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



MEDIA MONITORING

27 August 2015

DRC

DRC President Signs Legislation on Local Elections

NEWS STORY

Source: Associated Press

Kinshasa, 26 August 2015 - The president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has signed legislation to keep elections on a timeline proposed by an independent commission, a government spokesman said Wednesday, as the new U.S. envoy for the region urged respect for the constitution and electoral calendar.

President Joseph Kabila on Tuesday signed the parliament-approved legislation to hold the first local elections Oct. 25, said spokesman Lambert Mende.

"The president's actions today reflect the government's steadfast commitment to upholding the electoral calendar," he said. The Independent National Electoral Commission's implementation of the timeline "will enable the Congolese people to participate in free, fair and transparent elections at all levels of government."

Presidential elections are slated for November 2016.

Mass protests erupted in Congo in January against proposed changes to the electoral law, widely seen as a ploy to prolong Kabila's rule. Kabila, who has been in power since 2001, has remained quiet about his future in politics, but the D.R.C. has never had a peaceful transfer of power in its 55 years of independence.

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The new U.S. special envoy to the Great Lakes region, Thomas Perriello, met with Kabila on Wednesday before holding his first news conference there.

The election process is as important as Election Day, and "many partners must be involved in ensuring a truly free and transparent elections cycle here," he said.

Tensions have been high between the president and opposition parties, who fear election delays could keep Kabila in office beyond constitutional limits.

Kabila called for a dialogue in June, but opposition parties refused to participate without international mediation. Some leaders have said they worry talks will lead to the formation of a national unity government that would delay elections.

U.N. cuts aid to ex-rebels in Congo, urges state to step in

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

By Aaron Ross

Kinshasa, 26 August 2015 - U.N. peacekeepers said on Wednesday they would have to cut rations for 6,800 ex-rebels and their families left in limbo in government camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo, blaming a shortage of funds and calling for the state to step in.

The U.N. mission there also said some of the adults and children had been ordered to stay in the camps by rebel leaders trying to keep up a presence in the region - and the aid cut might push the commanders to let the people go home.

The announcement underlined the plight of the thousands of former fighters and their dependants stuck in often dire conditions in demobilization camps for years amid a string of conflicts.

Last October, U.S.-based Human Rights watch said more than 100 people had died from starvation and disease in one camp because of government neglect.

The U.N. Peacekeeping Mission in the country, MONUSCO, said on Wednesday it did not have the funds to keep feeding the inhabitants, and something needed to be done to resolve the festering problem and get the ex-fighters back home.

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"We don't have the money," mission head Martin Kobler told a news conference in the capital Kinshasa. "This costs us \$2 million per month. It's not our task. It's not our obligation. The government must take responsibility."

The government was not immediately available for comment but has in the past pointed to the difficulty of supplying remote camps, and accused world powers of not giving enough aid.

The defense ministry recently pledged \$1.5 million to support the camps, Taz Greyling, the chief of MONUSCO's demobilization, disarmament and reinsertion (DDR) section said.

The camp inhabitants are members of a number of rebel groups, many from Congo, but others from the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a force which includes former Hutu militia accused of involvement in the 1994 genocide in neighboring Rwanda.

Analysts have said the FDLR commanders have been keen to keep their fighters in Congo to avoid having to return to Rwanda and face possible arrest and prosecution.

The FDLR portrays itself as a defender of Hutu refugees in Congo, a country dogged by nearly two decades of conflict fueled by competition over vast minerals resources.

In an email to Reuters, Greyling said the decision to cut support was also meant to pressure FDLR leaders to allow ex-fighters and their families leave the camps.

"We hope that FDLR will let them leave and have a chance at a normal life," Greyling said.

Junior Safari, executive director of the Congolese Association for the Respect of Human Rights in the northern city of Kisangani, where hundreds of ex-FDLR combatants and their families are housed, said MONUSCO's decision would force the former fighters to live off the population.

"Now, they are going to have to get by on their own," he said. "They are going to create panic and insecurity among the population."

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L'ONU ne peut plus nourrir les 7 000 ex-rebelles cantonnés dans l'est de la RDC

NOUVELLE

Source: France24 avec l'AFP

Parce qu'elle n'a pas "suffisamment d'argent", la Mission des Nations unies en RD Congo (Monusco) souhaite que l'aide alimentaire apportée aux quelque 7 000 ex-rebelles cantonnés dans l'est du pays soit désormais assumée par Kinshasa.

26 août 2015 - Faute de moyens, la Mission des Nations unies en République démocratique du Congo (Monusco) a annoncé, mercredi 28 août, qu'à partir de la mi-septembre elle cesserait de nourrir les quelque 7 000 anciens rebelles congolais et étrangers répartis dans les camps de démobilisation de l'est du pays.

"Il y a 6 800 ex-combattants [...] que la Monusco nourrit" et le coût de cette aide s'élève à "deux millions de dollars chaque mois", a déclaré à l'AFP le chef de la Monusco, Martin Kobler, qui souhaiterait que cette responsabilité soit "transférée" aux autorités de Kinshasa.

La mission onusienne gère un programme de désarmement, démobilisation, rapatriement, réintégration et réinstallation (DDRRR) des rebelles étrangers. La gestion des camps d'ex-combattants, congolais ou non, revient à la RDC, et l'ONU apporte une aide alimentaire et logistique.

Avec quelque 20 000 hommes et dotée d'un budget annuel de 1,4 milliard de dollars, la Monusco est aujourd'hui l'une des plus grandes missions onusienne au monde. Mais selon Martin Kobler, l'argent lui manque pour nourrir les ex-combattants. Une source à la mission a précisé à l'AFP que parmi les 6 800 personnes concernés par le programme figuraient "sûrement" les femmes et les enfants cantonnés avec les ex-rebelles.

Succès limité

Depuis près de 20 ans, l'est de la RDC est en proie à l'activisme de dizaines de groupes armés congolais et étrangers qui s'affrontent pour des raisons ethniques, foncières ou pour le contrôle d'importantes ressources minières dont regorge la région. En décembre 2013, Kinshasa a lancé un troisième programme de désarmement, démobilisation et réinsertion pour les rebelles congolais. Un programme que la communauté internationale rechignait à financer en raison du succès limité de précédents plans du genre.

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Le nouveau plan prévoyait notamment le regroupement des ex-combattants dans des camps, une "phase de réintégration durable sur un site de leur choix" et un "suivi" pendant cinq ans. Mais dans plusieurs centres, les mauvaises conditions de vie ont poussé certains à repartir en brousse.

En octobre 2014, l'organisation Human Rights Watch avait accusé les autorités congolaises de négligence "criminelle", leur reprochant la mort d'une centaine de personnes - dont 57 enfants - dans le camp de Kota-Koli (Nord-ouest). Kinshasa avait démenti les accusations.

