trial for alleged gross violations of human rights.

“Sooner than later, the International Criminal Court will be full of violators of human rights from Africa, but none from Europe and America.”

Thus far it is reported that the ICC has indicted 36 individuals. Those in the public eye have been Laurent Gbagbo, former president of the Ivory Coast, Muammar Gaddafi, President Uhuru Kenyatta, Deputy President William Ruto and President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan. The Sudanese leader was the subject of media headlines in South Africa recently. There was an order on behalf of the ICC that South Africa must arrest him.

This was despite the fact that he had officially come to attend the African Union Summit and was not a visitor to South Africa. He, therefore, had diplomatic immunity according to the principles of international law.

This was also in spite of the fact that since 2009, this African leader has visited a number of countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and Egypt. These countries

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rejected the ICC request that they arrest the Sudanese president for alleged crimes in Darfur.

The United Nations Security Council has been divided over the issue of crimes allegedly committed by Omar al-Bashir in Darfur. It is not clear why the ICC expected South Africa to arrest al-Bashir. In December 2014 the ICC was reported to have suspended its investigations against the man.

Moreover, the African Union meeting in Kampala in 2010 reaffirmed that its member states must not co-operate with the ICC in the arrest of al-Bashir.

A judicial body must have the substance and manifestation of justice and fairness. It is difficult for fair-minded people and lovers of justice to ignore that not long ago, Britain and the United States invaded Iraq and sentenced to death its President Saddam Hussein for “weapons of mass destruction” his country did not have, except oil. The damage that the American and British invasion has done has incubated the “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” (ISIS). This has destabilised and created unprecedented chaos in the Middle East and poses danger to world peace.

What about Libya? As a result of the United Nations Security Council Resolution of 1973, that was manipulated to invade Libya by America, France, Britain, Norway, Belgium, Denmark and Spain, Libya is today described as “a failed state”. Muammar Gaddafi had made Libya emerge in Africa as a home of citizens enjoying a “first world economy”.

A British columnist Owen Jones has written, “Libya is a disaster we helped to create. The West must take full responsibility for it.”

Why is the West having such a short memory of its own atrocities in Africa through slavery, colonialism and racism? Writing about the enslavement of Africans by European countries and their allies, the Rev. J.H. Soga has written, “Murder was the order of the day. Men, women and children were massacred, and the captives sold without regard to the ties of fatherhood, motherhood or offspring; the one ruthlessly torn from the other, as if the bond of love and compassion had no existence. Family on family, tribe on tribe were often completely swept away, not even an infant being spared; millions of the sons and daughters of Africa were sent to destruction as if they had been wild animals.”

Corroborating this historical fact, Stanton A. Coblentz has recorded . . . villages had been left desolate . . . children had been orphaned, mothers wrested from their sons from their mothers, husbands from their wives. For these strangers from across the waters were pitiless hunters — hunters of human beings.”

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In the “Belgian” Congo, “Each village was ordered by the Belgian authorities to collect and bring a certain amount of rubber. If they failed to bring the required amount, their women were taken away and kept as hostages . . . in the harems of government employees . . . if this method failed . . . troops were sent to the village to spread terror, if necessary by killing some of the men . . . They were ordered to bring one right hand amputated from an African victim for every cartridge used.”(As quoted in “Introduction to African Civilisations” by John G. Jackson page 310-311, also “The Long Road to Humanity” by Stanton A. Coblentz)

The result, according to British philanthropist Sir H. H. Johnston, was the reduction of the Congolese population in the Congo from twenty million people to nine million in 15 years.

The worst known genocide occurred in Namibia in 1904. A well armed German army under General Lothar von Trotha drove Africans out of their land to the desert. Eighty percent of the Herero population perished there.

It is a good thing for Africa and justice loving people of the world that South Africa did not arrest President Omar Al-Shabir and handed him over to the International Criminal Court.

This act would have caused an African wound of divisions and instability that would take many years to heal, particularly because South Africa wrongly voted for the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, which Western countries manipulated to kill Gaddafi and destroy Libya.

The 21st century demands a new world order of peace, stability and prosperity for all nations of the world.

The practice of Western countries to sweep their atrocities under the carpet and want to bully Africa and other nations of the world shall dig a grave for them sooner than later.

The International Criminal Court must go to the drawing board. It must do what the Rome Statute established it for or gave way for better things to be done for the happiness of mankind on this planet.

Dr Motsoko Pheko is author of several books and a former representative of the victims of apartheid at the United Nations in New York and at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva as well as a former member of the South African Parliament.

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DRC

Joseph Kabila épingle 4 « obstacles » à la tenue apaisée des élections 2015-2016

NEWS STORY

Source: Le Potentiel (DRC)

1 Juillet 2015 - Le président Joseph Kabila Kabange a épinglé lundi 29 juin 2015, dans son message à la nation prononcé la veille du 55ème anniversaire de l'indépendance de la République démocratique du Congo (RDC) célébré mardi 30 juin à Matadi (Kongo Central, ouest du pays), quatre (4) obstacles à la tenue apaisée des élections que la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (Ceni) doit organiser en 2015 et 2016.

« La mise en place des animateurs de la CENI, le vote et la promulgation de la nouvelle loi électorale et de la loi des finances 2015, ont généré des défis qui naturellement n'avaient pas été pris en compte lors des Concertations nationales », a-t-il expliqué.

« Ces obstacles, a-t-il énuméré, sont liés:

1. Au calendrier électoral global. Exigé à cor et à cri par l'opposition, il a été contesté par la même opposition sitôt publié.
2. Au financement du processus électoral. Evalués bien après l'adoption du budget 2015, à eux seul, les besoins pour l'organisation réussie des élections s'élève à plus d'un milliard de dollar américain; alors que ledit budget, pour l'ensemble des besoins de l'Etat, était arrêté à l'équivalent, en Francs congolais, de neuf milliards de dollars américains.
3. A la participation aux scrutins de 2015 d'anciens mineurs devenus majeurs, en cours du cycle électoral qui du fait de la loi électorale en sont exclus, et donc injustement privés d'un droit que j'estime légitime. Cette loi prévoit, en effet, que cette frange importante de notre population ne pourrait être prise en compte que lors des scrutins à venir, après le renouvellement du fichier électoral.
4. A l'impératif de la sécurisation du processus électoral, les expériences malheureuses du passé, notamment l'intolérance politique et la non acceptation des résultats des élections par les perdants ayant conduit à des violences meurtrières avant, pendant et après les scrutins de 2006 et 2011 ».

Le chef de l'Etat congolais a insisté sur le fait que, « ne pas régler ces questions tant voulues et de manière consensuelle pourrait plonger le processus électoral dans une impasse et engendrer des conflits de tous ordres ».

