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



MEDIA MONITORING

9 July 2015

GENERAL NEWS

Grands Lacs: les dirigeants lancent la Conférence sur l'investissement du secteur privé

ARTICLE

Source: Radio Okapi

8 juillet 2015 - Les dirigeants des différents pays de la région des Grands Lacs décident de lancer une Conférence sur l'investissement du secteur privé en février 2016 à Kinshasa. Le communiqué conjoint sanctionnant la rencontre, lundi 6 juillet à Kinshasa, entre le Comité national d'organisation de la RDC et les délégations des Nations Unies et de la Conférence internationale pour la région des Grands Lacs (CIRGL) indique qu'il s'agit de renforcer le développement et l'intégration économique dans cette région.

La Conférence sur l'investissement du secteur privé vise à élargir les opportunités de commerce et à stimuler la création d'emplois afin d'instaurer une stabilité et une paix durable dans la région.

Elle réunira les différentes catégories des investisseurs du secteur privé, des autorités gouvernementales, des chambres de commerce, d'industries nationales et des agences de promotion de l'investissement.

Le but est de faciliter les échanges sur les opportunités d'affaires, d'évaluer le climat des affaires et de signer des accords d'investissement sur plusieurs projets identifiés.

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Déjà, un dossier sur les opportunités d'investissement contenant une liste de projets régionaux a été élaboré, faisant suite aux consultations tenues à Luanda en Angola en décembre 2014.

Cette conférence, qui se tiendra du 24 au 25 février prochain à Kinshasa, a déjà un secrétariat composé d'officiels du bureau de l'envoyé spécial des Nations unies, du secrétariat de la CIRGL et du point focal du gouvernement de la RDC.

Tous ces officiels ont pour mission de faire de la conférence sur l'investissement du secteur privé une excellente opportunité pour faire de la région des Grands Lacs un environnement attrayant pour les investisseurs, favorable aux affaires et où la stabilité et le développement s'enracinent afin d'alléger la souffrance des populations.

Justice must cut both ways

OPINION

Source: The Africa Report

By Patrick Smith

The fate of Darfur highlights the short attention span that has stymied the International Criminal Court (ICC).

7 July 2015 - Like Groucho Marx, South Africa does not want to belong to a club that will accept it as a member. This time, the club in question is the International Criminal Court.

What could be the final showdown over South Africa's membership of the ICC was prompted by the fiasco of the arrival of Sudan's indicted President Omar al-Bashir at the African Union (AU) summit in Johannesburg on 13 June and his forced departure on 15 June.

South Africa, with the moral strength from its struggle against apartheid, was a key signatory of the ICC's Rome Statutes.

The governing African National Congress now says the ICC is "no longer useful for the purposes for which it was intended – being a court of last resort for the prosecution of crimes against humanity."

The ICC's charges against Bashir are based on the deaths of more than 300,000 people in the Darfur region a decade ago.

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The latest United Nations (UN) reports say at least 78,000 people have been forcibly displaced in Darfur this year and there are unverified reports of 130,000 more chased from their homes by the government's Rapid Support Forces and state-backed militias.

The current fate of Darfur shows the same short attention span that has stymied the development of the ICC.

The court's international backers have to show that justice must cut both ways: if the US was to ratify the Rome Statutes, it would add pressure on Russia and China to follow suit, making it far less of an Africa-centric affair.

ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, as a top Gambian lawyer trained in Nigeria, is sensitive to the charge that the ICC is pursuing selective justice against Africa.

She has also made the point that the UN Security Council, which authorised the ICC investigation and prosecution, should take much more serious action if it wants the court to press its charges against President Bashir.

The Security Council, which could not agree on a resolution to refer Syria to the ICC this year, should back a French proposal that no council member should use its veto when considering crimes against humanity.

It should also support the ICC's implementation of witness protection programmes and effective and technologically savvy investigations.

As a senior UN official tells The Africa Report: "If Loretta Lynch and the FBI can work out who laundered the money at FIFA, the ICC should be able to prove who ordered the killings of hundreds of thousands of people in Africa."

Another development for the court that could win it wider credibility is the membership of Palestine this year, which could trigger investigations into allegations of war crimes carried out by both Israel and Hamas.

There have also been a slew of proposals for hybrid courts – in Central African Republic, South Sudan, Guatemala and Kosovo – combining the knowledge of national judiciaries with the guarantees of international jurists.

These could help the ICC to win back support. For the sake of the hundreds of thousands of victims of atrocities, let's hope it succeeds.

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**Le gouvernement déterminé à clôturer le dossier des ex-M23**

ARTICLE

Source: Digitsaongo.net (<http://www.digitalcongo.net/article/108348>)

Selon François Mwamba, la RDC a accompli sa part de responsabilité et il ne reste que des tâches communes qui nécessitent la coopération des autres intervenants pour clôturer le dossier M23.

Kinshasa, 8 juillet 2015 - Le vice-ministre de la Défense nationale, anciens combattants et réinsertion, René Sibou, a réaffirmé mardi la détermination du gouvernement à mettre fin au dossier des éléments ex-M23, conformément à la Déclaration de Nairobi et à la résolution du Sommet des Chefs d'Etat tenu le 18 mai dernier à Luanda, en Angola. Il l'a fait savoir à l'issue de la réunion d'évaluation avec les garants (Nations Unies, CIRGL), de cette déclaration.

« Le M23 constitue une force négative. Nous n'allons pas continuer à aller au Rwanda et en Ouganda pour les chercher. La présence des témoins de la région vise à résoudre une fois pour toutes ce dossier », a souligné M. Sibou avant de préciser que le gouvernement veille à ce que ceux qui ont été amnistiés ne puissent pas bénéficier de l'asile de l'autre côté.

Au sujet de l'ultimatum de trois mois donné par le Sommet de Luanda, M. Sibou a dit qu'il n'aura pas d'effet pour la simple raison que le dossier aura été réglé dans le délai convenu avec l'envoi des missions au Rwanda et en Ouganda. Le coordonnateur du Mécanisme national de suivi de mise en œuvre de l'Accord-cadre (MNS), François Muamba Tshishimbi, a rappelé que la Déclaration de Nairobi fait suite à la défaite militaire du M23, en novembre 2013, engageant le pays dans un processus de paix, avant d'expliquer qu'au titre de ces engagements, la RDC a accompli sa part de responsabilité et il ne reste que des tâches communes qui nécessitent la coopération des autres intervenants pour clôturer le dossier M23.

S'agissant de la présence du M23, François Muamba a précisé qu'à ce jour il a été dénombré en Ouganda 1.678 et plus de 450 au Rwanda, identifiés lors de la signature de l'acte d'engagement d'éligibilité à l'amnistie. Cependant, 182 éléments ont été rapatriés volontairement et stationnés à Kamina, au Katanga.

Le secrétaire exécutif adjoint de la Conférence internationale pour la région des Grands Lacs (CIRGL), Vicente Muanda, a relevé que l'absence d'autres intervenants (Rwanda,

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Ouganda), aux réunions tripartites d'évaluation constitue une difficulté majeure à l'aboutissement du processus de mise en œuvre de ladite déclaration.