U.S. Envoy Meets Congo's Kabila on Election, Regional Issues

NEWS STORY

Source: Bloomberg Business

By Thomas Wilson

26 August 2015 - The U.S. special representative to the Great Lakes region met with Democratic Republic of Congo President Joseph Kabila on Wednesday to discuss the election in that country and ongoing armed conflicts in the region.

The conversation included the political situation in Burundi and adoptions, Tom Perriello, the U.S.'s special envoy to the Great Lakes region, told reporters in Kinshasa, the capital, on Wednesday.

"The conversation on the electoral calendar was very constructive," Perriello said. "I am sure we will continue to have many discussions between ourselves and others with the goal, of course, of meeting the presidential and legislative elections slated for the end of next year."

Perriello, who replaces U.S. Senate candidate Russ Feingold, takes on the role of special envoy at a troubled time in the region. Burundi has suffered deadly protests and widespread civil unrest since President Pierre Nkurunziza successfully sought a third-term in an election in July, which the U.S. described as lacking in credibility.

In Congo, the government plans to hold six elections in 14 months culminating in the presidential elections in November 2016. Opposition leaders have expressed concern that Kabila also wants to run for a third term, which is banned by the constitution.

In two visits to the region since his appointment on July 6,

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Perriello has visited Kinshasa and Goma in the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania. Perriello previously served as a congressman. It was the first meeting between Kabila and Perriello.

Troisième mandat de Kabila: les médias publics' accusés de partialité

REPORTAGE

Source: RFI

L'Association africaine de défense des droits de l'homme (Asadho) a adressé une lettre ouverte au président congolais Joseph Kabila pour dire son opposition à éventuel un troisième mandat du chef de l'Etat, jugé anticonstitutionnel. L'organisation dénonce également une instrumentalisation des médias publics par les partisans du troisième mandat.

26 Août 2015 - C'est une nouvelle pierre que vient de jeter l'Asadho dans le débat autour de la question d'un éventuel troisième mandat de Joseph Kabila à la tête de la République démocratique du Congo. Dans une lettre envoyée lundi au président (reprise en intégralité sur plusieurs sites congolais), l'Asadho dénonce les « appels à la violation de la Constitution ».

L'Asadho demande à Kabila de « rappeler ses troupes à l'ordre »

Interrogé par RFI, Jean-Claude Katende, président de l'association de défense des droits de l'homme, fustige notamment les interventions régulières des proches du président Joseph Kabila, qui lancent des appels à un troisième mandat, notamment sur la Radio télévision nationale congolaise (RTNC).

« La RTNC est une institution publique, financée par les contribuables congolais. Nous ne pensons pas qu'il soit acceptable que l'on se serve de cet outil, qui appartient à tous les Congolais, pour appeler à la violation de la Constitution », dénonce Jean-Claude Katende.

L'Asadho pointe « le silence du président de la République, qui ne rappelle pas ces troupes à l'ordre ». Selon l'association, M. Kabila laisse faire les appels à une candidature de sa part à un troisième mandat, « alors que cette possibilité ne lui est pas reconnue par la Constitution de notre pays ».

L'exemple burundais et la crainte des violences

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« Si la situation dégénère, ce sont nos vies qui vont être affectées », justifie Jean-Claude Katende, qui pointe les risques d'une escalade comparable à celle qui touche le Burundi.

Il faut que Joseph Kabila « se prononce de manière claire pour dire qu'il ne va pas briguer un troisième mandat, demande le président de l'Asadho. Parce que, pour nous, le troisième mandat risquerait de nous plonger dans la crise qui est connue aujourd'hui par le Burundi. »

Et pour Jean-Claude Katende, les violences qui résulteraient d'une telle crise seraient « très grandes par rapport à ce qui se passe au Burundi ». Pour lui, « le peuple n'est pas prêt à accepter une nouvelle transition, qui serait conduite par le président Kabila, et encore moins un nouveau mandat ou un troisième mandat pour ce dernier ».

BURUNDI

Groups threatening Burundi security must be destroyed: president

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

26 August 2015 - Burundi's president on Wednesday called for groups that threaten national security to be "destroyed", setting a combative and hardline tone as he begins a controversial third term in office.

In a speech read out on state media, Pierre Nkurunziza said young people would be given "patriotic, theoretical and practical training" to work alongside the central African nation's security forces.

"These mixed security committees will be asked to work day and night so that groups which seek to only kill and upset security, especially inside Bujumbura, will be destroyed and so that we won't be talking about them two months from now," he said.

He urged "all people to rise up as one, and to work with security forces so that this promise can be kept".

The president won a highly-controversial third term in July in polls the United Nations said were not free or fair, and which sparked an attempted coup and months of civil unrest led by opposition groups who condemned his re-election bid as unconstitutional.

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There have also been a string of killings since his re-election, including that of his top security chief, assassinated last month in a rocket attack.

Nkurunziza won over 69 percent of the vote in July's presidential poll, giving him a landslide first round victory. The polls, however, were boycotted by the opposition.

Burundi's constitution only allows a president to be elected twice -- for a total of 10 years in power -- but before the polls Nkurunziza argued he had only been directly elected by the people once.

In power since 2005, when he was selected by parliament, he then was re-elected in 2010.

Nkurunziza said the dispute over his third mandate was now "over".

"Today, it is time to work together for our country, to support the institutions we have elected and put in place the programme that you voted for us to put in place," he said.

Nkurunziza, a 51-year-old former sports teacher, was a Hutu rebel leader during Burundi's 13-year civil war, when at least 300,000 people were killed.

The opposition and international community claimed a third term violated the Arusha accords that paved the way to end the war in 2006.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Communiqué de Presse de la 534ème réunion du CPS sur la situation en République centrafricaine

COMMUNIQUE

Source: African Press Organization (APO)

26 Août 2015 - e Conseil de paix et de sécurité de l'Union africaine (UA), lors de sa 534ème réunion tenue le 17 août 2015, a suivi une communication de la Commission sur la situation en République centrafricaine (RCA).

Le Conseil a rappelé ses précédents communiqués et communiqués de presse sur la situation en RCA, y compris le communiqué de presse PSC/PR/COMM.(DVI) adopté lors de sa 506ème réunion tenue le 13 mai 2015.

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Le Conseil s'est félicité de l'évolution globalement positive de la situation en RCA depuis la tenue, du 4 au 11 mai 2015, du Forum national de réconciliation de Bangui. À cet égard, le Conseil a félicité les autorités de la Transition et toutes les autres parties prenantes centrafricaines pour leur engagement à respecter l'esprit du Forum et à mettre en œuvre les recommandations qui en sont issues.