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« C'est pourquoi j'engage ce jour toutes les Congolaises et tous les Congolais à s'inscrire dans la voie du règlement pacifique de toute divergence politique, conformément à la tradition congolaise de prévention, de gestion et de résolution des conflits », a-t-il souligné.

MESSAGE DU PRESIDENT JOSEPH KABILA KABANGE PRONONCE A L'OCCASION DU 55EME ANNIVERSAIRE DE L'INDEPENDANCE DE LA RDC

Mes chers compatriotes,

30 juin 1960, 30 juin 2015, cela fait exactement 55 ans que notre beau pays a accédé à la souveraineté nationale et internationale en s'émancipant du joug colonial.

Il y a cinq ans, à l'occasion du cinquantenaire de cette accession à l'indépendance, nous avons célébré cette date avec une fierté d'autant plus légitime pour notre pays, d'un demi-siècle de liberté retrouvée et d'autodétermination dont les limites des frontières héritées de la colonisation n'étaient pas acquises d'avance.

En effet, la République démocratique du Congo, ce précieux héritage, de nos aïeux, était un sujet à convoitise et objet de machinations de toutes sortes de la part de ceux qui pensent que ce territoire est trop grand et trop riche pour revenir aux Congolais, et à eux seuls. Evoquer ce défi permanent à notre souveraineté, à notre intégrité territoriale, c'est donner un sens et un contenu à la date du 30 juin et, partant, à la célébration de la fête nationale. Et cette année, elle le sera de manière solennelle au Congo central.

Par-delà la stabilité macro-économique retrouvée et les perspectives de croissance à deux chiffres qui rassurent, quant à notre détermination à hisser le Congo au rang des pays émergents d'ici à l'horizon 2030, la célébration de cette date est d'abord et avant tout le renouvellement tant par notre génération et par celle d'avenir de l'engagement individuel et collectif à préserver l'unité nationale, à garantir l'indépendance nationale et à sauvegarder l'intégrité territoriale de notre beau et grand pays.

Un engagement aussi à protéger nos échos systèmes, gage de l'avenir de nos enfants et petits enfants et à œuvrer sans nous lasser à la moralisation de la vie publique et à l'éradication de la corruption et de toutes formes d'antivaleurs. Condition sine qua non pour l'amélioration des conditions de vie de nos populations.

Mes Chers Compatriotes,

Pour nous Congolais, la République démocratique du Congo est le bien le plus précieux au monde, nous devons l'aimer, la chérir et la protéger. Quoi qu'il en soit, quoi qu'il en coûte. Dans cette optique, la paix, la sécurité et la stabilité s'imposent en nous comme un impératif non négociable.

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Notre destin commun en dépend. Nous nous devons, dès lors, d'apprécier à sa juste valeur le don de soi allant souvent jusqu' aux sacrifices suprêmes que sont nos filles et fils qui servent sous le drapeau, acceptent privations diverses, nuits et jours, et bravent des dangers de toutes sortes sur différents théâtres d'opérations afin que la sécurité de chacun soit de nous soit assurée et qu'aucun mètre carré de notre territoire n'échappe au contrôle du pouvoir central.

Aujourd'hui, avec persévérance, ils mènent ce combat contre les groupes terroristes à Béni, dans toutes les zones opérationnelles du Nord-Kivu et du Sud-Kivu ainsi qu'en Ituri, en Province orientale. Offrant ainsi à nos populations de ces contrées, longtemps meurtris, la perspective d'une aire de paix et de sécurité véritable et durable. De la Nation, ces vaillants éléments de nos forces armées, de Police et de sécurité, méritent reconnaissance, respect et soutien.

Mes Chers compatriotes,

Conscient de cette exigence de paix et de stabilité, si vitale pour notre pays, et dans le souci de mieux faire aboutir le processus électoral, j'ai depuis trois semaines entrepris les consultations avec les représentants des forces politiques et sociales de notre pays.

Ces consultations, élargies au Congo profond, à travers les entretiens entre les gouverneurs de province et les forces vives de leurs juridictions respectives, font suite à la demande pressante et insistante d'un dialogue politique par certains membres de l'opposition congolaise.

Le nouveau cycle électoral ayant été lancé dans notre pays, cette demande ne pouvait me laisser indifférent, d'autant plus que la mise en place des animateurs de la CENI, le vote et la promulgation de la nouvelle loi électorale et de la loi des finances 2015, ont généré des défis qui naturellement n'avaient pas été pris en compte lors des concertations nationales.

Vu qu'ils sont nés postérieurement à ce forum, j'ai donc engagé la Nation sur la voie des consultations et, éventuellement, du dialogue afin qu'ensemble, Majorité, Opposition et Société civile, puissent convenir des voies et moyens permettant de surmonter des obstacles qui jonchent la marche vers la troisième série d'élections générales, voulues libres, transparentes et crédibles et aussi apaisées par notre peuple qui avait été privé d'élections démocratiques pendant les 45 premières années de notre indépendance.

Ces obstacles sont liés:

1. Au calendrier électoral global. Exigé à cor et à cri par l'opposition, il a été contesté par la même opposition sitôt publié.

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2. Au financement du processus électoral. Evalués bien après l'adoption du budget 2015, à eux seul, les besoins pour l'organisation réussie des élections s'élève à plus d'un milliard de dollar américain; alors que ledit budget, pour l'ensemble des besoins de l'Etat, était arrêté à l'équivalent, en Francs congolais, de neuf milliards de dollars américains.
3. A la participation aux scrutins de 2015 d'anciens mineurs devenus majeurs, en cours du cycle électoral qui du fait de la loi électorale en sont exclus, et donc injustement privés d'un droit que j'estime légitime. Cette loi prévoit, en effet, que cette frange importante de notre population ne pourrait être prise en compte que lors des scrutins à venir, après le renouvellement du fichier électoral.
4. A l'impératif de la sécurisation du processus électoral, les expériences malheureuses du passé, notamment l'intolérance politique et la non acceptation des résultats des élections par les perdants ayant conduit à des violences meurtrières avant, pendant et après les scrutins de 2006 et 2011.

Mes Chers compatriotes,

Ne pas régler ces questions tant voulues et de manière consensuelle pourrait plonger le processus électoral dans une impasse et engendrer des conflits de tous ordres. C'est pourquoi j'engage ce jour toutes les Congolaises et tous les Congolais à s'inscrire dans la voie du règlement pacifique de toute divergence politique, conformément à la tradition congolaise de prévention, de gestion et de résolution des conflits.

Je remercie très sincèrement tous ceux et toutes celles issus de toutes les couches de la population qui lors des consultations entamées ont répondu sans hésitation à cet appel, qui à mes yeux, est celui de la sagesse.

