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



## **MEDIA MONITORING**

**29 July 2015**

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**GENERAL NEWS**

### **Obama tells Africans to build democracy, create jobs to thrive**

#### NEWS STORY

Source: Reuters

By Jeff Mason and Aaron Maasho

**28 July 2015** - Barack Obama told African nations on Tuesday they needed to respect democratic rules and create jobs to avoid a slide into disorder.

In the first speech by a serving U.S. president to the 54-nation African Union, he said violence unleashed in Burundi by the president's bid for a third term in office showed the risks of ignoring constitutional rules.

"Africa is on the move, and a new Africa is emerging," he said at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, adding the continent's rapid economic growth was changing "old stereotypes" of a continent of war and poverty.

But he said there was an "urgent task" facing a continent whose 1 billion people will double in a few decades.

"Africa will need to generate millions more jobs than it is doing now," he said. "We need only look to the Middle East and North Africa to see that large numbers of young people with no jobs and stifled voices can fuel instability and disorder."

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"Africa's progress will also depend on democracy," he said, adding that jailing journalists or restricting legitimate opposition groups led to "democracy in name, but not in substance".

Obama said leaders should stick to the rules and the African Union should put pressure on leaders to stick to limits.

"I don't understand why people want to stay so long, especially when they have got a lot of money," Obama said, drawing laughter from an audience on a continent often known for politics of "Big Men" accused of siphoning off state funds.

Noting that he was in his second term and could not serve again, even though he thought he could win a vote, Obama said: "I'm looking forward to life after being president."

Obama's speech wound up a tour of Kenya, his father's homeland, and Ethiopia, a once famine-stricken nation which is on course to deliver 10 percent growth this year.

Throughout his trip, he has spoken of security cooperation with states battling Islamist militants in Somalia, democratic development and trade with a continent, which since 2009 has done more trade with China than America.

In an apparent swipe at China, without mentioning any country, he said the United States offered a partnership that "can't simply be about building countries' infrastructure with foreign labor or extracting Africa's natural resources".

China has built huge amounts of infrastructure across Africa, including a new metro snaking across Addis Ababa.

But Africans have increasingly accused Chinese firms of using expatriate labor and sucking out commodities without adding value. China insists it is also a partner in development.

While in Ethiopia, Obama held talks with regional African leaders on the conflict in South Sudan. The U.S. president called for tougher measures against the world's newest nation if its warring factions failed to reach a peace deal by Aug. 17.

He repeated that threat in his speech, while also calling on leaders of the Central African Republic, another nation struggling with conflict, to respect elections later this year.

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## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

### Joseph Kabila Forever: The dangers of an extended presidency in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

#### OPINION

Source: Human Rights Watch (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/07/28/joseph-kabila-forever-dangers-extended-presidency-democratic-republic-congo>)

**Kinshasa, 28 July 2015** - Joseph Kabila, the president of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, faces a historic choice: Does he step down when his constitutionally limited two terms in office come to an end in December 2016, or does he succumb to the delusion of indispensability that is making the rounds in parts of Africa and try to cling to power?

The issue is the subject of intense debate in Congo. When we met with Kabila last week in Kinshasa, he pointed out — correctly — that he has not yet publicly stated his position about what he will do in 2016. “Let’s wait and see what will happen,” he cautioned. But he has done little to stem intense speculation about his possible reluctance to relinquish office.

If Kabila chooses to abide by the constitution, he would become the first Congolese president to step down voluntarily for another elected president — arguably making him the “father of democracy” in Congo. That would be a major step forward for a nation that suffered brutal colonial rule under King Leopold II of Belgium, decades of post-colonial dictatorship under Mobutu Sese Seko, and then years of deadly war in which a constellation of rebel groups and armies from nine African states battled on Congolese soil.