Aussi, a-t-il préconisé la tenue prochaine de ces réunions avec d'une part la RDC, le Rwanda et les garants (Nations Unies, CIRGL et SADC) et, d'autre part, les mêmes acteurs avec l'Ouganda, en vue de débloquer la situation. Il a, par ailleurs, noté que la RDC a réalisé beaucoup de progrès dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de la Déclaration de Nairobi.

RDC: fronde commune contre un nouveau mandat de Kabila

ANALYSE

Par Trésor Kibangula

Dans le Katanga, outre Moïse Katumbi, deux personnalités locales s'opposent à un nouveau mandat de Kabila : l'avocat Jean-Claude Muyambo et le président de l'Assemblée provinciale, Gabriel Kyungu.

7 juillet 2015 - Dans le Katanga, outre Moïse Katumbi, deux personnalités locales s'opposent à un nouveau mandat de Kabila : l'avocat Jean-Claude Muyambo et le président de l'Assemblée provinciale, Gabriel Kyungu.

C'est l'histoire de trois Katangais qui n'ont pas toujours été d'accord, mais partagent aujourd'hui un même combat. Chacun à sa manière, chacun selon sa stratégie.

Le premier à dégainer fut Jean-Claude Muyambo Kyassa, 49 ans. Le président du parti Solidarité congolaise pour la démocratie et le développement (Scode), ex-bâtonnier de Lubumbashi et ancien ministre des Affaires sociales (2007-2008), a commencé à prendre ses distances avec la majorité au lendemain des législatives de novembre 2011, à l'issue desquelles il a perdu son mandat de député national. « Il n'a pas été réélu parce que certaines personnes très influentes auprès du chef en avaient décidé ainsi », accuse l'un des proches de l'avocat.

Muyambo et Katumbi, meilleurs ennemis

Parmi ces personnes que Muyambo soupçonne d'avoir manœuvré contre lui, un homme en particulier : Augustin Katumba Mwanke, décédé en février 2012 dans un accident d'avion à Bukavu. Député national et ancien gouverneur du Katanga, ce cofondateur du Parti du peuple pour la reconstruction et la démocratie (PPRD, au pouvoir) était l'éminence grise du chef de l'État. Il était aussi le mentor de l'homme d'affaires Moïse Katumbi Chapwe, dont il a accompagné l'entrée en politique. Une

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proximité qui, pour Muyambo, a ipso facto expédié son ex-ami Katumbi dans le camp de ses ennemis.

Pendant près de cinq ans, les deux fortes personnalités se sont livrées une guerre sans merci dans la province, ne cessant de ferrailer à travers leurs radios et télévisions respectives (Nyota pour Katumbi, Jua pour Muyambo), surtout après les législatives de 2011. L'avocat a même adressé au gouverneur quatorze « lettres ouvertes » sur la situation au Katanga et sa mauvaise gestion de l'exécutif provincial, l'accusant des pires maux... « C'est de l'histoire ancienne ! Depuis, nous avons changé notre fusil d'épaule », affirme aujourd'hui un collaborateur de l'avocat en brandissant la Constitution congolaise.

Rapprochement contre un troisième mandat de Kabila

Début 2014, les deux hommes se sont en effet rapprochés sur le terrain du respect des dispositions constitutionnelles contre un troisième mandat du chef de l'État. Désormais Muyambo, qui a claqué la porte de la majorité présidentielle en avril 2012, et Katumbi, qui en fait encore officiellement partie, se retrouvent dans le même camp. Lors d'un point presse donné à son domicile lushois le 8 janvier, Muyambo a réitéré son rejet d'une nouvelle candidature de Joseph Kabila et dit s'être « trompé de cible » en s'en prenant à « Moïse ». Et d'ajouter : « La majorité présidentielle serait très mal inspirée d'utiliser mes écrits contre Moïse Katumbi. »

Deux semaines plus tard, alors qu'il était à Kinshasa pour participer à des réunions et manifestations organisées par l'opposition et la société civile contre le projet controversé de loi électorale (dont une disposition, finalement retirée du texte adopté par le Parlement, subordonnait l'organisation des législatives et de la présidentielle de 2016 au recensement de la population), Muyambo a été arrêté à sa résidence de Ngaliema. Poursuivi, selon la justice congolaise, pour « des faits de droit commun », il serait soupçonné d'avoir vendu un immeuble qui ne lui appartenait pas. Depuis le 20 janvier, il est en détention à Kinshasa.

Antoine Gabriel Kyungu wa Kumwanza, le troisième homme

Moins frontal, peut-être, mais tout aussi clair dans son message, le 23 décembre, lors de son retour à Lubumbashi après trois mois d'absence, Moïse Katumbi a mis en garde la majorité contre un troisième « faux penalty ». Et fait planer comme une menace de divorce avec Kabila... Témoin privilégié de cet acte : le doyen Antoine Gabriel Kyungu wa Kumwanza, 76 ans, président de l'Assemblée provinciale et de l'Union nationale des fédéralistes du Congo (Unafec). Celui que les Katangais appellent « Baba » (« le père », en swahili) était ce jour-là au côté du gouverneur. « Sa présence n'était pas un hasard, confirme un cadre de l'Unafec. En tant que membre du bureau politique de la

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Majorité présidentielle, il était venu soutenir et partager la prise de position du gouverneur Katumbi. »

Quelques mois plus tard, « Baba » confie que lui-même ne supportait plus l'absence de débat sur l'éventuel troisième mandat du président Kabila. Et que cette sortie de Katumbi l'a convaincu de passer à son tour à l'offensive. Mais pas question de quitter pour autant la majorité, c'est de l'intérieur qu'il va mener la fronde. Comme il l'avait fait avec douze autres parlementaires, le 1er novembre 1980, en écrivant une longue lettre ouverte à Mobutu Sese Seko, alors président du Zaïre, pour l'alerter sur la « crise profonde de confiance » qui risquait d'entraîner le pays dans le chaos politique et social.

Le G7 des frondeurs

Pour son nouveau combat contre un troisième mandat, Kyungu est entouré de six autres cadres de la Majorité présidentielle, avec lequel il constitue « le G7 des frondeurs ». Le groupe a déjà envoyé deux lettres au président de la République, l'une fin février, l'autre début mars, pour le mettre en garde contre l'imminence d'une « crise politique grave et difficilement maîtrisable » si la majorité persistait à vouloir maintenir son chef au pouvoir.

La voix des frondeurs sera-t-elle entendue ? Dans tous les cas, le parti de « Baba » compte bien présenter « son » candidat à la présidentielle de 2016, même s'il est encore trop tôt pour le désigner. En coulisses, Kyungu, qui prend régulièrement des nouvelles de Jean-Claude Muyambo, semble pour l'heure avoir jeté son dévolu sur Moïse Katumbi. Lequel ne s'est pas encore prononcé sur ses intentions.

RWANDA**Rwanda court hears case to block third presidential term****NEWS STORY**

Source: Reuters

By Clement Uwiringiyimana

Kigali, 8 July 2015 - Rwanda's main opposition party opened a case in the Supreme Court on Wednesday seeking to prevent constitutional change that would allow President Paul Kagame to run for a third term seven-year in office.

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The debate about term limits and challenges to veteran leaders has flared in several places in Africa. The United States and other Western nations have been pressing African leaders to stick to constitutional rules on presidential terms.