Leurs propositions sur la meilleure manière d'organiser le dialogue seront, autant que faire se peut, prises en compte. A cet égard, même si les consultations se poursuivent encore, j'ai retenu avec intérêt que l'écrasante majorité de délégations qui se sont déjà exprimées, tant à Kinshasa que dans l'arrière pays souhaite que dans l'éventualité du dialogue celui-ci soit mené sans ingérence étrangère, à travers un nombre limité des participants et pour une durée relativement courte.

Et je note également que quoique non inscrit dans l'ordre du jour de mes consultations, la question de la réforme territoriale, de l'installation de nouvelles provinces, a été spontanément abordée par plusieurs de mes interlocuteurs et a reçu une large adhésion. Bientôt je mettrai fin aux consultations entamées et prendrai une disposition pertinente et qui s'impose en vue de matérialiser notre vision commune et sauvegarder ce qui nous est cher, la paix, la stabilité et l'unité de notre pays.

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J'espère qu'interpelées par ces nobles objectifs, quand viendra ce moment historique, les forces politiques et sociales de notre pays, dans leurs diversités, y compris ceux qui hésitent encore, répondront présents, afin que tous ensemble, dans la paix nous puissions donner à notre jeune démocratie la chance de se consolider davantage à travers cette troisième expérience électorale.

Quant aux amis de notre pays, je formule le vœu de les voir jouer, comme dans le passé, un rôle positif en vue de l'aboutissement heureux de cette démarche. Heureux anniversaire de l'indépendance de notre pays à chacun et à tous et que Dieu bénisse la République démocratique du Congo.

Je vous remercie.

RDC: l'opposition rejette l'appel au dialogue du président Kabila

REPORTAGE

Source: RFI

En République démocratique du Congo, le président Joseph Kabila a une nouvelle fois, lundi soir, appelé les partis d'opposition à participer au dialogue politique. Une concertation qu'il a lui-même initiée entre les forces vives du pays pour aller à des élections apaisées. Mais en dépit de ce nouveau geste, l'opposition refuse toujours de joindre aux concertations.

1 Juillet 2015 - En RDC, dans un discours prononcé à l'occasion de la fête de l'indépendance, le président Joseph Kabila a fermé la porte à toute possibilité de médiation internationale pour modérer le « dialogue » politique entre toutes les forces politiques du pays, tel que le réclamait le premier parti d'opposition du pays, l'UDPS. Le chef de l'Etat a expliqué que les consultations avec « les forces vives de la nation » se poursuivaient et a une nouvelle fois appelé l'opposition à y participer.

Le deuxième parti d'opposition, le Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC), dit « niet », car selon eux ce n'est pas avec le président qu'il faut discuter des échéances électorales. Un président qu'ils soupçonnent de vouloir se servir de ce dialogue pour négocier son maintien au pouvoir au-delà du second mandat en cours. « Le président Kabila, pour le moment, ne constitue plus un interlocuteur en matière d'élections, estime Eve Bazaïba Masudi, secrétaire générale du MLC. L'interlocuteur en matière des élections, ce sont les cadres tripartites de la majorité, de l'opposition et de la Céni. Donc lui, il est dans la famille de la majorité. »

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Pas de médiation internationale

Le MLC reste sur ses revendications et demande toujours une modification du calendrier électoral pour que la présidentielle se déroule avant les élections locales: « Je crois que le constat va être donné par la Céni, qui en a les compétences. Nous sommes au 30 juin. C'est-à-dire que la Céni va constater l'inopérationalité, le manque de faisabilité des élections locales. Ce n'est pas à l'opposition de le dire, mais le constat sera donné par la Céni qui en a les compétences. Voilà pourquoi nous disons que toutes ces questions techniques concernent la Céni, la tripartite au sein de la Céni », ajoute Eve Bazaïba Masudi.

Lundi soir dans son allocution, le président Joseph Kabila a notamment fermé la porte à une médiation étrangère. Cette médiation onusienne était portant une condition posée par l'opposition de l'UDPS pour participer à ce dialogue. L'UDPS reste donc sur sa position. Pour son porte-parole Bruno Tshibala, il n'est pas question d'aller au dialogue sans une médiation internationale : « C'est M. Kabila, qui en présence du secrétaire général des Nations unies, a signé le 24 février 2013 l'accord d'Addis Abeba. Cet accord dit clairement qu'il appartient au représentant spécial du secrétaire général des Nations unies d'offrir ses bons offices en vue de promouvoir un dialogue réunissant les parties congolaises, en vue de favoriser la tenue d'élections apaisées en RDC. »

UN Calls for Wider Police Deployment in DRC

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

Goma, 1 July 2015 - The U.N. mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, MONUSCO, has called on the government to deploy its police force more widely. Currently, only a small number of police officers patrol many of the areas with high crime rates, and a five-year program to reform the police has been found lagging.

During a recent conversation with reporters in Goma, MONUSCO chief Martin Kobler touted the successes in joint army and U.N. operations against rebels. But he stressed the importance of following up on those successes with a permanent police presence.

"We can fight against the armed groups," Kobler said, "but if the state's authority and the civil administration are not restored, and the PNC [Congo's national police] are not deployed, the end result will not be a success," he said.

As an example Kobler mentioned Bukaringi territory which he visited recently.

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He said the territory with 64,000 inhabitants on 400 square kilometers and had only four police officers, about one officer per every 16,000 people. The normal ratio, he added, is about one for every 500 people.

The latest official figures suggest there are about 100,000 police in the DRC, or approximately one officer for every 700 people nationwide.

Numbers inflated

But Djento Maundu, a former president of civil society groups in North Kivu province, told VOA that figure needs updating.

Perhaps only 60 percent of the names on the police list are of real police, says Maundu, and the rest are out of date or fictitious, although somebody is still drawing their salaries.

There are many territories like Bukaringi, where police presence is minimal, says Swedish academic Maria Eriksson-Baaz, an expert on Congo's security services.

"In many areas in the east, the police are (...) simply not present," she said.

Eriksson-Baaz says you will also see in general in the Congo that there is a great concentration of the PNC in urban areas. You also see that in western parts, she says, but it's clearer in the east and it's of course partly due to the security situation. There have been many instances over the years of PNC officers being killed in insecure areas in the east, she adds.

There is a clearly a limit to how far police can protect the population against armed groups.

Lack of training

A government spokesman in South Kivu province, minister Jean Julien Miruho, told a public meeting in Bukavu recently that police had not intervened to prevent a night time massacre at the village of Mutarule last year because they lacked training.

The police, Miruho said, are not trained for warfare, and when there is a lot of shooting as there was that night, it is too much to expect people who are not trained to wage war to intervene at that time.

In more peaceful areas, however, civilians also comment that the PNC are not widely deployed.

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A resident of the village of Kibumba, near Goma, told VOA that police are mainly to be found at public buildings such as the offices of local chiefs and administrators, and elsewhere, if you explore the neighborhood, you will not find them.

