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



## **MEDIA MONITORING**

**29 May 2015**

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### **GENERAL NEWS**

#### **BAD : le Nigérian Akinwumi Adesina succède à Donald Kaberuka**

Source: Agence d'Information d'Afrique centrale

Par Guy-Gervais Kitina

**28 mai 2015** - Au terme d'une élection à deux tours, les 80 gouverneurs de la Banque africaine de développement, réunis ce jeudi 28 mai à Abidjan, ont choisi Akinwumi Adesina comme nouveau président de la Banque africaine de développement (BAD). Il succède au Rwandais Donald Kaberuka.

Akinwumi Adesina a été élu avec 58.1% des voix (60, 5% des voix africaines), devant le tchadien Bédoumra Kordjé (31.6% des voix) et la capverdienne Cristina Duarte (10.27%).

#### **US takes steps to extend African exports law by 10 more years, but behind the scenes, an almighty tug-of-war**

Source: Mail & Guardian

By Benon Herbert Oluka

**Analysts say AGOA tug-of-war could scuttle efforts to ensure law is passed before September 30, 2015 when the current version expires.**

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**28 May 2015** - LESS than a month after US legislators introduced a bipartisan bill in Congress seeking to renew the signature African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) for another 10 years, the proposed law sailed past its first hurdle with overwhelming approval in the Senate during a May 14 vote.

This paves the way for the AGOA legislation, which is part of the “Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015,” to be sent to the House of Representatives, where it is expected to be further pared before it passes into law.

However, behind the scenes, an intense tug-of-war is on between players in the US and some beneficiary countries over what changes should be made to the law to greater benefit Africa.

Analysts say the tug-of-war could scuttle efforts to ensure AGOA is passed before September 30, 2015 when the current model of the law expires.

“The Senate’s move to re-authorise AGOA is a major milestone for the program[me], but it is still far from certain that bill will ultimately pass. There are indications that the House of Representatives will move to vote on the Trade Promotion Authority before AGOA, leaving the bill in a somewhat precarious position leading up to President Obama’s trip to Kenya in July,” write Witney Schneidman and Andrew Westbury in a May 20, 2015 article for US think tank Brookings. Schneidman is a former US deputy assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

The grappling is largely over the likely changes to the new AGOA law and the concessions either side is prepared to cede. Among the major potential casualties could be South Africa, until recently Africa’s largest economy, which is locked in a protracted battle with American farmers over tariffs it imposes on chicken from the US. The battle could affect South Africa’s eligibility for AGOA post-2015, should a section of Congress have its way.

AGOA, a back-door through which the US currently allows 40 African countries to export 6,400 products quota- and duty-free to the world’s largest economy, was enacted on May 18, 2000 for an initial eight-year period. In 2004, it was extended to 2015.

Other side of coin

Since AGOA was introduced in 2001, according to figures from the US International Trade Commission (USITC), exports from African countries to the US have more than quadrupled. Other figures show that AGOA has in the last 15 years generated 100,000 jobs in the US as well as 350,000 direct jobs and at least a million indirect jobs in Africa.

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The other side of the coin is not quite as dazzling, according to analysis by Rick Helfenbein, chairman of the board of the American Apparel and Footwear Association. He notes that the last four years of AGOA have shown a steady decline in trade, with total AGOA export numbers to the US (including Generalised System of Preferences, or GSP) falling from \$68.2 billion in 2011, \$43.1 billion in 2012, \$34.8 billion in 2013, and \$23.2 billion in 2014.

“Except for apparel and auto manufacturing (from South Africa), very few sectors have actually benefited from the treaty. To make matters worse, close to 80% of all the AGOA exports come from just four of the 40 countries (Nigeria, Angola, Chad and South Africa),” he explains in a blog article for the hill.com.

“If we look at the non-energy sector, just four of the countries (South Africa, Kenya, Lesotho and Mauritius) cover 90% of the exports.”

Those contrasting facts do not look to have warmed up the sentiments of some major players in Africa on the way the U.S does business with the continent. While some argue that the U.S should make some more concessions in the next AGOA law so Africa can benefit more, others such as the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) believe the US now uses that deal with Africa as a whip with which to bully the continent into submission on other trade matters.

### **‘Arm-twist Africa’**

While AGOA has contributed to the increase in South African non-mineral exports to the US to the point that it exports luxury cars, Cosatu, South Africa’s most powerful union, says America is using the deal to arm-twist its counterparts.

“The USA has attempted to use AGOA to extract concessions and bully SA into agreeing to further liberalise her market. This is unfortunate as AGOA is meant to be a non-reciprocal agreement which does not require eligible countries to liberalise their trade,” says Cosatu in an April 22, 2015 statement.

The point of contention, according to US officials, is that South Africa has decided to impose anti-dumping duties on certain imported poultry products.