Wednesday's Supreme Court case was quickly adjourned after the lawyer for the Democratic Green Party failed to appear. One party official told Reuters lawyers had been fearful about taking on the case.

Senior members of the ruling party have urged scrapping of the two-term limit and parliament has said it would debate public petitions calling for Kagame to stay beyond 2017. Kagame has said he opposes a change but is "open" to being convinced.

The Democratic Green Party, a tiny party but the only vocal political opposition in a nation where rights groups say critics and free speech are stifled, opened proceedings by explaining that the lawyer who was to represent them had not turned up.

"The court should consider that Green Party is not represented in court and therefore the case be canceled," Theoneste Mbonera, a lawyer for the government, told the court.

"Lawyers refuse"

The court panel of nine judges led by Chief Justice Sam Rugege adjourned and set the next hearing for July 29.

The Rwandan government denies accusations that it suppresses free speech and opposition to Kagame.

In next door Burundi, President Pierre Nkurunziza has ignored a wave of protests against his third-term bid which opponents say violates the constitution. Nkurunziza cites a court ruling saying he can run again.

Party Secretary-General Jean Claude Ntezimana told Reuters in court that the party did not have a lawyer as the one they had initially engaged had not responded to calls in the past two days while others were wary of taking part in such a challenge.

"We have tried many lawyers who have refused because of fear," he said. "Five of them who even read our case kept changing their minds, arguing that they cannot counter the government's move."

The Democratic Green Party has said sticking to a two-term limit would help ensure a peaceful transfer of power and show respect for the rule of law. In the past it has also called for the presidential term to be shortened to four or five years.

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BURUNDI

Burundi ruling party urge talks on possible presidential polls date

NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

8 July 2015 - Burundian ruling party has welcomed outcomes of a regional summit held to tackle the country's political crisis, but urged the discussion of the proposed new presidential poll date of July 30.

The East African Community (EAC) summit on Burundi was held Monday in Tanzania's Dar-es-Salaam, suggesting the delay of the Burundian presidential poll from July 15 to July 30.

"We welcomed all the outcomes from the summit, but concerning the delay of the presidential poll from July 15 to July 30 as suggested by the summit, we will take time to discuss with the new facilitator.

"We will show him that there is limit of the constitution of Burundi, meaning that there is a date we cannot go beyond," Gelase Daniel Ndabirabe, spokesman of the Burundian ruling party, the National Council for the Defense of Democracy- Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), told Xinhua.

According to him, holding the presidential poll on July 30 will be in contradiction with the national constitution whose article 103 sets the limit of a presidential poll not beyond July 26.

"We will show this issue to the new facilitator and we will convince him that we cannot go out of the provisions of the national constitution," said Ndabirabe.

He also indicated that other issues including the formation of a "government of national union" that would include some opposition figures will also be discussed with the new facilitator.

The summit also designated Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni as the new facilitator in the Burundi's political crisis and the disarmament of youth groups affiliated to political parties.

By the end of last week, the Burundian ruling party and its allies rejected the facilitation of UN Special Envoy to Burundi Abdoulaye Bathily, accusing him of interfering in the east African country's affairs and called for the appointment of a new facilitator.

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Earlier in June, the opposition had also rejected the facilitation of UN Special Envoy to Burundi Said Djinnit, accusing him of siding with the government.

Burundi has been in turmoil since April 25 when President Pierre Nkurunziza, who has been in power since 2005, announced that he will run for a third term in the upcoming elections, despite warnings at home and abroad.

Clashes between protesters and police have left more than 30 people dead in the country.

Burundi: l'opposition rejette les résultats des législatives du 29 juin

ARTICLE

Source: Agence d'Information d'Afrique centrale

Par Fiacre Kombo

Le parti de Pierre Nkurunziza a remporté 77 des 100 sièges à l'Assemblée nationale lors des dernières législatives que l'opposition et la société civile ont boycottées. Le mystère reste entier sur la présidentielle prévue dans une semaine.

8 juillet 2015 - Malgré le refus par les partis de l'opposition burundaise, la société civile, y compris la majorité de la communauté internationale, de prendre part au processus organisé par le parti au pouvoir, le 29 juin dernier, contre vents et marées, la Commission électorale nationale indépendante (Céni), a tenu les législatives et communales. Les seuls observateurs de l'ONU qui ont suivi le scrutin, l'ont par la suite contesté.

Selon les résultats rendus publics mardi par la Céni, le CNDD-FDD au pouvoir et son allié l'Uprona ont raflé 79 sièges contre 21 obtenus par la coalition d'opposition des Indépendants de l'Espoir, menée par les opposants Agathon Rwasa et Charles Nditije, rapporte l'AFP. Pourtant, la coalition avait décidé de boycotter le scrutin, mais la Céni a affirmé « n'avoir jamais reçu de requête formelle demandant le retrait des listes de ses candidats ».

Que dira le nouveau médiateur ?

Mais pour l'opposition burundaise, cette annonce est caduque. «Une chose est sûre: ils ne seront pas nos députés. Ils ne nous représenteront ni aux conseils communaux ni au Parlement. Ils tenteront de représenter leur maître Nkurunziza, mais le pays nous

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appartient », a déclaré Pacifique Nininahazwe, un des leaders de la société civile et du mouvement populaire anti-troisième mandat de Pierre Nkurunziza.

Le 6 juillet dernier, les dirigeants de la communauté est-africaine (EAC), réunis lors d'un sommet extraordinaire à Dar es Salaam en Tanzanie, ont désigné le chef de l'Etat ougandais, Yoweri Museveni, médiateur de la crise burundaise, et appelé Bujumbura à reporter la présidentielle prévue le 15 juillet prochain. « Les dirigeants des pays de l'EAC ont demandé que l'élection soit reportée au 30 juillet pour donner le temps au médiateur, Yoweri Museveni de conduire un dialogue », a déclaré le secrétaire général de l'organisation sous-régionale, Richard Sezibera. Dès à présent, le médiateur international Museveni doit pouvoir tout mettre en action en vue de réunir CNDD-FDD et l'opposition.

Bujumbura veut répondre à l'EAC

Le sommet s'est déroulé en absence du principal intéressé, le président burundais Pierre Nkurunziza qui n'a pas fait le déplacement. Le porte-parole du gouvernement burundais, Philippe Nzobonariba, a indiqué ce mardi à APA que le gouvernement réagira aux recommandations du sommet des chefs d'Etat de l'EAC après avoir étudié le rapport détaillé de ses envoyés sur les recommandations du sommet.

Le parti au pouvoir a tout de même salué les recommandations du sommet de Dar-es Salaam, mais émet le doute sur la demande de report de la présidentielle attendue le 15 juillet prochain. Le CNDD-FDD a fait savoir qu'il ne serait pas admissible de « dépasser les dates d'expiration des institutions élues en 2010 », note APA.

UN urges reopening of radio stations to curb rumors in Burundi**NEWS STORY**

Source: News Service (English)

Bujumbura, 8 July 2015 - The Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Burundi Wednesday urged the reopening of radio stations to curb rumors, the OHCHR representative to Burundi said after meeting the Burundian Ombudsman.

"We discussed the impunity issue and the propagation of rumors whose origin is the lack of radio stations," the head of the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Burundi, Patrice Vahard, told reporters after a courtesy visit he had with Burundian Ombudsman Mohamed Rukara.