Le Conseil a souligné, encore une fois, la nécessité de tout faire pour assurer la tenue réussie des élections législatives et présidentielles prévues en octobre 2015 et qui marqueront le couronnement de la Transition en cours et le parachèvement du processus de restauration de l'ordre constitutionnel. Le Conseil a noté avec satisfaction les mesures prises à cet effet, y compris le lancement, le 26 juin 2015, de l'opération d'enrôlement des électeurs, ainsi que les efforts de mobilisation des ressources financières et logistiques requises pour la bonne tenue de ces scrutins. Le Conseil, notant que près de 10 millions de dollars sont encore requis pour le financement du processus électoral et rappelant le principe de solidarité africaine, a lancé un appel pressant à tous les États membres qui ne l'ont pas fait pour qu'ils apportent d'urgence des contributions financières pour aider à combler le déficit actuel. Le Conseil a demandé à la Commission de sensibiliser les États membres sur la situation.

Le Conseil s'est félicité de l'Avis de la Cour constitutionnelle du 20 juillet 2015 stipulant que l'on ne peut, au motif de difficultés d'organisation technique et matérielle, dénier l'exercice de leur droit de vote aux citoyens centrafricains réfugiés du fait des violences qu'a connu le pays, tel qu'énoncé à l'article 20 de la Charte constitutionnelle de la Transition du 18 juillet 2013 et réaffirmé par le Forum de Bangui. Le Conseil a exprimé l'espoir que le Conseil national de transition (CNT), lors de sa session extraordinaire ouverte le 10 août 2015, entérinera cet Avis. Le Conseil a souligné l'importance que revêt le caractère inclusif des scrutins à venir, qui est une condition essentielle à la promotion durable de la réconciliation et de la paix en RCA.

Le Conseil a réitéré son attachement au strict respect des dispositions de la Charte constitutionnelle de transition relative à l'inéligibilité des responsables actuels et passés de la Transition, ainsi que des responsables politiques visés par des sanctions imposées par le Conseil et/ou par le Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, conformément au communiqué de presse PSC/PR/COMM.(DVI). Le Conseil a souligné que l'UA ne reconnaît pas comme valides des scrutins tenus en violation de ces dispositions.

Le Conseil a salué les Conclusions de la 8ème réunion du Groupe international de contact sur la RCA (GIC-RCA) tenue à Addis Abéba le 27 juillet 2015, et s'est félicité des actions de suivi qui sont menées sur le terrain par le Groupe de coordination pour la préparation et le suivi des réunions du GIC-RCA (G8- RCA), que préside le

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Représentant spécial de la Présidente de la Commission en RCA et chef de la Mission de l'UA pour l'Afrique centrale et la RCA (MISAC), le Général Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko. Le Conseil a encouragé la MISAC à poursuivre vigoureusement la mise en œuvre de son mandat tel que déterminé par le communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(CDLVIII) Rev.1 adopté lors de sa 458^{ème} réunion tenue le 17 septembre 2014.

Le Conseil a réitéré sa gratitude aux chefs d'État et de Gouvernement de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique centrale (CEEAC) et à l'ensemble des pays contributeurs de troupes et de personnels de police à la Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en RCA (MINUSCA) pour leur contribution à la promotion de la paix, de la sécurité et de la réconciliation en RCA. Le Conseil a également exprimé sa gratitude aux partenaires bilatéraux et multilatéraux de la RCA pour leur appui continu au processus de paix en RCA, et les a exhortés à poursuivre leur soutien.

Le Conseil a exprimé sa profonde préoccupation face aux allégations d'exploitation et d'abus sexuel et autres violations des droits de l'homme commis par des éléments des forces internationales en RCA. Le Conseil a fermement condamné ces actes inacceptables et ignobles, et souligné la nécessité et l'urgence de faire la lumière sur cette question. Le Conseil a instamment demandé à tous les pays contributeurs de troupes et de personnels de police dont les ressortissants seraient impliqués dans la commission de tels actes de diligenter sans délai les enquêtes requises et de prendre, le cas échéant, des sanctions exemplaires. Le Conseil a demandé à la Commission, en collaboration avec les Nations unies, de sensibiliser les États membres concernés. Plus globalement, le Conseil a prié la Commission de lui soumettre un rapport sur la question de l'exploitation et des abus sexuels dans le contexte des opérations de maintien ou de soutien à la paix en cours sur le continent, et de lui faire des recommandations sur les modalités d'une action africaine et internationale renforcée pour prévenir et sanctionner de tels crimes.

Le Conseil, ayant été informé de la démission du Représentant spécial des Nations unies en RCA et chef de la MINUSCA, le Général de corps d'armée Babacar Gaye, lui a rendu hommage pour sa contribution inestimable à la promotion de la paix et de la réconciliation en RCA et ailleurs, ainsi que pour son engagement. Le Conseil a formé des vœux de succès pour son successeur, M. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, et attend avec intérêt la poursuite, sous sa direction, de l'étroite coopération qui existe entre la MINUSCA et la MISCA, dans le cadre du partenariat entre l'UA et les Nations unies dans le domaine de la paix et de la sécurité.

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UN Central African Republic head promises discipline

NEWS STORY

Source: Associated Press

Bangui, 26 August 2015 - Central African Republic — The United Nations' acting special representative for Central African Republic has said there is zero-tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers, calling on civilian and military personnel to act responsibly.

Parfait Onanga-Anyanga of Gabon was appointed Aug. 14. He replaces Babacar Gaye, who was forced to resign after about a dozen allegations of sexual misconduct had been received since the mission was established in April 2014.

Onanga-Anyanga said Wednesday that U.N. personnel must embody the principles and values that make it a respected institution. He said the protection of civilians is sacred.

He condemned recent violence in Bambari that the International Committee of the Red Cross said Saturday had killed dozens over days.

Central African Republic has been rocked by deadly violence between Muslims and Christians since 2013.

Démenti du ministre de la Défense nationale sur les prétendus viols commis à Bangui par des soldats congolais

NOUVELLE

Source: L'Avenir (quotidien de la RDC)

Ngoy Mukena a souligné qu'un seul Président au monde ayant fait de la lutte contre les violences sexuelles et viols son cheval de bataille est bel bien Joseph Kabila.

26 Août 2015 - Le ministre congolais de la Défense Nationale et Anciens Combattants, Aimé Ngoi Mukena, a indiqué mardi qu'aucun cas de violence sexuelle parmi les Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (Fardc) ne restera impuni.

Cet officiel congolais qui revient de Bangui, capitale de la République centrafricaine pour s'imprégner du contexte et surtout des circonstances dans lesquelles un casque

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bleu congolais a été accusé de viol, il y a de cela une semaine passée, est rentré depuis hier dans la capitale congolaise.