“In our view, South Africa’s unfair and protectionist practices must be addressed before Congress would be justified in extending the AGOA programme,” the US National Chicken Council President Mike Brown is quoted by Bridges Africa, a monthly product of the Switzerland-based International Centre on Trade and International Development, as having said early this year.

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However, Cosatu insists that South Africa has a right under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to impose anti-dumping duties on dumped imports, which it says are sold at lower prices than locally produced goods. The trade union says the US instead wants to use AGOA to hold South Africa hostage, as it claims it has done with other AGOA countries.

“The poultry anti-dumping issue has been raised as an issue standing between SA and the AGOA. However, this is just a symbolic issue as there are deep-seated problems with US government’s interpretation of AGOA. The US has continued to maintain non-tariff barriers on AGOA imports with the result that many AGOA countries continue to export a few products and mainly in the energy sector,” says Cosatu, which wants AGOA to remain non-conditional and preference based.

**Several gripes**

South Africa is not the only country that has a bone to pick with AGOA. In June 2014, the East African Community (EAC) released a position paper on how the five-member-country regional body could enhance trade and investment relations with the US under a new post-2015 AGOA programme.

In its paper, EAC notes that while its trade with the US had increased from \$2,372 million in 2000 to \$3,167 million in 2013 – with exports to US up from \$186 million to \$577 million and imports increasing from \$328 million to \$1,184 million – the balance of trade shows that the region is not getting a better deal than before.

“Despite the increase in the EAC exports to US, imports have exponentially grown a situation that has led to a continued increase of the trade imbalance against the EAC,” noted the regional body. “This situation will not enable the EAC achieve the intended objectives of AGOA which are to stimulate economic growth, encourage economic integration and facilitate sub-Saharan African integration into the global economy.”

According to EAC, the under-utilisation of AGOA by its member countries stems from issues such as the fact that AGOA is a unilateral programme that can be modified or terminated in favour and at the discretion of the US government.

For instance, according to other studies, since AGOA was instituted, 13 countries have lost their eligibility, though seven eventually had it restored.

Countries that lost their eligibility to AGOA for failure to adhere to political benchmarks set by the US and have never regained it include Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, The Gambia, South Sudan, and Swaziland.

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Other factors that derail Africa's efforts to reap the full benefits of AGOA include lack of predictability and sustainability of the law due to its limited lifespan, the expiry of the 3rd Country Fabric Provision in 2015, high transportation costs to the US market, uncertainty over eligibility due to annual reviews undertaken by the US, stringent rules of origin and stringent Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures for agricultural products such as fresh produce and beef and which the majority of African producers are often unable to meet.

**Unexploited gaps**

Whether it is a consequence of challenges such as those named above or Africa's own internal weakness, African countries do not quite exploit the full-range of opportunities that AGOA offers.

The USITC first opened the lid over that weakness in a May 2008 report, which said Africa was exporting under AGOA less than 50% of the full range of products that the law allows.

"Agoa's continued success will require intensified efforts to promote greater diversification and competitiveness of Agoa trade," said the report.

Despite efforts to diversify since then, that problem still persists, as admitted by the United States Trade Representative, Michael Froman, when he told a 2013 AGOA Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia that "petroleum products still account for the largest portion of AGOA imports." By some estimates, that is nearly 70% of all exports.

President Obama, who travels to Kenya in July on his fourth presidential trip to Africa, has however promised to offer Africa a helping hand. In an April 7, 2015 letter to Congress, Obama said his administration is "committed to expanding our efforts to help African businesses and governments to take advantage of all the benefits AGOA offers."

President Obama has further urged Congress to consider a 10-15 year extension for AGOA, saying investors see it as a sufficient period to fulfill the programme's full potential to mobilise capital commitments, promote growth and development and to integrate African stakeholders in global supply chains.

Among the key concessions that the proposed new AGOA law is expected to make is expanding the rule of origin to allow AGOA countries greater flexibility to combine inputs to meet the rule of origin for AGOA-eligible products, extending the GSP to 2017 and giving the US president the authority to include cotton products in the list of AGOA preferences available to LDCs.

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With the United States keen to retain strong trade links to Africa in the midst of a growing challenge from the European Union (Africa's largest trade partner) and emerging economies such as China (now Africa's second largest trade partner after overtaking US), India and Brazil, Congress is likely to smoothen over some other cracks on some of the contentious issues in AGOA after 2015.

The question is whether Africa will see the efforts as sufficient to stake more on trading with the US over the next 10 years than any other country or region.