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Vahard also indicated that they discussed the press freedom in general and the current situation of human rights in Burundi.

He indicated that he told Rukara to discuss with the government so that radio stations can be reopened.

Since the destruction of at least five main private radio stations in the aftermath of the failed coup plot staged by Major General Godefroid Niyombare on May 13, rumors that threaten citizens' security have been mounting, causing the exile of thousands of Burundian citizens into neighboring countries namely Rwanda, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo).

UGANDA

EAC heads of state appoint Uganda's Museveni mediator in Burundi standoff

NEWS STORY

Source: IPP Media (<http://www.ippmedia.com/?l=82059>)

By Sylvester Domasa

7 July 2015 - The East African Heads of State extra ordinary summit yesterday appointed Uganda President Yoweri Museveni mediator to the Burundi crisis and urged the nation to postpone its planned presidential election to July 30.

Held in Dar es Salaam and chaired by the current East African Community Chairman and Tanzania President Dr Jakaya Kikwete the summit was attended in person by Uganda's President Museveni while the other EAC Heads of State were represented by their Foreign Affairs Ministers.

They included Piere Nkurunziza (Burundi), Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya) and Paul Kagame (Rwanda) as well as South Africa's President Jacob Zuma who was represented by the South Africa High Commissioner to Tanzania.

Briefing the delegates on the seven resolutions reached during the summit, EAC Secretary General Dr Richard Sezibera said the leaders have called on the Government of Burundi to respect the Arusha declaration accord and not to amend the constitution.

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The summit urged whoever wins the presidential election should form a national unity government on in which all parties involved in the election are represented and provide with special seats.

Burundi was scheduled to go to the polls next Wednesday but with the new decision, Burundi presidential election scheduled for July 15 is now to be reset for July 30.

It was not immediately verified whether the new mediator, Museveni, will work with the UN Special Representative to Central Africa, Abdoulaye Bathily who was on Sunday rejected by Burundian government as the new mediator to end the crisis, accusing him of being bias.

Shortly after the meeting, Alain Aime Nyamitwe, Burundi's Minister for External Relations who was representing Gen. Piere Nkurunziza said; "I will take the resolutions and the leaders will make the final decision."

According to him, the government is optimistic that the opposition will cooperate with the new mediator; "we believe Museveni will help. It's a good decision made by the regional leaders for Burundi," he said.

The summit also called for the government of Burundi to disarm all armed groups and the African Union to urgently deploy military observers to oversee the disarmament. The regional leaders also agreed that a joint ICJR to be deployed urgently to verify presence of FDR in the country.

The summit also requested the AU to urgently endorse the decision.

Dr Sezibera said the EAC should send an electoral observer mission for the rescheduled presidential election.

Plans for the summit, the third in a space of three months following the second one held in May, were revealed to the Press a day after the United Nations declared this week's parliamentary and local elections in Burundi not free and fair.

This week's polls were reportedly held amid a tense standoff as dozens of people were killed in the capital, Bujumbura.

There was a tense political crisis and a climate of widespread fear and intimidation in parts of the country on polling day, the UN electoral observer mission said in a report.

"Episodes of violence and explosions preceded and in some cases accompanied Election Day activities, mostly in Bujumbura," said part of the nine-page report. "The environment was not conducive for free, credible and inclusive elections."

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Burundi's president, Pierre Nkurunziza, is seeking a bitterly contested third term in office.

Meanwhile, the United States ratcheted up international pressure, calling for presidential elections on July 15 to be delayed.

John Kirby, US Department Spokesperson, last Thursday issued a statement saying that Nkurunziza's continued disregard for the Arusha Agreement has resulted in dozens of deaths, the exodus of over 144,000 Burundians to neighbouring countries and an economic meltdown.

"The Burundian government's decision to push forward with the June 29 parliamentary elections despite the complete absence of the necessary conditions for credible elections and widespread calls, including from the African Union and United Nations, to delay the voting further exacerbated an already dire situation," reads the US statement.

The US says it joins with the AU, the UN, the EU, and other regional bodies and leaders in urging Nkurunziza to place the welfare of Burundi's citizens above his own political ambitions and participate in dialogue with the opposition and civil society to identify a peaceful solution to this deepening crisis.

"This solution should include the delay of the July 15 presidential elections until conditions are in place for free, fair, and peaceful elections."

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

France probes CAR child sex scandal

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

French magistrates were on their way Tuesday to the Central African Republic, a judicial source said, to question children who say they were sexually abused by peacekeepers in exchange for food.

Bangui, 8 July 2015 - Several children - the youngest just nine - allege that more than a dozen French soldiers dispatched to the impoverished nation to restore order after a 2013 coup were involved in the scandal that rocked the French military.

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Since then, allegations of abuse have also surfaced in Burkina Faso, where two French Special Forces soldiers were accused - and one charged - with sexually assaulting two girls aged three and five at a hotel swimming pool.

France's defence ministry was informed of the incidents in the Central African Republic in July 2014 when it received a leaked report compiled by UN officials stationed in the restive country.

It immediately launched an internal probe into the case, sending police investigators to the former French colony on August 1 after receiving the news.

But the allegations nevertheless only emerged in April when The Guardian newspaper broke the story, leading to accusations the ministry tried to cover up the scandal - which it denies.

French judges were subsequently tasked with investigating the alleged sexual abuse, and the source, who wished to remain anonymous, said two magistrates were currently on their way to Bangui.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Congo Opposition Plans to Boycott 'National Dialogue'

NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

7 July 2015 - The main opposition party in the Republic of Congo on Tuesday said it would boycott talks this week with the government over constitutional changes it fears are designed to allow President Denis Sassou Nguesso to serve a third term in the oil-rich central African nation.

Sassou Nguesso called the "national dialogue" this Saturday through Tuesday to discuss reforms. These are expected to include scrapping a two-term limit on presidents — a sensitive issue across Africa, where a number of veteran leaders have triggered protests with plans to extend their time in office.

Sassou Nguesso, a 71-year-old former military commander, has not said publicly whether he plans to seek a third seven-year term next year. He would also currently be barred by a ban on candidates older than 70.

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Pascal Tsaty Mabilia, head of the main opposition party, the Pan-African Union for Social Democracy (UPADS), said a coalition of opposition parties was against any changes to the constitution and had declined the invitation to talks.

"We will open talks only if the president says clearly and loudly that he is not a candidate for re-election in 2016 and will respect the term limits in the constitution," Tsaty Mabilia told Reuters by telephone.

The opposition leader also said he had been prevented by police on Monday from boarding a flight to France and informed that he was forbidden from leaving the country.

A government spokesman was not immediately available for comment.

Invitations Issued

About 400 representatives of political groups, trade unions, ex-combatants, and traditional and religious authorities have been invited to take part in the talks, but the absence of FROCAD would be a blow to efforts to forge a national consensus.

Sassou Nguesso ruled the former French colony from 1979 to 1992, and took power again in 1997 at the end of a civil war before winning disputed polls in 2002 and 2009.

Congo is on track to leapfrog Equatorial Guinea to become sub-Saharan Africa's third-largest crude producer by 2017. Half of its 4.5 million population lives in poverty, according to the World Bank.