Se faisant le devoir d'éclaircir l'opinion nationale et internationale sur cet incident qui ternit l'image de marque de la République démocratique du Congo à travers ses forces de défense, le ministre congolais a précisé à la presse qu'il s'agit d'un policier congolais, qui serait malheureusement reproché de cet acte honteux et pour lequel, toutes les autorités congolaises et de l'Organisation des Nations unies sont saisies.

« Il ne s'agit pas d'un militaire congolais, mais plutôt d'un policier congolais, un casque bleu de la Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation de la Centrafrique (MISNA), qui aurait commis cet acte. Je suis rentré avec lui dans l'avion et d'ailleurs, à notre descente de l'avion, ici à l'aéroport international de N'Djili, il m'a demandé s'il sera fait prisonnier (...). Nous avons déjà informé le ministre de l'Intérieur... », a indiqué le ministre congolais de la Défense, soulignant cependant que jusque-là, c'est encore une rumeur, qui court les rues de Bangui, capitale de la République centrafricaine.

« Les enquêtes se poursuivent par les experts indépendants de l'ONU pour déterminer les vrais auteurs de ce crime que nous combattons au sein de notre armée et de la police », a ajouté Aimé Ngoyi Mukena, avant de souligner que s'il s'avère que ce Congolais soit réellement auteur cette infraction, il va subir la rigueur de la loi, surtout que les instances compétentes en la matière sont déjà saisies.

Jaloux de l'image du pays

C'est un défi que la République démocratique du Congo doit relever. Celui de redorer l'image de l'armée congolais et de son pays. Les efforts déployés en vue justement d'éradiquer le fléau au sein des Fardc sont en train de payer à la grande satisfaction des Congolais, mais aussi des partenaires, qui jettent des éloges au chef de l'Etat et au Gouvernement, qui a fait de la lutte contre les abus sexuels son cheval de bataille.

« Sur l'ensemble de prisonniers que compte actuellement le pays, il y a 3000 militaires, et un général (...) pour le cas de viol », a déclaré le ministre. Ce qui est une vraie exception au monde. Et les éloges ne cessent de tarir à l'endroit du chef de l'Etat, qui a parmi ses collaborateurs, une Représentante spéciale ayant en charge la lutte contre les violences sexuelles.

Soulignons que ce Congolais se trouvait parmi les casques bleus de l'Onu, qui interviennent dans le cadre de la Mission des Nations Unies en République centrafricaine (Minusca), dans laquelle d'ailleurs, les Congolais sont très félicités pour leurs prouesses sur le terrain.

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CAR govt condemns recent Bambari violence

NEWS STORY

Source: APA

26 August 2015 - The government of the Central African Republic has strongly condemned the latest clashes in Bambari in which twenty people died and several others were injured including humanitarian workers of the International Red Cross. A statement read on the national broadcaster by Dominique Pagueendji the Spokesman of the minister of Public Security on Wednesday vowed that the perpetrators of the heinous attacks will be prosecuted and brought to justice.

Pagueendji was part of a government mission which visited the town in the wake of the attacks.

In its statement, the CAR government asked the former rebels of the Seleka movement to leave their positions in the city to facilitate the return of IDPs to their homes.

On Tuesday the president of the National Transition Council (NTC), Ferdinand Alexander Nguendet appealed to community leaders in the region to step up efforts to help end the violence which, he said is being committed by small groups.

“How can we hold elections under these conditions of insecurity?” the NTC Chair declared.

The Integrated Multi-dimensional UN Mission for Stabilization in Central Africa (MINUSCA) also condemned the inter-faith violence in Bambari.

MINUSCA, which deployed a buffer force between the belligerents has furthermore called for restraint and dialogue.

Centrafrique: des élections en 2015, sinon...

ANALYSE

Source: Jeune Afrique

26 Août 2015 - Le scrutin présidentiel doit se tenir le 18 octobre, après deux reports. S'il était de nouveau annulé, l'aide financière du FMI pourrait être suspendue. Au grand dam de Bangui.

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L'organisation des prochaines élections présidentielle et législatives en Centrafrique ressemble à une course contre la montre dont on repousserait irrémédiablement la ligne d'arrivée.

Le scrutin devait d'abord se tenir en février, puis en juin. C'est désormais la date du 18 octobre que l'Autorité nationale des élections (ANE) a cochée – le second tour aura lieu le 22 novembre. Personne ne doute de la volonté de Bangui de respecter ce délai, ce qui ne fut pas toujours le cas dans le passé. Il n'est malheureusement pas certain que les autorités y parviennent, tant le processus a pris du retard.

Depuis la fin de juin, seuls 40 % des quelque deux millions d'électeurs potentiels se sont inscrits sur les listes électorales. Dans la capitale, Bangui, et ses environs, le processus s'est achevé avec succès.

En revanche, dans l'Ouest, où il a débuté fin juillet, il ne produit pas les résultats espérés. Dans la province de l'Ouham, favorable à l'ancien président François Bozizé, seulement 10 % des électeurs potentiels se sont pour le moment manifestés. Les opérations démarrent à peine dans le Nord et dans l'Est, les zones les plus sensibles et les moins accessibles, alors que celles concernant les réfugiés et la diaspora sont au point mort. « Le processus avance lentement », déplore un diplomate en poste à Bangui.

Un nouveau report pourrait être envisagé

Il faudra encore un moment avant qu'un corps électoral significatif soit constitué. Ce ne sera sans doute pas le cas avant le 4 octobre, date à laquelle est prévu le référendum constitutionnel. « On sera satisfait si les opérations d'enrôlement sont achevées début novembre », commente une source centrafricaine. « Avec la visite du pape François [fin novembre], le processus électoral va connaître un sacré ralentissement », ajoute notre diplomate.

Un nouveau report de la présidentielle pourrait être envisagé par la communauté internationale (malgré les réticences de la France), mais les autorités de Bangui veulent absolument que l'élection ait lieu avant la fin de l'année.

D'une part parce qu'on voit mal la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique centrale (Ceeac) prolonger une nouvelle fois la transition – qui court désormais jusqu'au 30 décembre.

D'autre part, l'aide financière du Fonds monétaire international (FMI) pourrait être suspendue. L'organisation a déjà accordé son quota maximum de facilités de crédit rapide (FCR) à la République centrafricaine. Sa prochaine aide ne pourrait se faire que dans le cadre d'une facilité élargie de crédit (FEC), un mode de financement dont seuls

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les gouvernements issus d'une élection peuvent bénéficier. « Si les élections n'ont pas lieu à temps, le premier trimestre 2016 va être très compliqué », craint un ministre.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan's Kiir Signs Peace Deal

NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

Juba, 26 August 2015 - South Sudanese President Salva Kiir on Wednesday added his signature to a peace deal aimed at ending more than 20 months of fighting between government forces and rebels led by his former deputy, Riek Machar.