The governor of South Kivu, Marcellin Chishambo, told the public meeting in Bukavu last month that the PNC is in training, and as it has had to incorporate many former rebels, this training cannot be completed in just two years.

The governor was referring to a five-year reform and training program launched in 2012. One of the main donors, the British development agency DFID, has suspended its funding to the program.

DR Congo rebels have 'terrorist' undertones: UN general

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

Kinshasa, 1 July 2015 - Ugandan rebels blamed for slaughtering hundreds in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo have a "terrorist aspect" which could draw them closer to African jihadist movements, a UN military leader said Wednesday.

The insurgency by the mainly Muslim rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) has a "terrorist aspect that must be taken extremely seriously," said General Jean Baillaud, deputy commander of MONUSCO, the United Nations peacekeeping mission in DR Congo.

The rebels are accused of murdering -- primarily with machetes and farming tools -- over 400 people in nine months of massacres in and around the major eastern trading hub of Beni.

"What worries us... is that this group could possibly transform into an even more serious threat of the type we have seen in other parts of African," said Baillaud, evoking the jihadists' active on the continent.

He added that MONUSCO and the DR Congo authorities are totally committed to squelching the insurgents.

The ADF rebels launched an insurgency in neighbouring Uganda against President Yoweri Museveni in the mid-1990s and later established bases on the Congolese side of the border.

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They are also accused of looting, the forced enlistment of child soldiers and illegal trade in tropical timber.

Starting the mid-2000s the rebels began striking at the army and civilians, after authorities started to try to run them out of DR Congo.

An expert on DR Congo's armed groups, speaking on condition of anonymity, called ADF rebels "terrorists".

"Clearly they are terrorists, but to make the jump from there to jihadism is a line they must not cross," the source said.

The expert added Ugandan intelligence services were actively hunting for links between the group and jihadists movements but no "credible" tie has been uncovered.

BURUNDI

Burundi closes border to stem rising flood of people trying to flee

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

Bujumbura, 1 July 2015 - Nearly 10,000 Burundians fled the country at the weekend before Burundi closed its borders ahead of controversial and violence-wracked elections, the United Nations (UN) said on Tuesday.

Since Burundi's political turmoil began in April, 144,000 people have fled the country, with the numbers surging towards the end of last week, the UN refugee agency said.

"The pace this weekend spiked ... we saw at the weekend 10,000 more Burundians fleeing the country," UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokeswoman Melissa Fleming said in Geneva.

More than 6,000 had arrived in neighbouring Tanzania alone over the two-day period, bringing the total there to about 66,600.

Another 56,500 were in Rwanda, 11,500 in Democratic Republic of the Congo and more than 9,000 in Uganda, UNHCR said.

Burundian officials closed the borders late on Sunday ahead of Monday's controversial parliamentary polls — something they claim is common practice during an election.

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"Over the past 48 hours, refugees have been trying to cross informal border crossings through the forest to leave the country," Ms Fleming said.

People arriving in neighbouring countries have told aid workers that roads are being blocked and people suspected of heading to the border are being forced off buses, she said.

"Many said they had to walk for hours through the bush without luggage so as not to attract the attention of the militia and the police," she said.

"We are concerned that people who want to flee to seek asylum, who fear their lives are in danger ... are not able to leave the country."

The troubled central African nation has been in crisis since late April over President Pierre Nkurunziza's controversial bid to stand for a third consecutive five-year term, a move branded by opponents as unconstitutional and a violation of a peace deal that ended 13 years of civil war in 2006.

The opposition boycotted Monday's parliamentary elections, which precede the planned presidential vote on July 15. While the flood of refugees initially consisted largely of women and children, Ms Fleming said a growing number of men were now leaving.

They had told aid workers they had fled because of the breakdown in diplomatic negotiations and over fear the ongoing violence will escalate leading up to the presidential vote.

"They're very concerned that the country is going to break down." Ms Fleming said international appeals for funds to assist the refugees were "not meeting with much donor generosity".

A month ago, UNHCR and its partners appealed for \$207m to help protect and help up to 200,000 Burundian refugees but have so far received just 13% of that amount.

Election officials finished vote-counting on Tuesday.

"The counting is completed in all the polling stations throughout Burundi," election commission spokesman Prosper Ntahorwamiye told AFP, with those votes now being collated and taken to larger centres for final tallies before results can be announced.

Voting on Monday was marked by grenade attacks, with the election commission claiming an "enormous" turnout despite many polling stations remaining quiet.

The poll followed weeks of violence and a failed coup attempt sparked by Mr Nkurunziza's defiant bid for a third term, with more than 70 people killed.

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Almost 4-million people were registered to vote but the opposition boycotted the polls, as they did in the last elections in 2010, claiming that it was not possible to hold a fair vote.

The only international observers were those of the UN, who said their presence should not be "interpreted as a validation" of the process.

UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon earlier called for voting to be delayed, as Burundi faces its worst crisis since the end of its civil war nine years ago.

The African Union refused to send observers, saying that it was not possible to hold "free, fair, transparent and credible elections".

The European Union warned the polls would "only exacerbate the profound crisis", while former colonial power Belgium said the polls could "further divide the country".

Provisional results of local elections could be ready on Wednesday, when parliamentary results are also likely due, according to an election commission spokesman, who said it was "impossible" to give turnout figures before the results were fully compiled.

In polling stations in Bujumbura queues were short and turnout sparse, with election officials at times outnumbering voters, although in pro-government areas turnout was higher.

Monday's double polls were the first stage of three votes, with presidential polls due on July 15 followed by senatorial elections on July 24.

6 Killed in Clashes as Burundi Awaits Election Results

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

Bujumbura, 1 July 2015 - At least six people, including one policeman, were killed in Burundi's capital on Wednesday, witnesses and a police spokesman said, in the latest violent clash between police and residents since Monday's parliamentary election.

Burundi has been locked in its worst political crisis since its civil war ended a decade ago, with protests erupting in late April against President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid to seek a third term in office. Dozens have been killed.

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Monday's parliamentary election was boycotted by the opposition, and the presidential vote, scheduled for July 15, also comes in the face of widespread protests.

The incident occurred Wednesday morning in the Cibitoke neighborhood, in the outskirts of the capital, Bujumbura, when police were conducting patrols, said police spokesman Pierre Nkurikiye. He said that four people had been arrested and "many, many" guns and grenades had been seized.

"Six people have been killed. Five were criminals who attacked the policemen while they were on their patrol," he said.

Witnesses at the scene said the victims included a man and his two sons, aged 20 and 22.

"This is a war that has started. We have no peace at all," said a witness who did not identify himself but said he had lost a friend in the incident.

Throughout the day Wednesday, sporadic gunfire could be heard in several flashpoint districts in Bujumbura, marring celebrations marking the Independence Day holiday in the former Belgian colony in east Africa.