President of Congo Brazzaville kicks off Paris visit to discuss reforms**NEWS STORY**

Source: RFI

7 July 2015 - French President Francois Hollande is meeting Tuesday with Denis Sassou-Nguesso, president of the Congo Brazzaville, at the Elysee Palace to kick off a four-day visit that is expected to touch on electoral governance, institutional reform, the crisis in central Africa and the upcoming climate summit in Paris.

Critics suspect that Sassou-Nguesso is preparing to change the constitution so that he can run for another presidential term. They are asking France to take a hard stance against the move.

The meeting is Hollande's latest in conversations about constitutional reform in Africa.

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Hollande has condemned constitutional reforms to extend power with France's African allies at November's Francophone summit in Dakar, as well as in his visit to Benin last week. That was part of a two-day tour in Africa beginning 2 July with Hollande also stopping in Cameroon and Angola.

During the trip, the issue of African presidents changing their laws to remain in power was discussed at length in each country.

Angolan President José Edouardo Dos Santos during the visit said that he would not support the Congolese president if violence were to break out in the country as a result of a constitutional reform. Previously, the Angolan army helped reinstate Sassou-Nguesso in 1997 during the Second Republic of the Congo Civil War.

In Benin, Hollande praised President Thomas Boni Yaya for his decision not to seek a third term. Yaya is seen as an example of how the presidential system can work in Africa, he said.

"You are a country of reference when it comes to democracy," Hollande told MPs in Benin.

"If I am here it is to underscore that examples can be set. Benin has succeeded – not merely its transition but succeeded in fully democratising its institutions. The stability of a country is the stability of its institutions. To respect a constitution is to respect citizens. Accepting the rule of the ballot box is proof of maturity for those in office."

The influence of France over its former colonies is something that is frowned upon in Africa.

Pierre Nglo, the secretary-general of the opposition party, the Congolese Labor Party (PCT), has said he believes Sassou-Nguesso is looking to gain electoral power through help from Paris and that this undermines Congolese sovereignty.

KENYA

Kenya: Rwandese 'Snatched and Sent Back Home'

NEWS STORY

Source: The Star (Kenya)

By Kamore Maina

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8 July 2015 - A Rwandese investigator into the 1994 genocide was kidnapped in Nairobi and sent back to Kigali by Kenyan police and military agents, the man's family yesterday told the Star.

Jean Chrysostome Ntirugiribambe had been a military captain in Rwanda before the 1994 genocide. He was an investigator and legal assistant in UN war crimes tribunal in Tanzania.

He worked on the defence of three cases. He had been living as a refugee in Togo but returned to Nairobi in early June to visit his five children.

Yesterday, the family in Nairobi, through his daughter, alleged that officers from the Flying Squad and from military intelligence abducted Ntirugiribambe and handed him over to the government of President Paul Kagame in Rwanda. The daughter asked that she not be quoted by name and did not say how she came by the information.

But witnesses saw the abduction. A human rights activist also told the Star that Ntirugiribambe had been abducted and "repatriated".

The daughter said there is a plot by the Rwandan government to eliminate fugitives' crucial evidence that could discredit the government. Witnesses to the abduction told police he was arrested at 8pm as he left a grocery store at Tanners ya Juu in Zimmerman and went to his car.

Four armed men in street clothes claiming to be police forced him into a black Toyota, a civilian vehicle, they said. The onlookers demanded the four men identify themselves and were told the men were from the Flying Squad. One of the four pointed a pistol at onlookers, they said.

The family reported him missing to Kasarani police station. The family and police have been unable to contact Ntirugiribambe by phone since his mobile has been turned off for the past 13 days. Police spokesman George Kinoti denied the family's claim that security agencies were involved in the disappearance.

"Investigations have not established such as thing. Kenya police does not involve itself in criminals acts," Kinoti told the Star. Kasarani CID chief Valery Obore said investigations are in high gear but declined further comment.

Human rights activists and others have alleged a plot to eliminate people with damaging information about the Kagame government, allegations the government denies.

A former head of Rwanda's external intelligence service, Patrick Karegeya, was found strangled in a hotel in South Africa on January 2, 2014.

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He had been close to Kagame but the men fell out. He had lived in exile for several years. According to the family, hours before his disappearance, Ntirugiribambe had received calls from a former Randan military officer Emmanuel Mughisa, alias Gafirita, who had escaped from Rwanda 20 years ago and was living in Nairobi.

Mughisa had fled Rwanda after the plane carrying then President Juvenal Habyarimana was shot down on April 6, 1994. That triggered three months of killings that left at least 800,000 people dead, mostly Tutsi and moderate Hutu.

Mughisa went missing in 2013 under mysterious circumstances from his house in Dagoretti where he was in hiding. At the time he disappeared, Mughisa, was due to give evidence before a French inquiry into the downing of the President's plane. Mughisa has been reported to have evidence linking Kagame to the downing. Kagame has always denied any involvement. The whereabouts of Mughisa are not known.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan rebel leader says no peace while president remains

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

8 July 2015 - The leader of South Sudan's rebels said Wednesday that the country's civil war would continue as long as President Salva Kiir remained in power.

"We don't feel like we have a peace partner with Salva Kiir," Riek Machar told reporters in a luxury hotel in the Kenyan capital, saying that previous ceasefires he had signed with the government during the course of the 18-month-old conflict were "born dead".

"The people of South Sudan did not deserve to go back to war, but this was caused by the actions of President Salva Kiir, who we ask to resign today," Machar said.

"Should President Kiir remain adamant and refuse to hand over power back to the people, then the citizens have every right to rise up and overthrow his regime."

The comments came as South Sudan, the world's youngest nation, prepares to mark the fourth anniversary of its independence from Khartoum on Thursday, an event that marked an end to decades of war but only provided a brief respite from conflict.

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The civil war in the new nation began when Kiir accused Machar, a former vice president, of planning a coup, setting off a cycle of retaliatory killings across the country that has split the poverty-stricken, landlocked country along ethnic and tribal lines.

A UN report last month described horrific violence in the latest fighting, with witnesses saying troops gang-raped girls and torched them alive in huts. Large numbers of child soldier have also been recruited.

Fighters on both sides are accused of atrocities, and analysts believe tens of thousands of people have died since the war began.

The United Nations has also described South Sudan as being "lower in terms of human development than just about every other place on earth."

Machar rejected accusations levelled at his own troops and insisted he too was a "victim".

"I am a victim, just like all the other victims who died, except I am not dead," he said.

South Sudan's parliament voted in March to extend Kiir's mandate by three years, formally ditching any plans for elections originally due to take place this year.

Machar said the extension was meaningless, and that as the original mandate ended Thursday, the rebels considered the government to be "unconstitutional and illegitimate."

Last week, the UN Security Council imposed a travel ban and asset freeze on six commanders -- three from the government side and three rebels.

But Machar, who last month welcomed into his ranks a rogue ex-government general, Johnson Olony -- who has been accused of forcibly recruiting hundreds of child soldiers -- defended the rebel trio.

"All of them are innocent," he said.

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Soudan du Sud: pas de paix possible si Kiir reste président, avertit le chef des rebelles

ARTICLE

Source: AFP

Nairobi, 8 juillet 2015 - La guerre civile ayant fait des dizaines de milliers de victimes depuis fin 2013 ne connaîtra pas de fin à moins d'une démission du président Salva Kiir, a averti mercredi le chef des rebelles sud-soudanais Riek Machar.