But even as he signed the deal at a ceremony in the capital, Juba, Kiir expressed reservations about the terms of the peace agreement.

"The current peace we are signing today has so many things we have to reject," Kiir said to African leaders present at the signing. "Such reservations, if ignored, would not be in the interests of just and lasting peace."

Power-sharing

The deal calls for Kiir to serve as president in a 30-month transitional government, and for Machar to be his second-in-command in the newly created position of first vice president. Machar and former political detainee Pagan Amum signed the deal, brokered by an international mediation team known as IGAD-Plus, in Addis Ababa on August 17.

Machar said he signed the agreement even though he, too, disagreed with many of its provisions.

"I made 20 points of reservations on the peace agreement, but when I compared the reservations I had on the agreement to what we can get if we sign it -- we can get peace for South Sudan ... I think we can live with it," Machar told VOA after Kiir had signed the deal.

"Peace is more important to the people of South Sudan," Machar said.

The White House welcomed Kiir's signing of the deal, saying he had made "the right decision."

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But White House spokesman Josh Earnest warned that the United States will only accept the agreement that was brokered by IGAD-Plus without "any reservations or addendums."

Kiir was at that signing ceremony in the Ethiopian capital when Machar and Amum signed the deal on August 17, but the president refused to add his name to the agreement. The government has explained that it objected to some of the provisions in the deal, including the power-sharing provisions and a plan to demilitarize Juba.

Implementation tougher than signing

Kiir asked the IGAD-Plus mediation team for 15 days to consult with his inner circle and civil society groups before signing the deal. IGAD-Plus granted his request, but lead mediator Seyoum Mesfin said the deal that was signed by Machar and Amum on August 17 could not be changed.

Steve McDonald of the Washington-based Wilson Center said getting Kiir and Machar to work together at the head of a transitional government, as the deal provides for, might be a tall order.

"We still have a situation where both of the antagonists want as their final outcome to be president of South Sudan," Wilson said.

"The history that these two gentlemen have shown us in terms of their leadership -- I'm very cynical at this stage, unfortunately, given the history of these two, that this is going to hold," McDonald said.

Machar was sacked by President Kiir five months before South Sudan erupted in violence in December 2013.

President Kiir has insisted that the conflict in South Sudan was triggered when Machar launched an abortive coup against him on December 15, 2013. The international community has broadly rejected that theory and has said instead that the unrest began when soldiers loyal to Kiir and Machar clashed in Juba.

Opportunity to show leadership

Amir Idris, the head of the department of African and African American Studies at Fordham University in New York, said the peace deal marks the beginning of a new chapter for South Sudan. Idris urged Kiir and Machar to seize the opportunity to show leadership and reunite the nation, which he says was fractured along ethnic lines during the conflict.

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"The people of South Sudan have suffered a lot," Idris said. "It is now an opportunity for the political leaders to demonstrate to their own people that they are capable of providing a new vision that allows them to take South Sudan to a better future, a future where there's a language of justice, of freedom, of inclusivity for all the people of South Sudan."

The violence that broke out in Juba 20 months ago rapidly spread to nearly all of South Sudan's 10 states. Peace was restored within weeks in all the states but Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile. Fighting was continuing as recently as this week in Upper Nile and Unity states, which are home to South Sudan's oil industry, the backbone of the nation's economy.

No official death toll has been released for the 20 months of fighting in South Sudan, but international NGOs and the United Nations have estimated that tens of thousands have been killed and millions face severe hunger because of the conflict.

More than 2.2 million South Sudanese have been forced from their homes by the fighting, and more than 800,000 of them have sought refuge in U.N. camps or in neighboring countries.

The fighting has also put development in South Sudan on hold and crippled the heavily oil-dependent economy of the world's newest nation.

Under the terms of the peace deal, fighting is supposed to stop within 72 hours. But there were reports of deadly clashes between government and opposition forces just hours before Kiir signed the agreement.

Prior to the agreement signed Wednesday, the warring sides in South Sudan signed and recommitted to peace more than half a dozen times. Each time, the deal was violated within hours and the country was plunged back into violence.

Soudan du Sud: Salva Kiir signe l'accord de paix mais émet de «sérieuses réserves »

NEWS STORY

Source: Jeune Afrique

Le président du Soudan du Sud, Salva Kiir, a estimé que l'accord qu'il a accepté de signer mercredi contenait des "disposition néfastes".

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26 Août 2015 - C'est en exprimant de « sérieuses réserves » sur plusieurs dispositions que le président sud-soudanais, Salva Kiir, a finalement signé mercredi 26 août, à l'occasion d'un mini-sommet qui réunit à Juba les dirigeants du Kenya, de l'Ouganda, du Soudan et de l'Éthiopie, l'accord de paix, déjà ratifié par les rebelles.

« La paix que nous signons aujourd'hui contient tellement de choses que nous devons rejeter (...) Ignorer de telles réserves ne serait pas dans l'intérêt d'une paix juste et durable », a-t-il lancé, avant de signer le document.

Cette accord « n'est ni la Bible, ni le Coran, pourquoi ne pourrait-il pas être réexaminé? Donnez nous du temps pour voir comment on peut corriger ces choses », a ajouté Salva Kiir, bien que les médiateurs eurent affirmé que l'accord était définitif et non modifiable.

Dénonçant des « dispositions néfastes » de l'accord, Salva Kiir a remis aux médiateurs et aux dirigeants de la région un document de 12 pages contenant les réserves de son gouvernement. Il n'a pas précisé sur quels points portaient les réserves, mais assuré que celles-ci seraient publiées incessamment.

« Intimidation »

Selon des responsables sud-soudanais, la démilitarisation de Juba ou la large représentation accordée aux rebelles dans le cadre du partage du pouvoir local dans l'État pétrolier du Haut-Nil posent notamment problème.

Le président sud-soudanais a également dénoncé « les messages d'intimidation » à son encontre, faisant référence aux menaces de sanctions agitées par la communauté internationale. Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU s'était dit prêt mardi soir à « agir immédiatement » si Salva Kirr Kiir ne signait pas intégralement l'accord, ou s'il signait « en émettant des réserves »... Pas sûr néanmoins que les Nations unies mettent à exécution leurs menaces, la Russie, la Chine et plusieurs pays africains ont déjà émis des doutes sur cette proposition. Les États-Unis ont quant à eux d'ores et déjà appelé au respect de l'accord de paix sans réserves.

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Kiir a jusqu'à mardi pour lever ses réserves sur l'accord au Soudan du Sud

NOUVELLE

Source: AFP via L'Orient Le Jour (<http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/941112/kiir-a-jusqua-mardi-pour-lever-ses-reserves-sur-laccord-au-soudan-du-sud.html>)

27 Août 2015 - Le président sud-soudanais Salva Kiir a jusqu'à mardi pour lever ses réserves sur l'accord de paix au Soudan du Sud, a indiqué mercredi la présidente du Conseil de sécurité, l'ambassadrice du Nigeria Joy Ogwu.