Kabila came to power in 2001 at the age of 29, following the assassination of his father, Laurent Désiré Kabila. He is not without his accomplishments in office. Under his leadership, Congo has emerged from the dark years of war, and he led a transitional government that in 2006 brought about the country’s first democratic elections in more than 40 years, which he won. With mixed success, he has sought to stabilize the eastern part of the country, which has been plagued by armed groups that continue to kill, rape, and pillage, and he has sought to end the impunity that underwrites these atrocities. His government asked the International Criminal Court to investigate the crimes committed in Congo and has surrendered more suspects to that court than any other government in the world.

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His “zero tolerance” policy toward sexual violence by security forces — announced two days after we encouraged him to take this step at a meeting in the eastern Congolese city of Goma in 2009 — has led to a spate of domestic prosecutions and a notable reduction in complaints about rape by government soldiers. And in late 2013, he succeeded in ridding eastern Congo of the last of a succession of abusive Rwandan-sponsored rebel groups that operated in the region for 15 years.

Yet if Kabila chooses to try to hang on to power, his reputation will be tarnished not only by the failure to respect the unamendable constitutional two-term limit but also by the likelihood of a violent and abusive chain reaction. To envision how a downward spiral of protest and violent repression might unfold in Congo over a disputed extended presidential term, one need look no further than neighboring Burundi, where President Pierre Nkurunziza’s insistence on a constitutionally questionable third term has yielded the deadly suppression of mass protests.

In January, when Kabila’s government attempted to change the electoral law to enable extending his time in office, thousands of people took to the streets of Congo’s major cities to protest. Government security forces responded with violence and repression, killing at least 38 protesters in Kinshasa and five in Goma, and jailing — and sometimes beating and torturing — politicians and activists who were seen to challenge the idea of an extended presidency.

Why might Kabila want to stay past his mandate? Beyond the perks of power, many assume that he fears for himself and his family. For example, in our meeting, he raised the specter of Congo’s first democratically elected leader, Patrice Lumumba, who was executed after an apparently Western-backed coup. “Have I been successful? I don’t know. Lumumba is the real father of democracy, and he was assassinated.”

Moreover, according to political insiders and investigative journalists, the Kabila family has amassed a considerable fortune, which could make them vulnerable to future investigations. Plus, Kabila in 2016 would be only 45 years old; those close to him say he has no desire to leave Congo, but there is no Congolese precedent of a former president assuming an elder statesman role of the sort played by South Africa’s Nelson Mandela or Nigeria’s Olusegun Obasanjo.

Yet Kabila has little room to maneuver. A broad consensus has emerged in the country that a formal third presidential term is constitutionally impossible, so Congolese speak instead of a possible “glissement” — the use of some pretext to allow the prescribed limits for his second term to “slide.” The pretext might be intensifying armed conflict in the east, making the prospect of genuinely national elections difficult. It might be the seemingly deliberate lack of preparations for elections: little of the budget has been

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funded, and no steps have been taken to register more than 5 million youth who have come of age since the last national election in 2011. Or it might be the government's insistence on proceeding with complicated plans to subdivide the country's 11 provinces into 26 and then hold local and provincial elections before national ones — a sequencing that could lead to significant glissement.

But it's hard to imagine how any of these scenarios would buy Kabila more than another year or two in office. That would accomplish little for him, while significantly undermining his interests. Prosecutors, for example, would be far less likely to proceed against a former president who is respected for having reinforced the foundation of Congolese democracy by handing power to a newly elected leader in timely fashion, than one who oversaw intensifying rounds of brutality against a public that seemed clearly to want a constitutionally mandated handover of power. A tumultuous period of repression would also make it less likely that Kabila's endorsement of a friendly successor would succeed — another option that might help Kabila safeguard his interests.

We made these arguments to him directly in our meeting last week, but the president was coy in answering them: "Why are you trying to anticipate what will happen?"

He was more responsive when we stressed the importance of allowing people to protest and criticize the government, especially in an electoral period, though he hedged his commitment to democratic principles: "People want to hold demonstrations and protests, good enough. But if the idea is to go beyond free protests and create mayhem and anarchy, that's completely unacceptable." We noted that democracy can be messy yet, short of violence, shouldn't be equated with anarchy. He let the point hang.