Nous n'avons pas le sentiment d'avoir en Salva Kiir un partenaire pour faire la paix, a déclaré l'ancien vice-président Machar, qui a pris la tête d'une rébellion après avoir été limogé de son poste.

Les sept cessez-le-feu signés avec le pouvoir pour tenter de mettre un terme au conflit ont tous été morts-nés, a-t-il souligné.

La nation la plus jeune du monde marquera jeudi ses quatre ans d'indépendance, arrachée le 9 juillet 2011 au Soudan après des décennies de guerre nord-sud.

Mais ces derniers 18 mois ont été marqués par une guerre civile sans merci, conduisant le pays tout en bas de l'échelle en terme de développement humain, selon les termes de l'ONU.

Le peuple du Soudan du Sud ne méritait pas de replonger dans la guerre, c'est de la responsabilité du président Salva Kiir, auquel nous demandons aujourd'hui de démissionner, a lancé Riek Machar, depuis un hôtel de luxe de la capitale kényane.

Si le président Kiir continue à s'obstiner et refuse de rendre le pouvoir au peuple, les citoyens auront tous les droits de se soulever pour renverser ce régime, a-t-il martelé.

Le parlement sud-soudanais a prolongé fin mars le mandat de Salva Kiir pour trois ans, réduisant à néant la perspective d'une élection, initialement prévue cette année.

Riek Machar a récusé cette décision, estimant que le mandat présidentiel prenait fin jeudi et qu'à partir de cette date le gouvernement serait anticonstitutionnel et illégitime.

Les combats ont débuté en décembre 2013 dans la capitale Juba lorsque Salva Kiir, un Dinka, a accusé son vice-président nuer Riek Machar, tout juste limogé, de fomenter un coup d'Etat.

Leur rivalité politique a rapidement dégénéré en un conflit ethnique marqué par une scission de l'armée et des massacres entre les deux ethnies.

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Femmes et filles victimes de viols collectifs, garçons émasculés, armées d'enfants soldats: les atrocités se sont enchaînées dans le pays, où certaines régions sont désormais au bord de la famine.

La population sud-soudanaise a désespérément besoin d'une fin immédiate de ce conflit, afin de pouvoir recevoir nourriture et autres aides vitales, a averti mercredi le directeur d'Oxfam pour le Soudan du Sud, Zlatko Gegic.

Quelque 8 millions de personnes - deux-tiers de la population - ont besoin d'assistance et 3,8 millions d'entre elles souffrent de la faim, selon Oxfam.

Les combattants des deux camps ont été accusés d'avoir commis des massacres dans lesquels des dizaines de milliers de civils sont morts.

Riek Machar, qui a accueilli le mois dernier dans ses rangs un ex-général du camp gouvernemental, Johnson Olony, accusé d'avoir recruté de force des centaines d'enfants-soldats, a rejeté les accusations portées contre ses troupes, se décrivant lui aussi comme une victime.

La semaine dernière, le conseil de sécurité de l'Onu a gelé les avoirs financiers et frappé d'interdiction de voyager six chefs militaires sud-soudanais: trois côté forces gouvernementales et trois côté rebelles.

Mais Riek Machar a défendu le trio de chefs rebelles: Ils sont tous innocents, a-t-il affirmé.

Soudan du Sud : le mandat du président Salva Kiir prolongé de trois ans par le parlement

ARTICLE

Source: Agence de presse Xinhua

9 juillet 2015 - Le parlement du Soudan du Sud a officiellement prolongé mercredi de trois ans le mandat du président Salva Kiir Mayardit, a indiqué un porte-parole.

Le parlement a décidé de prolonger le mandat du président Salva Kiir Mayardit de trois ans après que les députés ont voté à propos de cette question en mars dernier, a expliqué à Xinhua le porte-parole du parlement du Soudan du Sud, Thomas Wani.

"Le président n'aura pas besoin de prêter serment officiellement car il assume actuellement le mandat présidentiel", a-t-il noté.

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Le président Kiir s'est engagé devant les membres du parlement à travailler à mettre fin à la guerre et à parvenir à la paix et à la stabilité au Soudan du Sud, a ajouté le porte-parole.

En février, le gouvernement sud-soudanais avait demandé au parlement de repousser les élections générales, prévues pour fin juin, à dans deux ans, et de prolonger le mandat de Kiir de trois ans.

Le Soudan du Sud a sombré dans la violence en décembre 2013 lorsque des combats ont éclaté entre les troupes fidèles au président Salva Kiir et les transfuges qui ont suivi l'ex-vice-président Riek Machar.

Le conflit s'est rapidement transformé en une véritable guerre. Et la confrontation a pris un tour ethnique, la tribu Dinka dont est issu le président s'opposant au groupe ethnique des Nuer dont est issu M. Machar.

Les affrontements ont fait des milliers de morts et environ 1,9 million de déplacés.

Suivez China.org.cn sur Twitter et Facebook pour rejoindre la conversation.

No peace in sight as South Sudan sinks into 'new brutality'

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

By Peter Martell

8 July 2015 - Girls gang raped by soldiers then burned alive, boys castrated, armies of child fighters: the litany of atrocities in South Sudan's civil war is growing, with the international community apparently powerless to stop the fighting.

As the world's youngest nation prepares to mark its fourth year of independence from Sudan on Thursday, South Sudan finds itself in the ignominious position of being "lower in terms of human development than just about every other place on earth," according to a UN report documenting the ravages of the war.

Analysts warn the only obvious diplomatic leverage left to pressure the warring parties into making peace -- sanctions -- could actually worsen the conflict.

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The war began in December 2013 when President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy Riek Machar of planning a coup, setting off a cycle of retaliatory killings across the country that has split the impoverished landlocked nation along ethnic lines.

Kiir and Machar have accepted "collective responsibility for the crisis", but the 18-month-old war, in which tens of thousands have been killed, rumbles on with no end in sight.

At least seven ceasefires have been agreed and broken. When Kiir and Machar last met in late June they failed to even agree a deal on paper, with the talks failing to "bear any tangible results", a rebel spokesman said.

Last week, the UN Security Council imposed a travel ban and asset freeze on six commanders -- three from the government side and three rebels.

- Billions in aid -

"Those who commit atrocities and undermine peace will face consequences," the US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power said.

But three of those named had already been slapped with European Union and United States sanctions that have failed to stem the violence, as asset freezes and travel bans mean little to battlefield commanders.

The International Crisis Group warned UN sanctions on those directing the fighting -- the calls for sanctions have stopped short of naming Kiir and Machar -- could "turn individuals and communities in South Sudan who currently favour a peace agreement against the international community".

But UN reports of a "new brutality and intensity" of violence with a "scope and level of cruelty that... suggests a depth of antipathy that exceeds political differences," indicates little, if any, appetite for peace.

John Prendergast, from the US-based Enough Project campaign group, said sanctions could "combat the climate of impunity" but said more were needed "on officials higher up the flagpole of authority."

Billions of dollars in aid and development funds have poured in since a 2005 peace deal with Khartoum that ended a decades-long civil war and paved the way to an overwhelming vote for independence in 2011.