## D.R. CONGO

### **Le président Joseph Kabila lance ses consultations avec les forces vives de la nation ce vendredi [29 mai 2015]**

Source: AFP / VOA / MCN, via mediacongo.net

**Kinshasa, 29 mai 2015** - Le président congolais Joseph Kabila lance ce vendredi 29 mai des consultations politiques tous azimuts en vue d'un dialogue aux contours encore flous, a-t-on annoncé de source officielle dans la nuit de jeudi à vendredi 29 mai.

Une partie de l'Opposition a d'ores et déjà annoncé qu'elle refusait de participer, y voyant une manœuvre de M. Kabila, à qui la Constitution interdit de se représenter, pour retarder l'échéance de la présidentielle de novembre 2016.

"Le chef de l'Etat commence vendredi des consultations avec toutes les forces vives de la nation", a déclaré à l'AFP un haut responsable congolais sous le couvert de l'anonymat.

"Il va écouter tout le monde, en particulier les réflexions sur le calendrier électoral global", a ajouté ce responsable.

M. Kabila doit recevoir d'abord les chefs des confessions religieuses, puis les chefs coutumiers avant de discuter avec ceux des partis politiques de l'Opposition puis de la majorité, des groupes parlementaires et regroupements politiques pour finir avec les diplomates accrédités en République démocratique du Congo (RDC) et le chef de la Mission de l'ONU au Congo (Monusco), a-t-on précisé de même source.

### **L'UDPS prête à participer au « dialogue politique »**

La Commission électorale nationale indépendante (Ceni) a publié en février un calendrier électoral global prévoyant une série d'élections (locales, provinciales,

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sénatoriales...) devant commencer en octobre et mener jusqu'à la présidentielle et aux législatives programmées pour novembre 2016.

Les trois grands partis de l'Opposition que sont l'Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UDPS), le Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC) et l'Union pour la nation congolaise (UNC) estiment en substance que ce calendrier fait peser une grande incertitude sur la tenue de la prochaine présidentielle dans les délais prévus par la Constitution.

Formation historique de l'Opposition, l'UDPS a dit être prête à participer au "dialogue politique" proposé par M. Kabila, y voyant la meilleure solution pour sortir le pays de la crise politique qu'il traverse depuis la réélection contestée du chef de l'Etat en 2011.

A l'inverse, une coalition regroupant le MLC, l'UNC, des dissidents de l'UDPS et des représentants de plusieurs dizaines de petits partis s'y oppose, estimant que cela détournera l'attention de l'essentiel : la tenue, dans les temps, de la prochaine présidentielle.

## RWANDA

### 30 countries meet in Kigali for peacekeeping conference

Source: The New Vision (Uganda)

By Taddeo Bwambale

**28 May 2015** - Delegations from at least 30 top UN troop contributing countries are meeting in Kigali, Rwanda to discuss how to protect civilians in conflict areas during peacekeeping operations.

The conference also brings together the ten financial contributing countries and Rwandan institutions to review implementation of the Protection of Civilians mandate in peacekeeping.

The cardinal role of UN peacekeepers and the international community is the protection of civilians under imminent threat.

However, differences in expectations and understanding of mandates of troop contributing countries are still major challenges for the UN in its 70 year history.

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Rwanda, which is hosting this year's peacekeeping conference, was victim of the UN peacekeeping failures during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi.

Over 100 days, more than one million Rwandans were killed in spite of the presence of UN peacekeeping force stationed in the country that did not intervene to protect civilians.

Rwanda has since become the fifth largest global contributor of UN peacekeepers, and the third in Africa.

The conference in Kigali will discuss the challenges of peacekeeping and make proposals on how to enhance collective efforts to protect the most vulnerable.

## BURUNDI

### **Burundi: Catholic bishops withdraw support for national elections amid political violence**

Source: Associated Press

By Gerard Nzohabona

**Bujumbura, 28 May 2015** - Catholic Church leaders said on Thursday they no longer support the Burundi government's decision to hold elections next month amid political unrest over President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term. The European Union also said it was suspending its election observer mission here.

The Conference of Catholic Bishops of Burundi said in a statement that it is withdrawing from an earlier agreement with the government that would have seen priests monitoring elections across the country, piling more pressure on an administration that is facing international calls to postpone the elections.

In a statement Thursday, the EU said it was suspending its election observer mission in Burundi over concerns about restrictions on the independent media, excessive use of force against demonstrators and the intimidation of opposition parties and civic groups.

"All parties should engage in good faith in a dialogue to restore the necessary conditions for democratic elections and, primarily, the government of Burundi should reach out to all domestic actors by restoring confidence through concrete measures," the statement said.



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Burundi's government says elections must go ahead because a postponement would create a dangerous political vacuum and possibly even lead to more unrest.

Parliamentary elections are set for June 5, and presidential elections for June 26.

Critics say the political environment is too unstable to hold elections, with almost daily street demonstrations in the capital, Bujumbura, starting a month ago after the ruling party announced it had nominated Nkurunziza as its candidate. Thursday was mostly calm.