"La date limite pour lui est le 1er septembre", a-t-elle déclaré, alors que le Conseil s'était dit prêt mardi soir à "agir immédiatement" si M. Kiir ne signait pas l'accord "sans réserve".

East Africa: Talks to Accept South Sudan into EAC Resume This Week

NEWS STORY

Source: The Monitor

By Dorothy Nakaweesi

26 August 2015 - Talks to accept South Sudan as a member of the East African Community resume this week in Tanzania's City Arusha, according to Dr Richard Sezibera, the East African Community Secretary General.

"We have been in touch with South Sudan and handling their request to join the EAC. Further negotiations resume this week in Arusha-Tanzania," Dr Sezibera said Wednesday while visiting Monitor Publications Limited Head Office in Kampala.

South Sudan's plan to join the EAC is likely to add 11 million people to a regional market that has 140 million people in the five states of Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania and Burundi.

EAC member states like Uganda and Kenya stand to benefit most from South Sudan which gives them a significant market. Currently, Uganda and Kenya's annual exports to South Sudan are valued at over \$200 million (Shs504 billion) and \$180 million (Shs453.6 billion) respectively.

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Mr Sezibera added that EAC Secretariat is committed to work closely with South Sudan to ensure "a smooth negotiation process".

Last year, South Sudan had halted negotiations because of an armed conflict that broke out, displacing close to 2.2 million people and claiming hundreds killed. The conflict put 4.6m people at severe risk of food insecurity, according to the UN.

However, negotiations to return peace in South Sudan are under-way in Juba where regional leaders are expected to assign a peace pact.

South Sudan marked its independence from Sudan on July 9, 2011. It had been at war for almost half a century when the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 brought an end to a period of fighting, which begun in 1983.

The country was plunged into conflict once more in December 2013, when a political dispute between President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the former vice president, escalated into a war that has since taken on a tribal dimension.

Mr Kiir is a member of the Dinka, the largest tribe in the country, while Mr Machar is from the second-largest tribal community, the Nuer.

Conditions

For South Sudan to become a member of the EAC has to meet the six conditions of acceptance into the Community as set out in the EAC Treaty which include: Adherence to universally acceptable principles of good governance, democracy, the rule of law and observance of human rights and social justice.

Background

The Republic of South Sudan applied to join the East African Community on 10th June 2011. A Verification Committee from the EAC visited the Republic of South Sudan from 15th to 31st July, 2012 with the aim of establishing the Republic of South Sudan's level of conformity with the Criteria for Admission of Foreign Countries into the East African Community as provided under Article 3 of the Treaty Establishing the EAC.

Based on recommendation of the report by the Verification Committee, the EAC Heads of State Summit in November 2012 directed the Council of Ministers to negotiate the admission of South Sudan putting into consideration the provision of the EAC Treaty on the criteria for joining the Community.

Based on the Summit directive, the EAC Council of Ministers established a High Level Negotiation Team and the Team is ready to start the negotiation process with the Republic of South Sudan.

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South Sudan seeks infrastructure funding as peace deal signed

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

By Wendell Roelf

26 August 2015 - As South Sudan's president was due to sign a peace pact on Wednesday, his transport minister was in South Africa to sign a deal he hopes will be part of a new inflow of infrastructure investment needed to develop the world's youngest country.

"Investors are willing, when the guns fall silent, they will come to invest," Transport Minister Kwong Danhier Gatluak told Reuters in Cape Town where he was signing an agreement with his South African counterpart which should, among other things, provide training for road engineers and air traffic controllers.

Back in South Sudan, regional African leaders gathered as President Salva Kiir was expected to sign a peace deal to end a 20-month conflict with rebels.

South Sudan will need more than \$10 billion to build and upgrade around 10,000 km of roads, Gatluak said.

The African Development Bank estimates there were about 35 meters of paved road per thousand residents in South Sudan, a nation of 11 million people, in 2011, compared to an average of 128 meters in Sub-Saharan Africa's cities and 700 meters in the low-income countries of the developing world.

The first tarmacked road in the land-locked country "since Adam and Eve" was constructed with USAID funding in 2012, from the border of Uganda to Juba along 192 km, Gatluak said.

"Now we are constructing a road that links Juba and the rest of northwestern part of South Sudan that's 441 km long, (at a cost of) around \$700 million."

China is investing in the country and the World Bank has promised about \$150 million to improve road connectivity in rural areas and increase access to markets, Gatluak said.

Beyond improving road, rail and river transport, Gatluak said he expected the first phase to upgrade Juba's main airport to be completed by September 2016, with China Harbour Engineering Company extending the runway by 700 meters.

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"By September next year we would have done the first phase and will be able to accept much bigger aircraft," he said.

20 months of conflict in South Sudan

REPORT

Source: AFP

26 August 2015 - South Sudan, independent since 2011, has been wracked for 20 months by a conflict between troops loyal to President Salva Kiir and those of ex-vice president Riek Machar.

Tens of thousands have been killed in the ethnically-motivated unrest, and more than two million people have been displaced, the United Nations figures show.

Here is a chronology of the fighting:

- 2013 -

December 15: Heavy gunfire in Juba where tensions have risen since July when Machar was fired as vice-president. Kiir denounces a coup, blaming Machar, who later accuses the president of purging his rivals. The fighting spreads to several states.

- 2014 -

January 10-20: Government troops recapture the northern city of Bentiu, capital of oil-rich Unity State, and Bor, capital of the eastern state of Jonglei. Uganda sends troops to reinforce the South Sudanese army.

February 27: Human Rights Watch says war crimes have been committed by both sides.

April 15-17: More than 350 civilians massacred in Bentiu and Bor, according to the UN's mission UNMISS.

May 2: Visiting Juba, US Secretary of State John Kerry warns of the risk of "genocide".

May 27: A Security Council decision refocuses the UN Mission on civil protection tasks.

- 2015 -

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February 1: Kiir and Machar sign a new agreement to end the fighting. They have signed - then broken - at least six previous ceasefire deals since fighting began. The accord is broken several days later.

March 20: The army and rebels have kidnapped 12 000 children to fight since the start of the conflict, the UN children's agency says.

March 24: South Sudan's parliament votes to extend Kiir's mandate by three years, ditching plans for elections this year.

June 30: South Sudan's army raped then torched girls alive inside their homes, a UN rights report says, warning of "widespread human rights abuses". Rebels have also been accused of atrocities, including rape and killings.

July 1: The UN Security Council imposes sanctions on six South Sudan generals: three of them rebels and three from government forces. A day later, the US imposes sanctions on two military commanders, one from each side.