Yet international influence is now limited, even for backers of South Sudan's independence such as Washington, or those with powerful economic roles such as China, once the main buyer of South Sudan's now largely stalled oil production.

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Few see change coming from leaders on either side despite the humanitarian crisis gripping South Sudan, where two-thirds of the population of 12 million need aid including food, medical treatment and military protection.

Former UN aid chief to South Sudan Toby Lanzer, who was barred from the country last month after warning of an economic meltdown, said the "political intransigence" of the country's leaders is fuelling the conflict, echoing similar warnings from the African Union.

"The continuation of hostilities, in total disregard of the suffering of the people, is tantamount to the abdication by the South Sudanese leaders of their most fundamental responsibility," the AU Peace and Security Council said.

An AU inquiry said Kiir and Machar were both responsible for "organised massacres" and ethnic killings and recommended they both be barred from political office. It was shelved over fears its strong line would torpedo the floundering talks, but was later leaked.

Meanwhile neighbouring countries are being dragged into the war.

Over two dozen armed groups are involved in the fighting, with thousands of Ugandan troops backed by helicopter gunships supporting Kiir, while Sudan is accused of arming Machar's rebels.

Diplomats say they have few options left. Repeated rounds of peace talks have resulted in little more than multi-million dollar hotel and travel bills.

"Sanctions on leaders are a last resort," said one diplomat close to the talks. "The hope is still to get them to talk and strike a deal."

South Sudan Army Vows Hot Pursuit of Rebels after Retaking Malakal Town

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Vision

Juba, 8 July 2015 - South Sudanese army (SPLA) said on Monday it will pursue the rebels after regaining control of the strategic town of Malakal, capital of the oil-rich Upper Nile state, sparking security and humanitarian concerns after armed opposition fighters allied to the former vice president Riek Machar, withdrew from the town on Monday.

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The SPLA deputy chief of general staff for operations, Lieutenant General James Ajonga Mawut told Sudan Tribune on Monday that the government troops have retaken the town after a series of fighting with the armed opposition forces outside the town before eventually entering it without resistance.

“I am talking to you in the operation area. Everything is under control. The rebels have fled and our forces are pursuing them,” General Mawut told Sudan Tribune on Monday.

“But this time we will not leave them. It will not be like the other operation. We have tolerated their criminal activities. We will give them hot pursuit. We will go after them since they do not abide by what they themselves have agreed and signed,” he claimed.

Mawut said the general command was forced to act against the alleged rebel activities to launch counter offensive to regain control of Malakal town and other areas in Jonglei and Unity states.

The chief of general staff of the government forces, Paul Malong Awan, he said, was also in the area overseeing the military operations in the state.

“We are all here. The general command is here. The chief of general staff is here for this operation. There must be an end to this,” he said.

Meanwhile the Upper Nile state minister of information, Peter Hoth Tuach, confirmed in a separate interview with Sudan Tribune that the government forces have regained control of the state capital.

“There has been heavy fighting for the last two days. The rebels moved out of Malakal and attempted to make advance on the position of our gallant SPLA forces in Akoka and Kodok but they were defeated and pursued and today they were dislodged from Malakal town,” Tuach told Sudan Tribune on Monday.

The state government’s spokesperson also confirmed the presence of the top military leadership in the area, pointing out that the presence of the chief of general staff, Paul Malong Awan, and many other senior commanders to personally oversee the military operations had added pressure on the government forces to regain control of the area.

“The chief of general staff has been here for the last three days. He is overseeing the operation against the rebels. They will now be pursued wherever they go”, he said.

But the armed opposition fighters rubbished the government’s claims of foreseeable victory saying such comments were not new.

“These comments of imaginary military victories are not new. We have heard these before. Somebody sent in foreign troops and promised that his interference would end

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the war militarily in four days. This did not happen. Another one came in as new army chief last year and vowed he would crush all our forces in 30 days. It did not happen,” rebel leader’s spokesman, James Gatdet Dak, told Sudan Tribune on Monday.

“Today we are approaching 20 months fighting. The best way to end the war is through peaceful political peace agreement,” Dak added.

He pointed out that there was no fighting that took place inside Malakal town on Monday as alleged by the government’s military and political officials, saying their forces tactically withdrew from the town without a gunshot.

UN confirms malakal takeover

The deputy spokesperson for UN secretary general, Farhan Haq said its mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) reportedly heard three mortar rounds this morning fired from positions northeast of the mission’s compound towards Malakal town in the oil-rich region.

"Shortly thereafter, UNMISS observed approximately 400 SPLA troops driving past its compound in the direction of Malakal town led by tanks and armored personnel carriers," Haq said in a brief statement he extended to Sudan Tribune on Monday.

"No fighting was subsequently heard, indicating that SPLA troops have regained control of the Upper Nile State capital and armed opposition forces had withdrawn from Malakal prior to the arrival of government troops", he added.

Peace talks to try to end the war between the two rival factions is expected to resume this July in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

One killed at UN camp in South Sudan’s Unity state**NEWS STORY**

Source: Sudan Tribune

Juba, 7 July 2015 - A man sheltering at United Nations protection of civilian site in South Sudan’s Unity state was killed by unknown gunmen, the mission said on Tuesday.

The UN, in a statement, condemned the shooting in the “strongest terms possible”.

“UNMISS personnel heard a gunshot at approximately 8:40 p.m. last Sunday that came from the northern perimeter of the PoC site. UNMISS personnel responded promptly

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and found the body of a male IDP with a gunshot wound in the back,” reads the statement.

Bentiu, the capital of oil rich Unity state, is currently under the control of government forces. Thousands of civilians are being hosted at protection of civilian sites since they took refuge at the UN camp when conflict broke out in the country in December 2013.

“Eyewitnesses told UNMISS that two armed men in military uniforms were seen inside the PoC site and fired the shot that killed the IDP. The gunmen then left the protection of civilian site and fled into the surrounding bush,” UNMISS added the statement.

The identities and motives, UN said, remains unknown as investigations get underway.

“Any attack on a protection-of-civilians site constitutes a direct assault against the United Nations and may constitute a war crime,” the UN mission said in a statement.

This is not the first time that an UNMISS protection-of-civilians site has come under attack by armed individuals in South Sudan but no suspect have ever been arrested.

The UN peacekeeping mission said it was time to hold the suspects accountable.

“UNMISS demands once again that the warring parties in the current conflict honour their obligation to ensure the safety and security of UN personnel in South Sudan as well as civilians seeking shelter within the UN sites and respect the inviolability of UN property and assets in the country,” stressed the release also extended to Sudan Tribune.

SUDAN

Sudan’s FM hopes talks with American envoy be based on new approach

NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

Khartoum, 7 July 2015 - Sudan’s foreign minister expressed hopes that upcoming discussions with the United States special envoy to Sudan would be based on a new approach and allow to reach joint understanding on bilateral relations.

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Donald Booth is expected to be in Khartoum within two weeks where he will conduct his first visit for Sudan since nearly two years. His visit comes after discussions between the two countries last February on how to clear misunderstandings and what each side expects from the other.

The contention between Sudan, which is classified as a state sponsor of terror and under economic sanctions, and the American administration is over Washington's demand to end conflicts in Darfur and the Two Areas as condition to normalize bilateral relations.