In a separate incident, at least two policemen were injured during a grenade attack, witnesses said.

Nkurunziza's decision to seek a third term and the Burundian election commission's (CENI) insistence on moving ahead with planned elections have been met with broad condemnation.

The United States and other Western powers have criticized Monday's poll, saying the conditions were not right to stage a fair election.

CENI had said it expected results from the poll to be announced Wednesday or Thursday.

Although the opposition coalition did not campaign and boycotted the race, names of the parties were still on the ballot. A CENI official told state radio their votes would be counted and they would be awarded any seats they won.

The government has pressed on with the election schedule despite the turmoil. Opponents say the president's attempt to stand again violates the constitution.

About 140,000 people, more than 1 percent of the population of 10 million, have fled across the country's borders, stoking concern in a region with a history of ethnic conflict, particularly in Rwanda, where 800,000 people were killed in 1994.

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Burundi celebrates 53rd Independence Day but crowds fail to turn up amid violent skirmishes

NEWS STORY

Source: International Business Times

1 July 2015- Burundi President Pierre Nkurunziza has reviewed troops in a semi-deserted stadium as the public failed to turn up for the country's 53rd Independence Day celebrations, amid heightened security after skirmishes erupted in parts of the capital Bujumbura.

Demonstrations started in the East African nation when Nkurunziza declared his intention to stand for a third term in the June elections, which the opposition claims is unconstitutional. However, his supporters argue that the president's first term should be discounted as it was chosen by the parliament rather than via election.

The festivities went ahead in Bujumbura, despite violence erupting in the Mutakura and Cibitoke districts – known for having housed some of the protests against the president's third term – on Wednesday 1 July.

'Heavy gunfire' during police operation

Local sources described how heavy gunfire in the two neighbourhoods followed a grenade explosion around 8:30am (local time) in Mutakura, in which two policemen were injured.

Automatic weapon gunshots could still be heard at the time of publishing, according to the same sources.

"At 8 AM we started hearing the police firing gunshots and the shots were very heavy. For us, this was strange because the district was calm this morning. We were told it was because police officers were raiding houses in our area but we can't know for sure because no one goes out in the streets," Pascal (not his real name), a resident from Mutakura, told IBTimes UK over the phone.

"Around midday, we were told a police van was targeted by a grenade, but again, we don't know if that is true and if any deaths were recorded because we are locked indoors."

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Presidency: Festivities under way

The spokesman for the Presidency, Gervais Abayeho, spoke to IBTimes UK from Bujumbura's Prince Louis Rwagasore Stadium, where army and police officers were parading.

Paratroopers also jumped from planes above the stadium, with their parachutes bearing the colours of the Burundian flag.

"The festivities are going on. After the civilians' parade, and the officers' parade, the president will make a speech before decorating those who contributed to the independence of Burundi," Abayeho said, adding that a commission had been set up to select civilians who will receive the medals.

Insecure climate dampens festivities

A local journalist, however, described the celebrations as "not like the other years as they are more like a formality now".

For many, the festivities come as increasingly difficult living conditions in Burundi and a government crackdown on dissidents have pushed a great number of opposition figures out of the country.

On the State Protocol's programme of festivities, which IBTimes UK saw, two defectors are still listed as being part of the official ceremony.

Vice president Gervais Rufyikiri fled the country on 25 June, saying he felt threatened after opposing Nkurunziza's third-term bid.

Pie Ntavohanyuma, the president of the assembly, fled to Belgium on 28 June – a day before the country held contested legislative elections.

The ruling CNDD-FDD party told IBTimes UK it was anticipating victory in the controversial legislative elections, but the country's opposition has already rejected the yet-to-be announced results.

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Burundi a poser for the AU

OPINION

Source: BD Live (<http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/editorials/2015/07/02/editorial-burundi-a-poser-for-the-au>)

2 July 2015 - When Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza made a move for a third term, he was playing a well-calculated game he knew he would win. Besides cleverly exploiting a seeming ambiguity in the constitution, he also knew very well that his peers in the African Union (AU) would, as they have done so many times in the past, learn to live with his machinations.

Jurists and senior politicians who thought this was a bad idea have had to flee.

Others have remained silent for fear of reprisals, a potentially deadly scenario in a region pockmarked by killings on an industrial scale for much of its history.

The AU has complained repeatedly about the unhealthy political state in which the recent elections were held.

Mr Nkurunziza, a former army officer, went ahead anyway, knowing that the AU could do no more to him than it has done to Egypt's Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, which is nothing of substance.

The latter has sentenced large numbers, predominantly his opponents in the Muslim Brotherhood, to death, including former president Mohamed Morsi.

The death sentences passed since Mr Sisi took over stand at more than a thousand.

The events in Burundi, where thousands have had to flee their homes and political freedoms are under threat, demonstrate how easily political abuse can turn into something worse. They also show us how powerless the AU is when it comes to making any meaningful intervention without the tacit consent of the problematic governments themselves.

Since Burundi's aid comes from outside Africa, the AU and its member states have even less leverage. At the same time, it does not have the means or credibility to impose any sanction to bring that government to heel because so many other heads of state and their governments have gone unpunished.

This is why the AU's bitter complaints against the International Criminal Court ring hollow.

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Just as we have seen everywhere else, what the AU says will probably remain in the realm of political fantasy, while millions of Africans continue to suffer abuse at the hands of dictators.

UGANDA

Uganda: Army Probe 1,500 over Forged Papers

NEWS STORY

Source: The Monitor (Uganda)

By Risdell Kasasira

Kampala, 1 July 2015 - An internal army investigation has unearthed hundreds of Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) soldiers who used false academic documents to get recruited.

A source said the soldiers, who could be as many as 1,500, could be charged with uttering of false documents once the probe is concluded.

Military sources say the soldiers under investigation include senior army officers. However, while the army spokesperson Lt Col Paddy Ankunda confirmed the existence of the probe, he downplayed the numbers involved preferring to only say "the number is not alarming."

"As an institution, we are doing an in-house verification in terms of academic credentials in order to professionalise our force. The process is still ongoing and the culprits could be charged with uttering false documents. They will definitely face the law," Lt Col Ankunda said.

According to 2005 UPDF Act Section 173, a person who utters false documents commits an offence and is, on conviction, liable to imprisonment not exceeding two years.