Kabila put a special stress on the need to ensure stability. "The issue in Congo is about stability. Stepping down — anyone can step down." But, again, it's far from clear how a contested extension of his term in office coupled with likely protest and repression would contribute to Congo's stability.

Kabila has proposed a national dialogue to iron out electoral questions. If he were to state clearly his intention to relinquish office at the appointed time and indicate that the dialogue would discuss only the modalities for the next round of elections consistent with the constitution, Congolese would most likely welcome the opportunity. But in his typically cryptic fashion, he has left people speculating that dialogue might be just another ploy for glissement.

That we left our meeting with Kabila cordially suggests that the arguments we made are not beyond the pale. He listened politely and even joked: "You say 'father of democracy.' You're not the first one to say this and you won't be the last." But he gave no indication that he accepted or rejected our suggestions. He simply asked: "As for my

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future, continue to pray for me.” For the sake of democracy’s future in Congo, we can only hope Kabila understands that his personal interest, not to mention his country’s, lies in accepting, rather than abusively fighting, the limits that the Congolese constitution so clearly impose.

## BURUNDI

### Burundi's ruling party urges constitution amendment to allow formation of gov't of unity

#### NEWS STORY

Source: Xinhua

**Bujumbura, 28 July 2015** - The Burundian ruling party Monday requested the East African Community (EAC), which is participating in the facilitation of the Burundian crisis, to understand the need for a constitution amendment for the formation of a government of unity.

"The National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD) requests the EAC's understanding of the need to amend the national constitution in order to be able to implement the recommendations of setting up a government of national unity," said CNDD-FDD Chairman Pascal Nyabenda in a congratulatory message. He sent the message Monday evening to President Pierre Nkurunziza after his re-election for a third term as the east African country's president on July 21.

In his message, Nyabenda said, "The amendment of the national constitution would help avoid the resurgence of the 2005 scenario when Nkurunziza integrated other political parties in the government with good faith, but the opposition rejected it, claiming that it was unconstitutional."

"The CNDD-FDD party reiterates its commitment to respect the principles of democracy, freedom, transparency and inclusiveness in elections and urges the international community to support the government in order to go forward towards liberty," Nyabenda said in the message.

On July 21, Burundi held a controversial presidential poll boycotted by main opposition groups that argued that the climate was not favorable for holding credible and inclusive elections.

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Main opposition groups had been saying that Nkurunziza's third term bid was a violation of the Arusha Agreement and the Burundian Constitution, but the Constitutional Court earlier in May issued a ruling saying that Nkurunziza's 2005-2010 term should not be considered as a term because he was elected by the parliament and not directly by citizens.

Protests against Nkurunziza's third term bid left more than 80 killed since April 25, when the Burundian ruling party designated Nkurunziza to run for the presidential election.

## UGANDA

### **Uganda: Prime minister guarantees democratic election as President Museveni announces candidacy**

#### NEWS STORY

Source: International Business Times

By Ludovica Iaccino

**27 July 2015** - Uganda's prime minister has assured the country will hold a free and democratic presidential election in 2016 as President Yoweri Museveni announced he would run for another term after 30 years in power.

Ruhakana Rugunda made the comment as Museveni released a song promoting his electoral campaign after his party, National Resistance Movement, agreed to be represented by him in the 2016 election.

"The people of Uganda should expect a free, peaceful and democratic election that will give them their leaders for the president, parliament and district level and to the grassroots," Rugunda said in a statement.

The government has been accused of persecuting political opponents after former prime minister Amama Mbabazi and Kizza Besigye, the leader of the main opposing party – Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), were arrested earlier in July, after announcing their candidacy.

Both politicians, who were released shortly after, are former allies of Museveni and now believe the president should step aside and give space to other potential leaders.