July 6: The army says it has retaken the strategic north-eastern town of Malakal from rebels.

August 11: Several rebel commanders, including Peter Gadet, a warlord hit by UN sanctions, say they have split from Machar.

August 17: The government refuses to sign a peace deal with rebels, but says it will finalise an agreement within 15 days. Machar says he signed the deal after talks in Addis Ababa.

August 18: Washington and London push for UN sanctions to punish the government.

August 25: Kiir pledges to sign a peace deal in Juba on Wednesday.

World leaders react to peace deal in South Sudan

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

26 August 2015 - World leaders have welcomed the signing of the South Sudan's peace agreement by president Salva Kiir on Wednesday in Juba, but said the "reservations" mentioned by the South Sudanese leader were therefore meaningless,

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warning of sanctions against him and his circles should he attempt to illegally bring them up during implementation of the IGAD Plus brokered peace deal.

United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, issued a statement on Wednesday, welcoming the deal and urged the parties to fully implement it. The world body also called on the former rivals, now peace partners, to cooperate with regional and international bodies in its full implementation, promising closer monitor of its implementation.

“The United Nations stands ready to support the parties in the implementation of this agreement in close cooperation with IGAD, the AU and the international partners,” partly reads the statement.

In the discussions on Tuesday to impose sanctions on the government should president Kiir fail to sign the peace agreement, UN Security Council also said the possibility of imposing the sanctions during the period of implementation of the agreement will remain an option on the table even if president Kiir signed the deal on Wednesday.

The UN body also raised concern about the insistence by president Kiir in mentioning his government’s reservations to the deal, seeing it as a sign of future trouble-making approach in the implementation of the accord that can attract sanctions in the transitional period.

European Union (EU) issued a statement on Wednesday, commending the final decision by president Kiir to follow suit and sign the IGAD compromise agreement as previously inked by the South Sudanese armed opposition leader, Riek Machar, and other stakeholders, including Pagan Amum, secretary general of the ruling party, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM).

“Today, President Kiir decided to sign the peace agreement endorsed by other South Sudanese parties in Addis Ababa on 17 August 2015,” says a joint statement signed by the EU’s High Representative/Vice President, Federica Mogherini.

He called on the South Sudanese parties to fully implement the peace agreement to end the suffering of the people of the war-ravaged region.

The chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Nkosazana Zuma, also issued a statement in reaction to the peace deal, urging the parties to immediately begin its implementation and adhere to all its provisions.

“The Chairperson of the Commission reiterates the AU’s commitment to fully support the implementation process of the Agreement and its determination, alongside IGAD

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and other international stakeholders, to ensure that all its provisions are adhered to,” partly reads the statement.

President Kiir on Wednesday signed the IGAD compromise agreement as it is without any change in it, but submitted to IGAD leaders a 12-page complaint document known as “reservations” on the peace deal.

The IGAD leaders however refused to incorporate the reservations into the document signed by Kiir, with observers saying legally speaking the reservations are a mere complaint with no effect as the agreement is concerned and IGAD may simply lock it in a drawer and forget about it.

RESERVATIONS MEANINGLESS

The United States government has also issued a statement, saying the reservations filed by the South Sudanese president Kiir had no meaning after he signed the peace agreement document which did not incorporate the complaints.

Both the White House and the State Department in Washington, welcomed the peace agreement and urged the South Sudanese parties to fully implement the deal without any reservation, warning that any party to the deal that will be seen to be obstructing its implementation will face punishment.

White House press secretary said President Barack Obama’s administration welcomed the signing of the deal by president Kiir, but said his reservations will not be recognized.

"President Kiir made the right decision to sign the peace agreement...The US does not recognize any reservations or addendums to that document," said spokesman, Josh Earnest.

In a separate statement, the US State Department on Wednesday also said the United States government “stands ready to support the implementation of the agreement, to work with the men and women of South Sudan who are committed to peace, and to hold to account those who would undermine the agreement or violate the ceasefire.”

The State Department said president Kiir, or any other party had no other option but to abide by the agreement he signed and fully implement it, saying the US will closely monitor the implementation of the agreement and explore ways to punish those who will resist its implementation.

“He [Kiir] signed it. He signed it and he’s committed himself to it, and our expectation is he’s going to meet his commitments. Obviously, he made a personal decision to overcome his reservations and sign this agreement. Our expectation is he’s going to

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meet his end of it. And if he doesn't, or if any party doesn't for that matter – this isn't just about President Kiir, although he's the one who's voiced the reservations – then there are options available through the UN that we will explore," said John Kirby, US State Department in a press briefing on Wednesday in Washington DC.

"Look, he can be unhappy about it as long as he abides by it. What matters is the actions, not the words. And we want to see, as I said in my opening statement, we want to see everybody effect the ceasefire and hold to what they agreed," he said.

South Sudanese rebels criticize president Kiir's reservations

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

26 August 2015 - South Sudanese rebels said they welcomed president Salva Kiir's signature to the IGAD Plus compromise peace deal, despite "unnecessary delay" but criticized his expressed "reservations" in the document as mere complaints without legal binding to the peace agreement the parties have signed.

President Kiir on Wednesday, 26 August, in Juba signed the same document which the armed opposition leader, Machar, signed on Monday, 17 August, in Addis Ababa, after 9 days of the government's delay over consultations as internal split over the peace agreement emerged in Juba.

Before signing the document witnessed by regional leaders and international representatives, president Kiir made a speech in which he expressed complaints over what he said were "serious reservations" in the deal, but went ahead to append his signature despite his concerns. He later on submitted to IGAD leaders a 12-page document carrying his complaints and appealed to the mediation to reconsider them.

IGAD leaders refused to consider Kiir's pleas on the reservations but took the document probably for mere information purposes, noting receipt of the complaint.

Machar's rebel faction however said president Kiir's reservations were only a sign of lack of seriousness and commitment to the peace agreement, but have no legal binding on the document signed.

"We welcome President Salva Kiir's signature to the peace agreement despite the unnecessary delay and change of venue. It is said it is better late than never," said

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Machar's press secretary, James Gatdet Dak, when contacted by Sudan Tribune on Wednesday.

He however said the rebel group was concerned that the change of venue from Addis Ababa to Juba for the signing ceremony, coupled with the reservations expressed by president Kiir, were indicating lack of seriousness and commitment to peace on the part of the government.

Dak said even the rebel group had many reservations to the document before signing it in Addis Ababa, but had to finally drop those reservations and wilfully signed the IGAD Plus compromise peace agreement in order to end the 20-month long civil war and the suffering of the people in South Sudan.