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ANGOLA

Angola: quinze jeunes accusés de coup d'Etat

ARTICLE

Source: Le Journal International (http://www.lejournalinternational.fr/Angola-quinze-jeunes-accuses-de-coup-d-Etat_a2947.html)

Par Jessica Robineau

1 Juillet 2015- La justice angolaise a annoncé l'arrestation et la mise en détention provisoire de 15 jeunes activistes accusés d'avoir voulu renverser le président Dos Santos. D'après des sources de la justice, ces jeunes s'apprêtaient à provoquer une insurrection en installant des barricades et en brûlant des pneus à Luanda. Dix jours plus tôt, la police angolaise avait procédé à l'interpellation de treize jeunes opposants au régime les accusant de trouble à l'ordre public. Ces activistes demandaient le départ du président José Eduardo dos Santos, au pouvoir depuis 1979, de meilleures conditions de vie et une plus grande justice sociale.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Republic of Congo president calls for inclusive dialogue

NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

Brazaville, 30 June 2015 - Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou N'Guesso on Tuesday announced that the country will hold inclusive and unconditional dialogue in July.

"There will be a national dialogue between July 11 to 15, 2015. It will focus on all concerns raised by various groups," the president said in a statement broadcast on national television.

He explained that the desire to hold the dialogue was expressed during consultative meetings held between May 20 to June 4, bringing together various political and social groups in the country.

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"It will touch on electoral governance and the future of our institutions," Sassou N'Guesso said.

At the same time, the Congolese president announced the setting up of a commission comprised of experts to prepare for the inclusive national dialogue.

Differences have emerged among the Congolese political class over the future of President Sassou N'Guesso whose second term ends in 2016. While some want him to leave as stipulated by the Constitution, others are calling for the review of the Constitution to allow him to contest for another term.

The differences have raised a lot of concern among the population which still remembers the persistent wars witnessed in the country between 1997 and 2002.

Dialogue is considered by majority of the parties involved in the debate as the only way of finding a peaceful resolution of this political impasse.

SOUTH SUDAN

SPLM-N becomes first African non-state body to commit to child protection

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

30 June 2015 - The Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM - N) on Tuesday signed the Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children (DCPC) and become the first African armed non-State actor (ANSA) to commit to child protection.

The Commitment is a mechanism developed by the Geneva Call, allowing the signatories from the rebel groups that cannot become parties to international treaties, to agree to respect a set of norms related to child protection and provide them with the aid and care they require.

In a ceremony held at the headquarters of the Swiss group in Geneva, the text was signed by the SPLM-N secretary-general Yasir Arman and its head of political training, Orwa Hamdan Zaid and the Geneva Call's executive president, Elisabeth Decrey Warner.

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In line with the signed document, the SPLM-N "is committed to prohibit the use of children in hostilities, ensure that children are not recruited into or forcibly associated with armed forces, release or disassociate children in safety and security, protect children from the effects of military operations, and do their best to provide children with the aid and care they need, in cooperation with specialized child protection agencies," says a statement released after the Geneva Call.

The signing comes after several meetings between the two sides to discuss ways to implement the Commitment. The SPLM-N chairman and his person were in Geneva two weeks ago to finalize the text with the non-governmental group.

In his speech, Arman reiterated the SPLM-N commitment to observe human rights and protect children and women rights particularly, stressing they are part of the movement' goals and objectives in a democratic Sudan.

"In the past two year we have established a commission of children, women and civilians, we have a special court for the protection of human rights, and also we have engaged in developing our basic rules and documents related to the advancement of human rights," he said.

The SPLM-N secretary general revealed they would destroy soon their stocks of land-mines.

He was referring to an agreement they signed with the Swiss based group in August 2013 where the rebel group committed themselves to ban the use of anti-personnel land-mines; which it claimed to have captured during military operations.

First African Group

From her side, Warner in her speech congratulated the SPLM-N for the committing itself to protect children and stressed that they are the first African armed movement to sign the DCPC.

"You are the first Africa movement in Africa to sign the Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children, so you can be proud of that. But this also means you will be under scrutiny of many people," she said.

The president of Geneva Call said she wrote to the Special Representative of the UN secretary-general for children and armed conflict Leila Zerrougui, UNICEF and other concerned agencies to inform them about the SPLM-N's commitment.

She also expressed the readiness of her organization to provide the rebel group with the needed support to implement the DCPC, including assistance and training.

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In a report to the UN Security Council, the UN chief accused all armed actors active in Sudan including the SPLM-N of using and recruiting children. But Armed dismissed the accusation during the meeting.

Since 2000, Geneva Call has been engaging armed non-state actors to seek their compliance with international humanitarian norms.

The deeds of commitment are a set of documents that mirror international treaties and allow armed non-state actors to declare their adherence to humanitarian standards, as these actors cannot sign international treaties.

Soudan du Sud: des rebelles attaquent une base de l'ONU

ARTICLE

Source: BFM avec AFP (<http://www.bfmtv.com/international/soudan-du-sud-des-rebelles-attaquent-une-base-de-l-onu-898936.html>)

2 Juillet 2015 - Des rebelles sud-soudanais ont ouvert le feu dans une base onusienne abritant 30.000 civils, tuant une personne et en blessant six autres, a dénoncé mercredi soir l'ONU, évoquant un possible "crime de guerre".

Des rebelles ont attaqué mercredi en début de soirée une base onusienne dans la ville septentrionale de Malakal, capitale de l'Etat pétrolier du Haut-Nil. Les Casques bleus ont riposté. "Toute attaque contre des sites de protection des civils constitue une agression directe contre les Nation unies et potentiellement un crime de guerre", a déclaré la Mission de l'ONU au Soudan du Sud (Minuss), dans un communiqué.

Plus de 142.000 civils ont trouvé refuge dans des bases onusiennes à travers le pays depuis le début de la guerre civile qui ravage le pays depuis 18 mois. D'autres bases ont été attaquées dans le passé par l'un ou l'autre des camps - forces rebelles regroupées derrière l'ancien vice-président Riek Machar ou forces pro-gouvernementales fidèles au président Salva Kiir.

L'actuel conflit au Soudan du Sud a éclaté en décembre 2013, avec des combats au sein d'une armée fracturée le long de lignes politico-ethniques par la rivalité à la tête du régime entre Kiir et Machar. Diverses milices tribales se sont jointes, des deux côtés, aux combats, accompagnés de massacres ethniques et d'exactions attribuées aux deux camps. Cette semaine encore, l'ONU a dénoncé des scènes insoutenables de viols, parfois collectifs, de femmes et de filles parfois brûlées vives par la suite.

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U.N. Security council blacklists six rival South Sudan generals

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

By Michelle Nichols; Editing by David Gregorio

1 July 2015- UNITED NATIONS The United Nations Security Council on Wednesday blacklisted six rival generals in South Sudan for "fuelling the ongoing conflict and contributing to the devastating humanitarian crisis" in the world's newest state, the United States said.

The men, three from either side of South Sudan's conflict, are the first to be listed by the Security Council's South Sudan sanctions committee, which operates by consensus. They are now subjected to a global travel ban and asset freeze.

"As the members of the Security Council demonstrated today, those who commit atrocities and undermine peace will face consequences," U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, said in a statement.