In an interview with the official news agency SUNA ahead of Booth's visit to Khartoum, the foreign minister Ibrahim Ghandour said he had discussed this issue with the American officials last February.

Ghandour said he informed his American interlocutors that a dialogue where the special envoy comes to Khartoum with "prescriptions" and ask them to implement it before to return home has proven its failure.

"We hope that the US administration understands our position in this matter," he said.

"We hope that the US envoy comes within the framework of an integrated technical and political work. This is what we expect from the American side, and if that happened we could go in the prospects for dialogue," he stressed.

Gahndour proposed to develop a relation based on the interests of US states in the troubled east and central African region and the role that Khartoum can play in support of the regional peace and stability.

He said that Sudan is a strategic and secure country in the region, while the United State as a great country has its vision for security and peace in the world, adding that "the cooperation between the two countries is important and required".

During the past years, the president Omer al-Bashir ordered to stop talks on bilateral relations with Washington and accused the American administration of implementing the agenda of activists and rights defenders.

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Sudan firm on UNAMID's exit from country

NEWS STORY

Source: Kuwait News Agency

(<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2450458&Language=en>)

Khartoum, 7 July 2015 - The Sudanese government insisted on Tuesday that the UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) had to leave Sudan.

Spokesperson for the Sudanese Foreign Ministry Ali Al-Sadeq noted in a press statement that the departure of UNAMID was to take place in stages, as agreed by all parties involved and in accordance to decisions already made by UN Security Council and the African Peace and Security Council. He said he made the Sudanese stance clear to the Chinese ambassador in Sudan Li Lian, who expressed his country's support of Sudan and its national sovereignty.

The ambassador extolled the work done by Sudan, the African Union, and the UN in strategizing UNAMID's exit from Sudan.

UNAMID has been commanding about 26,000 peace-keeping troops in Darfur since 2008. Sudan seeks UNAMID's exit after conflict in Darfur has been scaled back since 2003 due to peace agreements signed by the government of Sudan and armed groups, including the Doha peace accord.

Three opposition figures in Sudan sentenced to 20 lashes

NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

6 July 2015 - Three leading figures of a small Sudanese opposition group were given 20 lashes Monday after a court found them guilty of disturbing the peace, their party said.

The court convicted Sudanese Congress Party vice president Mastour Ahmed Mohamed and top officials Assem Omar and Ibrahim Mohamed, and the punishment was meted out even before defence lawyers had arrived, party spokesman Bakri Youssef said. Youssef said the sentence -- the first of its kind against the opposition since President Omar al-Bashir came to power in 1989 -- was carried out in Omdurman, the twin city of capital Khartoum. The three party members had called before a crowd in

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an Omdurman marketplace in April for the release of 12 jailed colleagues. Most opposition groups boycotted a Sudan presidential election in April that Bashir, 71, won with ease.

Soudan: 20 coups de fouet pour trois opposants

ARTICLE

Source: Dreuz.info (<http://www.dreuz.info/2015/07/06/soudan-20-coups-de-fouet-pour-trois-opposants/#sthash.gt0nhEsO.dpbs>)

8 juillet 2015 - Un tribunal soudanais a condamné lundi trois dirigeants d'une petite formation de l'opposition à 20 coups de fouet pour « perturbation de l'ordre public », une peine qui a été immédiatement exécutée, a annoncé un porte-parole de ce parti à l'AFP.

Ce verdict sans précédent contre des opposants depuis que le président Omar el-Béchir est arrivé au pouvoir en 1989 par un coup d'Etat, a été prononcé par un tribunal d'Oumduurman, ville jumelle de Khartoum.

« Le tribunal d'Oumduurman a condamné le vice-président du Parti du congrès soudanais Mastour Ahmed Mohamed et les deux dirigeants Assem Omar et Ibrahim Mohamed à 20 coups de fouet et la sentence a été aussitôt appliquée dans la cour extérieure du tribunal », a dit ce porte-parole, Bakri Youssef. Les trois dirigeants de ce parti ont été jugés pour s'être exprimés en public en avril lorsqu'ils avaient appelé, devant une foule dans un marché d'Oumduurman, à la libération de 12 de leurs collègues emprisonnés par les autorités.

Selon le porte-parole, le verdict a été « expéditif, le juge a prononcé son jugement sans même attendre l'arrivée de l'avocat des accusés ». La plupart des groupes d'opposition au Soudan ont boycotté la présidentielle d'avril remportée sans surprise par Omar el-Béchir, 71 ans, président depuis un quart de siècle.

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TANZANIA

Tanzanie: le parti au pouvoir entame la nomination de son candidat à la présidentielle

ARTICLE

Source: AFP

8 juillet 2015 - Près de 40 candidats en lice, dont deux ex-Premier ministres, le chef du gouvernement actuel ou le vice-président du pays: le parti au pouvoir en Tanzanie a entamé le processus de nomination de son candidat à la présidentielle, qui devrait être désigné sous une semaine.

Le président Jakaya Kikwete termine son second mandat et, fait rare dans la région, ne sera pas candidat à sa succession, conformément à la Constitution.

Il n'a désigné aucun dauphin au sein du parti au pouvoir, le Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), au pouvoir depuis l'indépendance du pays en 1964, mais a appelé les membres de la formation à choisir un candidat capable de s'attaquer à la corruption.

Le pays était classé 119 sur 175 dans le dernier index de perception de la corruption de l'ONG Transparency international.

"Choisissez une personne sérieuse, compétente, et un bon dirigeant pour donner un coup de fouet au développement économique et social", a-t-il lancé lors d'un meeting lundi.

Parmi les candidats à l'investiture, figurent le vice-président Mohamed Bilal, le Premier ministre Mizengo Pinda, ainsi que les ex-anciens chefs de gouvernement Edward Lowassa et Frederick Sumaye.

Sont aussi sur les rangs le ministre de la Justice, Asha-Rose Migiro, et le ministre des Affaires étrangères Bernard Membe, ainsi que Charles Makongoro Nyerere, fils du premier président de la Tanzanie indépendante Julius Nyerere.

"C'est la première fois dans l'histoire du pays que des dizaines de personnes sont en lice pour l'investiture du CCM, c'est sain, cela montre une maturité démocratique", a estimé Benson Bana, chercheur en sciences politiques à l'université de Dar es Salaam.

Les élections générales - la présidentielle mais aussi des législatives et communales - sont prévues le 25 octobre.

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Face à lui, le CCM a une opposition qui, pour la première fois, tente de faire front commun: les partis d'opposition sont en train de nommer leurs candidats, mais si leur coalition tient jusqu'aux élections, un candidat unique pourrait être choisi parmi eux.

Le CCM va lui présélectionner cette semaine trois candidats parmi les 38 en lice, avant de désigner son représentant à la présidentielle lors d'un congrès les 12 et 13 juillet.

Avec plus de 50 millions d'habitants, la Tanzanie est le pays le plus peuplé d'Afrique de l'Est. Elle affiche une croissance annuelle de plus de 7%, selon la Banque mondiale, qui déplore cependant que le pays reste "très pauvre au regard des standards régionaux et internationaux".

Le président Kikwete devrait dissoudre jeudi le Parlement pour ouvrir la voie aux élections.