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"[T]here are laws that govern meetings around this time of elections, and all we are saying is that these laws should be respected by the candidates when they are consulting with the population," Rugunda was quoted by Voice of America as saying.

Referring to a voters list recently compiled by the electoral commission to avoid frauds, Rugunda said: "Without any doubt, this is going to be the best voters register ever produced in Uganda. It will have not only photographs, but other biometric parameters that can be used to ensure the voter is indeed the voter, and nobody is trying to cut out fraud and around elections."

### **Changes to the constitution**

Museveni has been in power since 1986. The first presidential election since he came to power was held in 1996. In 2001, after Museveni was elected for the second time, his allies started a campaign aiming to loosen presidential terms and allow the leader to run for a third term in the 2006 election.

The constitution was changed amid local and international outrage, with critics accusing the leader of seeking life presidency and persecuting political opponents. Prior to the amendment, Uganda's constitution allowed the president to stay in power only for two terms.

The 2006 election, which Museveni won, was the first multi-party election after the government lifted a 19-year restriction on political activity, according to which those who run for candidacy had to do so as individuals and not as representatives of their parties.

According to Museveni, who imposed the restriction in 1986, this was aimed at preventing ethnic divisions. But critics accused the leader of trying to curb party activity.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

### **Corruption Hurts Refugees in South Africa**

#### **NEWS STORY**

Source: VOA

**28 July 2015** - Corruption is pervasive throughout the asylum process in South Africa, according to a report published this month.



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Almost a third of asylum seekers and refugees have to pay bribes for correct documentation violating the Refugees Act that stipulates that they are not required to pay any fees for documentation. Rights groups say incompetence and graft within the Home Affairs department is contributing to the number of undocumented foreigners who have recently become the focus of a government “clean-up” operation.

Asylum seekers and refugees experience significant corruption involving multiple actors, according to a report by Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) and the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS). Based on anecdotal evidence collected from over 900 interviews with applicants applying at centres across the country, the report said that Refugee Reception Offices arbitrarily issue documents to asylum seekers and refugees looking to renew their documents.

Corruption is most pervasive at the office in Marabastad, Pretoria with over two-thirds of applicants experiencing graft. If you cannot pay, rejection is almost guaranteed. Over half of respondents at Marabastad experienced corruption while standing in queues and a third were denied entry to the office because they could not pay bribes.

Methods of extortion are evolving, says Kabelo Sedipane from Corruption Watch, a non-profit platform for reporting corruption.

“Our undercover operations are revealing new types of corruption that we hadn’t taken notice of. This includes corruption such as people having to pay translators or translators putting price on the type of stories they can sell you so the more money you have – the better your story. If you don’t have any money [they say] ‘we’re going to tell a fake story,’” Sedipane said.

When people are asked to testify against corrupt Home Affairs’ officials, they are often afraid of compromising their application or implicating themselves and withdraw the complaint.

**A magnet for asylum seekers**

South Africa is one of the top global recipients of asylum seekers and received over 70,000 applicants in 2013 – similar to the number of those received in the European Union or United States. The large demand on the asylum system has allowed corruption to thrive but the number of refugees isn’t to blame, argues Loren Landau, researcher at ACMS.

“The argument is that Home Affairs and the way in which it is dealing with immigrants and refugees is shifting from one that is based on law and based on policy to one that is based on profit,” he said.

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Home Affairs Minister Malusi Gigaba responded to the report's findings stating that the department had set up a response team and a counter-corruption initiative — Operation Bvisa Masina, which is Venda (a South African language) for “throw out the rot.”

“We will do all in our power to uproot the twin evil of fraud and corruption within the public service. Our officials and persons found guilty of unethical, criminal conduct will continue facing - without fail - the full might of the law,” Masina told reporters on July 24. “We’re bent on cleaning the rot.”