The United States, supported by Britain and France, made the U.N. sanctions proposal. The United States and the European Union have already imposed sanctions on some rival commanders.

South Sudan plunged into civil war in December 2013 when a political crisis sparked fighting between forces loyal to President Salva Kiir and rebels allied with his former deputy Riek Machar. The conflict has reopened ethnic fault lines that pit Kiir's Dinka people against Machar's ethnic Nuer forces.

Thousands have been killed and millions displaced. Several ceasefire have been agreed but broken. Talks are set to resume in mid-July to try to end the conflict in South Sudan, which seceded from Sudan in 2011.

The Security Council has long threatened to blacklist anyone undermining security or interfering with the peace process in South Sudan. Kiir said in March that the threat of international sanctions would not keep him from retaliating against his rival.

The United States supported Kiir until it lost confidence in 2013. Washington hoped he could oversee a stable, oil-producing, majority Christian state allied to the West in contrast to neighbouring Muslim-led Sudan, which is hostile to Washington

"South Sudan's political leadership has squandered the international goodwill that accompanied its independence and pursued political and economic self-interest that

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has produced only violence, displacement and suffering for the South Sudanese people," Power said.

The men sanctioned on the government side are: Major-General Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok, commander of Kiir's guard unit; sector one commander Lieutenant-General Gabriel Jok Riak; and third division commander Major-General Santino Deng Wol.

On the rebel side, the blacklisted men are: Major-General Simon Gatwech Dual, chief of general staff for the opposition forces; Major-General James Koang Chuol, commander of the opposition special division; and Major-General Peter Gadet, the deputy chief of staff of operations for the opposition forces.

Soudan du Sud: l'ONU sanctionne pour la première fois six chefs militaires

ARTICLE

Source: AFP

1 Juillet 2015 - L'ONU a décrété mercredi des sanctions contre six chefs militaires au Soudan du Sud, pour la première fois depuis le début de la guerre civile en décembre 2013, ont indiqué des diplomates.

Les sanctions --gel des avoirs financiers et interdiction de voyager-- visent trois responsables du côté des forces gouvernementales et trois du côté des rebelles.

UN South Sudan Sanctions Seen to Challenge 'Unchecked Impunity'

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

2 July 2015 - The US-based crisis management group Enough Project said Wednesday's U.N. Security Council sanctions against six military commanders from South Sudan are essential to combat what it called "the unchecked impunity that has come to define South Sudan's political environment."

The three generals and three rebel commanders are now subject to a global travel ban and an asset freeze for their role in perpetuating that country's 19 month-old conflict.

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Akshaya Kumar, the Sudan and South Sudan policy analyst for the Enough Project, said the sanctions are an important first step that would send a message of accountability and help forge an enabling environment for peace.

“This is an important step forward. It’s really the first multilateral evidence that we’ve seen of an attempt to hold people accountable for the gross human rights abuses that are taking place in South Sudan since December 2013. And so we applaud the Security Council for taking this decisive action,” she said.

The three government commanders sanctioned by the UN include Major-General Marial Chanuong Yol Mangok, Lieutenant-General Gabriel Jok Riak and Major-General Santino Deng Wol. The three rebel commanders are Major-General Simon Gatwech Dual, Major-General James Koang Chuol and Major-General Peter Gadet.

Enough Project, which aims to end genocide and crimes against humanity, said while the six commanders are individually responsible for the warring parties’ inability to reach a durable peace agreement, they nevertheless have been tied to grave human rights abuses and “indisputable violations” of previous ceasefire agreements.

Kumar said the sanctions are just the first step needed to construct the leverage that will be essential to creating an enabling environment for a just and lasting peace.

She said South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and former vice president and rebel leader Riek Machar are equally responsible for the inability to reach a peace deal that would end the conflict.

“We believe that those who bear the greatest responsibility for obstructing the peace and intransigence are the men who are sitting at the negotiating table. And so, if evidence is available to show that individuals, however high they are up the chair of command in South Sudan, if they are responsible for violations that merit sanctions, then, yes, they should be listed and named,” Kumar said.

The war has driven more than 2 million people from their homes and created a humanitarian crisis. Kumar said that up until now, it has been ordinary South Sudanese who have borne the brunt of the war.

U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power said the sanctions demonstrate that “those who commit atrocities and undermine peace will face consequences.”

She said the U.S. and other Security Council members demand both the government and rebels cease offensive military action and commit to negotiating a peace deal.

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South Sudanese officials have said that sanctions will not only hinder the peace process, but inherently be felt by the people of South Sudan.

“We need to remove obstacles obstructing peace, not create new ones,” said Foreign Minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin.

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta is currently working with leaders of South Sudan’s warring parties to find a lasting solution to the conflict.

Salva Kiir and Machar met last weekend in Nairobi and discussed issues blocking efforts to end the conflict, according to Pagan Amum, the re-instated secretary general of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement.

Kumar said sanctions are an incredibly useful tool to push people to make important concessions at the negotiating table.

“Our view is that targeted asset freezes and travel bans could help forge an enabling environment for peace,” Kumar said.

Réconciliation au Soudan du Sud: l'UA déçue du report d'une rencontre intercommunautaire

ARTICLE

Source: Algérie Presse Service

Addis Abeba, 1 juillet 2015 - L'Union africaine a exprimé sa déception après le report de la réunion de réconciliation entre responsables communautaires du territoire de l'Abyei (Soudan du Sud), qui devait se tenir à Addis Abéba, et ce à la suite d'une demande du gouvernement Sud soudanais.

La Commission de l'UA a souligné dans un communiqué "l'urgence d'efforts renouvelés pour renforcer la confiance et la réconciliation entre les communautés d'Abyei".

La réunion, prévue du 20 au 24 juin derniers, visait à offrir aux parties prenantes d'Abyei un lieu neutre propice à des discussions directes, ouvertes et franches sur des questions clés, afin de renforcer les relations intercommunautaires et de promouvoir la stabilité et la réconciliation dans la région.

La Commission a tenu à rappeler les décisions antérieures du Conseil de paix et de sécurité (CPS) sur la situation dans le territoire de l'Abyei, en particulier "le communiqué adopté par la 494ème réunion du CPS qui a eu lieu le 24 mars 2015."

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Dans le cadre du suivi de ce communiqué, le Comité de surveillance conjoint d'Abyei (AJOC) a tenu une réunion à Addis Abéba, les 29 et 30 mars 2015, à l'issue de laquelle les parties ont, entre autres, convenu de tenir une réunion de réconciliation entre les chefs coutumiers, qui devait être facilitée par l'AJOC, la Commission de l'UA et la Force intérimaire de sécurité des Nations unies pour Abyei (FISNUA).