"Issues which the government brought up as reservations are not new. These are the same concerns they had been raising throughout the negotiations in Addis Ababa. We also had our concerns which we had to finally let go and signed the IGAD Plus compromise agreement for the sake of peace so as to end the suffering of our people," he said.

"If the parties were allowed to unearth their concerns in the document, IGAD Plus would have opened a Pandora box for another vicious cycle of endless renegotiations," he said.

Among South Sudan's concerns in the document include redeployment of troops from the capital, Juba; handing over top administration of the oil-rich greater Upper Nile region to the rebel faction; curtailing president Kiir's executive powers in making decisions; and maintaining separate armies with separate commands between him and Machar for at least 18 months of the transitional period.

Also, the rebel leader is put in charge of overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the peace agreement and initiating reforms during the transitional government.

South Sudan's government is also concerned with the process in which national cabinet ministers in Juba will be selected as it will likely lose many key ministries to the opposition groups, as well as Machar's 50 additional lawmakers to the national legislative assembly.

There are clauses in the agreement which also provide for accountability to individuals responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity since the war began on 15 December 2013, with some political and military leaders likely to be implicated and dragged to court during the transitional period.

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African Union's (AU) Commission of Inquiry report on the atrocities committed may be released and individuals charged for the crime after the signing of the peace deal.

Analysts say the best option for president Kiir to help exonerate himself is to fully cooperate in implementation of the peace agreement he signed and to hand over to court his political and military officials that may be implicated in the report.

There are concerns that the peace deal may not be fully implemented due to serious internal disagreements within the government as army chief, Paul Malong Awan, some political leaders and Jieng Council of Elders (JCE) are opposed to the agreement. Also rebels have two senior generals who defected and said they would not be party to the deal.

S. Sudanese in Ethiopia welcome peace deal signed by president Kiir

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

By Tesfa-Alem Tekle

26 August 2015 - Exiled South Sudanese in Ethiopia welcomed a peace agreement signed by President Salva Kiir, aimed to end a 20-months long conflict with rebels led by former vice president, Riek Machar.

The president signed the peace deal in Juba, South Sudan's capital, on Wednesday more than one week after refusing to do so.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by regional leaders including Ethiopian Prime Minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Sudan's First Vice-President Bakri Hassan Saleh.

Kiir signed the same compromised peace deal signed in Addis Ababa last week by rebel leader Machar.

Despite signing the agreement, the South Sudanese president however has expressed "serious reservations" he did not specify with regard to the mediation process, but said he would sign the deal even if his reservations were not considered in the document.

"With all those reservations that we have, we will sign this document" he told regional leaders before he signed, adding "some features of the document are not in the interest of just and lasting peace."

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“We had only one of the two options, the option of an imposed peace or the option of a continued war,” he added.

Although South Sudanese in Ethiopia commended the signed agreement they however have expressed concerns on whether the two warring factions would implement it or not.

“This is a great commitment by both warring factions to bring this senseless war to an end” South Sudan Peace Ambassador, Gatwech Koak Nyuon, told Sudan Tribune..

“Signing is not the difficult part, but implementation is the biggest challenge which we must collaboratively work with President Kiir and Machar to bring the lasting peace to our beloved Nation” added Gatwech, calling on all South Sudanese in Diaspora and at home to work for peace.

The office of the SPLM/SPLA Mission to Ethiopia and to the African Union (AU) also today welcomed the president’s move to sign the compromised peace pact and end the “senseless war” the rebels said was imposed on the people of South Sudan by president Kiir.

“This is a very good decision to bring this senseless war to an end and build the lives of our people” said David Dang, deputy representative of the SPLM/SPLA to the AU.

The signed agreement means the two rival factions will form at least a 30 months long transitional government which allows Kiir’s side to take 53% of the positions in the government and Machar’s side 33%. The remaining 14% positions will be taken by the former detainees and other political parties.

Meanwhile the U.S. based organization, Enough Project, has welcomed the South Sudan Peace Agreement, but has warned of tougher challenges ahead in the journey towards fully implementing it and restoring peace in the country.

Enough Project said the challenges of implementing the agreement far exceeds the challenges of negotiating one.

“Both sides contain hard-line factions and interests that openly oppose the signing of the compromise agreement and continue to benefit financially from the misery of the South Sudanese people,” it said today in a statement.

“There will be winners and losers as a result of this deal, and the losers could very well attempt to undermine the agreement, potentially through further violence.”

It urged regional and international communities to maintain their diplomatic and financial pressure on both sides so as the agreement is implemented effectively.

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If the agreement is implemented, Kiir will retain the presidency while the armed opposition group will secure a post of first vice president.

Conflict in the world's youngest nation broke out in December 2013 when President Kiir accused his sacked deputy Machar of plotting a coup, an allegation the latter denies.

The fighting has killed tens of thousands and displaced millions.

ZAMBIA

Justice Minister closes the Great Lakes Region conference

NEWS STORY

Source: <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2015/08/27/justice-minister-closes-the-the-great-lakes-region-conference/>

27 August 2015 - THE two-day conference of International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Ministers of Justice and Experts Meeting on Legal Harmonisation of ICGLR Protocols has closed in Livingston.

Zambia's Justice Minister Ngosa Simbyakula urged the 12 member states of the ICGLR to implement the agreed resolutions to a accelerate the transformation of the region into an oasis of peace and security

Dr Simbyakula said the fact that all member states were represented at the conference in Livingstone was a manifestation of commitment each of the member states had individually and collectively to transform the region.

He was speaking in Livingstone at Avani Victoria Falls Hotel yesterday during the official closing ceremony for the conference.

"It was an honor for us Zambian Government and the people of Zambia to host the conference.

"What remains now is for all member states to implement what we agreed here so that we accelerate e the transformation of our region into an oasis of peace and security," Dr Simbyakula said.

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Chairperson for the just ended conference, Antonio Bente Bembe, urged member states to prove to the world that Africa had maturity and a sense of responsibility to address its problems.

Mr Bembe, who is Angola Secretary of State for Human Rights, said there was need for member countries to put to an end the historical shame that Africa and other continent had.

And reading out the communique, ICGLR executive secretary Numb a Luaba said delegates resolved to adopt the domestication road map 2015 to 2018 developed by the national coordinators and legal focal points.

Prof Luaba said delegates resolved to speed up and complete the domestication process of the Protocols especially the four priority protocols.

The four priority protocols are non – aggression and mutual defence in the Great Lakes Region, judicial cooperation, prevention and suppression of sextant violence against women and children and the protocol against the illegal exploitation of natural resources by 2016 and the domestication process of the remaining protocols by 2018.

Prof Luaba said the meeting expressed its pound gratitude to the Government of Zambia and the people of Zambia for warm welcome a d hospitality extended to all delegations.

Zambia's Republican Vice President Inonge Wina officially opened the conference on Tuesday.