Corruption coupled with chaotic application processes and status determination increases the risk of asylum seekers remaining undocumented. Asylum seekers and refugees have complained that correct documentation is often dismissed or not recognised by the authorities including members of the police. “The issues are hampering the asylum and integration process,” said Alfani Yoyo from the Coordinating Body of Refugee & Migrant Communities. “Most migrants are undocumented and illegal because the system is bent against them.”

If they are arrested, they could be sent back to the countries from which they fled. Following a wave of xenophobic attacks in April, the government launched Operation Fiela – “sweep out dirt.” Described as an anti-crime campaign, rights groups say it is a populist policy feeding anti-foreigner sentiment. The majority of those detained during raids have been undocumented foreign nationals – including those eligible for asylum say LHR.

“A quarter of the people detained during raids in June had rights to stay in South Africa – this included stateless people,” said David Cote who heads the Strategic Litigation Unit at Lawyers for Human Rights. “Access to Lindela detention centre remains a problem. By the time notice was given – people were being deported,” he said.

## SOUTH SUDAN

### South Sudan Displeased at Non-Invitation to Obama Meeting

#### NEWS STORY

Source: VOA

By: Peter Clotney

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**28 July 2015** - South Sudan's foreign minister says the government in Juba is disappointed after it was left out of a meeting with President Barack Obama to discuss the country's conflict.

Obama met with regional leaders and senior officials of the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional bloc about the ongoing conflict in South Sudan.

South Sudan foreign minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin says his country plans on Wednesday, to officially send a petition to both the AU and IGAD for breaching protocol by refusing to inform or invite the "constitutionally elected" South Sudanese government to the meeting with Obama.

He welcomed President Obama's effort to help with the resolution of the crisis in South Sudan, but said it was wrong for the country to be left out of the meeting.

Benjamin says the government has been working closely with the U.S in bilateral relations to ensure peace returns to South Sudan. He says he will send a protest letter to the foreign minister of Ethiopia which country holds the chairmanship of the regional bloc, IGAD.

"That is very disappointing on the part of IGAD chairperson as well as the African Union because this republic should have been invited. If you talk about the issue of South Sudan that you want to bring to peace and you don't invite that country then that is even a difficult process to proceed sort of normally," said Benjamin.

"We would definitely put our protest very clearly to the chairperson of IGAD for having failed to advise His Excellency President Obama that if there is a regional meeting, you must also invite the Republic of South Sudan."

Critics say South Sudan's President Salva Kiir has squandered the country's good will since it became the world's newest nation. They also expressed disappointment that both President Kiir and former vice president and now rebel leader Riek Machar have yet to ensure peace is restored to South Sudan despite repeated peace negotiations mediated by IGAD.

Benjamin thanked the international community for its goodwill, but added that the country's sovereignty is being ignored over the ongoing conflict.

"This international community is not listening to what the democratically elected government of South Sudan is doing towards this. President Salva Kiir and his government have made tremendous sacrifices in as far as the peace process is

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concerned, from the day one of December 2013. And it seems they are not listening to the efforts done by the government,” said Benjamin.

“It is not fair on the part of the international community to continue with this moral equivalence between an elected leadership and a rebel movement. It actually makes it a very disappointing diplomatic sort of gesture to the people of South Sudan who fought so hard to get their own country. Yes, we have a crisis, but please respect us as an elected government. To do such an act, I mean no country will take such a treatment in their face,” he added.

Critics accuse the leadership of South Sudan’s government of failing the people due to the ongoing conflict, which has so far left tens of thousands of citizens either killed or displaced from their homes.

Benjamin disagreed.

“The leadership of the government has not failed. If there is anything, the leadership of South Sudan has cooperated tremendously with the international community and has made adequate compromises that actually guarantee a peace process will go ahead,” said Benjamin. “The government is implementing the cessation of hostilities [agreement] strictly in spirit and in letter, [but] the international community is not seeing that, and this is unfair.”