En prenant cette initiative, l'AJOC avait à l'esprit la nécessité d'impliquer les communautés Ngok Dinka et Messiriya dans la recherche de solutions aux préoccupations qui sont les leurs", a rappelé l'UA.

Par la suite, le Facilitateur de l'AJOC désigné par l'UA, Boitshoko Mokgathe, a entrepris des consultations intensives avec toutes les parties prenantes au Soudan et au Soudan du Sud, ainsi qu'avec la FISNUA.

Au cours de ces consultations, les parties ont indiqué que leurs gouvernements respectifs s'étaient engagés à soutenir pleinement la tenue de la réunion des chefs coutumiers.

La FISNUA et l'UA, pour leur part, se sont engagées à prendre les dispositions nécessaires.

SUDAN

Bashir issue is one of being African

OPINION

Source: Business Day (South Africa)

By Thami Mazwai

1 July 2015 - THE saga of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is going to be with us for some time now that the government may appeal the judgment by the High Court in Pretoria. Judge Dunstan Mlambo lambasted the government for allowing Bashir, who has two international warrants out for his arrest, to slip out of SA despite a court order forbidding his departure.

Yet, the government was between a rock and a hard place. The one mistake the government made was to allow Bashir to come into the country. However, and looking at the aftermath, the debate regrettably ignores the reality on the ground.

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It also pointedly disregards the warning by African National Congress secretary-general Gwede Mantashe that we would now be at war with Sudan if we had acted differently. That we are militarily superior to Sudan is not the point. The point is, had we arrested Bashir and handed him over to the International Criminal Court (ICC), we would now be the polecat of Africa.

We have spent the past 20 years integrating ourselves into Africa, which has the African Union (AU), of which we are proud members. If this body takes a decision, we must comply. The AU took a decision that warrants issued by the ICC must be ignored. Why, then, do people want SA to do the opposite, when we take part in and benefit from AU economic development programmes?

As the most modern economy in Africa, we have become the centrepiece of the AU's programmes. One of these is the development of the rail industry. Lucky Montana, CEO of Passenger Rail Agency of SA, recently announced at a rail industry conference that the AU had asked SA to lead this programme, which includes the manufacture of rolling stock. We are also the biggest investor in Africa and have companies in several countries. Do we welcome the benefits but reject the obligations to comply with AU decisions?

Further, in the recent xenophobic violence, many South Africans were chased out of several countries in retaliation. Had SA arrested Bashir, many in other African states would scorn us, particularly those who are envious of us.

Economic rivals would turn local populations against us and try to smoke us out of those countries. Sadly, as research has pointed out, the lack of sanctity of contracts and other legal instruments and institutions in parts of Africa does not offer us protection.

Sudan is an Islamist state. I shudder to think of what could happen when radical entities such as al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda take advantage of us arresting an Arab president and then, as in France, spread mayhem. Our government has played a delicate balancing act in trying to make sure we are not sucked into such conflicts, unavoidable as they are when taking the situation of Kenya into account.

Some of the above may be far fetched but must be carefully considered as we deal with the unknowns on our continent. I have no problem with the legal or constitutional issues that are being raised — they are par for the course in any democracy. But the same civil society raising these issues must not have a narrow focus, as if there are not numerous dynamics at play.

We will need to ask ourselves: do we want a conflict-free SA in which we expand our economic footprint, or are we so passionate about complying with the ICC even if our

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country becomes a wasteland? Are we blind to the fact that the developed world chooses which international statutes it complies with?

Finally, the Southern African Litigation Centre may be smiling all the way to the bank. Its court application to have Bashir arrested will undoubtedly open up the purses of those who hate Africa.

Government, UNAMID Reach Understandings on Demobilization in Darfur

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Vision

Khartoum, 1 July 2015 - Sudanese government and UNAMID reached common understandings regarding the process of demobilization in Darfur after the outbreak of sharp differences between UNAMID and the Commission of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR).

Head of UNAMID in Sudan said that he held fruitful and successful meeting with the DDR Commissioner, where all the outstanding issues between the two sides were discussed.

He stressed that the demobilization process in Darfur will not stop and that some of technical problems faced this process and will be overcome under the understandings that have been reached, noting that the two sides intent on continuing this process for Darfur security, peace and stability.

For his part, DDR Commissioner-General, Lieutenant General Salah Al-Tayeb Awad revealed reaching understandings in favor of demobilized from all sides.

He stressed that the differences between the two parties on the way towards a solution and address all outstanding issues between DDR and the UNAMID regarding the process of demobilization and reintegration of combatants.

DDR had accused UNAMID of threatening security there through procrastination in enforcement of demobilization.

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TANZANIA

Tanzania: Kikwete - Bring Rwanda Genocide Suspects to Arusha for Trial

NEWS STORY

Source: Tanzania Daily News (<http://allafrica.com/stories/201507020202.html>)

By Marc Nkwame

Arusha, 2 July 2015 - President Jakaya Kikwete asked all countries that host the remaining suspects of the Rwanda Genocide to surrender them to Arusha for trials.

He issued the plea here [Arusha] while laying the foundation stone for the ongoing construction of the proposed UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICTs) at the Laki-Laki Hills of the Kisongo wilderness in the outskirts of Arusha city. The UN Security Council Resolution 1966 (2010) established the MICTs that became effective three years ago.

The tribunal is supposed to complete the remaining work of the Arusha-based International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), after the completion of their respective mandates.

MICT, whose construction will be completed next year, will take over the trial of the remaining renegades, including the notorious Mr Felician Kabuga.

"Just as Tanzania and the United Nations are playing their part in ensuring that all perpetrators of international crimes are brought to justice, other countries also have moral responsibility to flush out the remaining suspects connected to the Rwanda mass killings of 1994 who are still at large and definitely holed up in some states," pointed out President Kikwete.

He also addressed the issue of relocating the 11 individuals who have been acquitted by the UNICTR, but are still in Tanzania because there are yet countries ready to take them under their care.

The issue has become extremely urgent, considering that the Arusha-based Tribunal will be closing its operations and departing from Arusha in three months' time.

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United Nations Assistant Secretary Generals, Mr Stephen Mathias (Office of legal affairs) and Mr Stephen Cutts (Central Support services) used the occasion to laud Tanzania for hosting the MICT, including donating the land for its construction and praised President Kikwete for being in the forefront in the battle against impunity.

The MICT has two branches, one in Tanzania, which is being constructed at Laki-Laki area of Kisongo neighbourhood in Arusha and the other one has been set up in The Hague, Netherlands.

The mechanism will serve as residual cases' court building, archives holder, Rwanda 1994 genocide museum and educational centre on information related to the ICTR and Rwanda.

The Tribunal has finished proceedings against 33 individuals who are currently serving prison sentences, 11 who have finished their sentences and have been released and three who have died while serving prison sentences. Three individuals remain at large as fugitives.