## **S. Sudanese presidency reacts to IGAD’s peace proposal**

### NEWS STORY

Source: Sudan Tribune

**27 July 2015** - The spokesperson for the South Sudanese presidency has expressed reservations over a proposal by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to demilitarise the capital, Juba and give the armed opposition faction an upper hand in power sharing arrangement in the conflict-affected regions.

“We have accepted the 33 percent for the SPLM in opposition in central government but we have refused it in Upper Nile,” Ateny Wek Ateny, told reporters in reaction IGAD’s proposal Monday.

“We cannot accept to give Upper Nile special consideration because if you do that, it could create an environment whereby that can threaten the sovereignty of South Sudan,” he added.

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The latest proposal from the IGAD-Plus, a team which comprises of special envoys from China, the Troika nations, European Union and five other African countries, creates the position of first vice president to be occupied by the armed opposition leader, Riek Machar.

But Ateny said President Salva Kiir had reservations on this particular clause within the proposal, citing issues regarding the two armies.

“And the issue of disarmament in Juba and that of two armies for more than 10 months will be very difficult,” stressed the spokesperson.

In the latest document the power sharing in the national executive would be 53% of ministerial positions for the government, 33% for the opposition faction of the Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Movement (SPLM-IO), 7% for former detainees and 7% for other political parties.

In the oil-rich greater Upper Nile region, the SPLM-IO would have 53% in the three states of Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei, while the government would take 33% and 14% divided between former detainees and other political parties. No power sharing in the seven states of greater Bahr el Ghazal and greater Equatoria regions as government would take 100% in the two regions.

On security arrangements, it proposed a period of 18 months of the 30-month long transitional period to complete integration process of the two rival armies. The national capital, Juba, will be demilitarized, according to the IGAD-Plus proposal, and to be known as a Special Arrangement Area (SAA). Foreign forces from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), IGAD and African Union (AU) would take over the security of the capital until the end of the two and a half years of transitional period.

While the South Sudanese government is yet to officially respond to the proposal, which was released Friday last week. The government and the rebels have until 5 August to discuss the document and return to Addis Ababa, the venue of the ongoing peace talks.

The mediators have set 17 August as the deadline for both parties to reach an agreement.

Talks between the warring factions collapsed on 6 March when the two principal leaders could not agree on almost all the outstanding issues on governance, security arrangements, reforms, power sharing and accountability and justice, reparation and reconciliation.

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## SUDAN

### African leaders demand end to Sudan sanctions

#### NEWS STORY

Source: AFP

**28 July 2015** - African leaders issued a joint statement from a conference in Mauritania on Monday calling for the lifting of sanctions against Sudan, whose president is wanted for a string of atrocities.

Omar al-Bashir, indicted for genocide in Sudan's western region of Darfur was among 11 leaders or government representatives at the meeting in Nouakchott of countries grouped by the "Great Green Wall" ecological initiative.

"For the sake of solidarity between the peoples of the member countries, the heads of state and government express their support for our sister republic of Sudan and call for the lifting of sanctions imposed on that country," they said in a joint statement.

The Darfur conflict began in 2003 when black insurgents rose up against Bashir's Arab-dominated government, before Khartoum unleashed a bloody counter-insurgency, using the armed forces and allied militia.

The United Nations says 300 000 people were killed in the conflict and another 2.5 million forced to flee their homes, and Sudan has been the subject of a variety of trade and arms embargoes supported by the international community.

The leaders did not specify which sanctions they wanted lifted.

Bashir arrived in Nouakchott on Sunday, despite an international arrest warrant issued against him in 2009 over charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Mauritania has not signed the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, however, and allowed him to visit without fear of arrest.

Countries of the Sahel, which stretches from Mauritania in the west to Eritrea in the east, are signed up to a UN-backed plan to build a "Great Green Wall" of vegetation to halt the advance of the Sahara desert.

The green wall will be around 15km deep and span more than 7 000km from Senegal to Djibouti.

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Experts estimate that Africa has lost around 650 000 square kilometres of productive land in the last 50 years, an area greater than the size of France.