In New York on Wednesday, the U.N. Security Council president said "the predominant opinion" of members is that Burundi's elections should not take place as scheduled.

The U.N.-led political dialogue in Burundi resumed Thursday, with all parties represented, the spokesman for the secretary-general, Stephane Dujarric, told reporters at U.N. headquarters in New York. The talks were suspended after the killing of an opposition leader several days ago.

The U.N. political chief, Jeffrey Feltman, met with Burundi's charge d'affaires and stressed that "the risk of escalation of violence remains," Dujarric said.

Burundi's president has called on "patriotic citizens" to donate for elections amid threats from some Western donors to suspend funding if Nkurunziza seeks a third term, which many consider unconstitutional and a violation of peace accords.

Burundi experienced an ethnic-based civil war from 1993 to 2003 in which at least 250,000 people died.

## European Union suspends Burundi vote observer mission

Source: AFP World News

**Bujumbura, 28 May 2015** - The European Union said Thursday it was suspending its electoral observer mission to Burundi and warned that current conditions in the east African nation would not allow for credible polls in June.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini "has decided, with my agreement, to suspend the deployment of the European Union Election Observation Mission," David Martin, the mission's chief observer, said in a statement.

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The statement said that "at the current time, conditions in Burundi do not allow for the holding of credible elections. This was the case at the time of the mission's arrival, and conditions have in fact significantly deteriorated since then."

The EU statement spoke of a "widespread atmosphere of fear and intimidation, now exacerbated by extremely volatile security conditions", and said that genuine campaigning has not been possible for all candidates. Independent news media reports also were not being allowed.

It singled out the ruling party's youth league, labelled a militia by the UN, and noted Saturday's assassination of an opposition leader, calling it "a particularly serious instance of political violence."

"Longstanding and ongoing reports of Imbonerakure (youth league) activity throughout the country have now been supplemented by a rising number of credible reports of human rights violations," the statement said.

Parliamentary elections are due to be held on June 5, with a presidential poll scheduled for June 26. The UN Security Council met on the crisis late Wednesday, with most of its 15 members supporting a postponement.

The crisis surrounds President Pierre Nkurunziza's uncompromising desire to stand for a third consecutive term in office, with opposition and rights groups saying the move violates the constitution as well as the terms of a peace deal that ended a 13-year civil war in 2006.

Street protests have taken place for the past month, leaving at least 30 people dead after a violent crackdown by security forces. There were more protests on Thursday in several parts of the lakeside capital of Bujumbura, with a massive police presence along main roads.

## **Burundi opposition says fair elections 'impossible'**

Source: AFP

**28 May 2015** - The opposition said the plans for polls to go ahead despite widespread civil unrest in the capital was tantamount to an "electoral hold-up" by President Pierre Nkurunziza, whose controversial bid for a third consecutive term has plunged the central African nation into a deep political crisis.

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The statement came as another demonstrator was killed and two wounded in clashes in the south of the country, according to local officials, while activists complained of increasing attacks by ruling party supporters.

"The country has sunk into a political and security mess which in no way can allow for peaceful, transparent, free or credible elections," Burundi's main opposition parties said in a joint statement.

"Having an election campaign or holding a vote is impossible. We cannot have an electoral hold-up," the statement said, accusing Nkurunziza and the ruling CNDD-FDD party of silencing independent media, detaining opponents and provoking a major refugee crisis.

The chair of the 15-member UN Security Council said Wednesday that the "predominant opinion" among the top UN body was that the elections should be postponed but it was divided over how to address the crisis.

"The predominant opinion was that elections were not possible to carry out in the present circumstances," Lithuanian Ambassador and current council chairman Raimonda Murmokaite told reporters.

Russia disagreed arguing that the elections were an internal matter and that the bloc should support efforts to help Burundians resolve the dispute themselves.

Parliamentary elections are due to be held on June 5, with a presidential poll scheduled for June 26. On Tuesday, the government appealed for public donations from "patriotic citizens" so that it could organise the elections, which have been hit by a funding freeze by the central African nation's former colonial power Belgium as well as the European Union.

The crisis surrounds a bid by Nkurunziza to stand for a third consecutive term in office, with opposition and rights groups saying the move violates the constitution as well as the terms of a peace deal that ended a 13-year civil war in 2006.

Street protests have taken place for the past month, leaving at least 30 dead after a violent crackdown by security forces.

The crisis intensified earlier this month when a top general staged a failed coup attempt.

The opposition parties said the crisis risked plunging the small, landlocked and impoverished country back into civil war.

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"Endorsing such a process is equivalent to supporting a predictable civil war in Burundi," the statement said, adding that foreign governments should "never recognise the election results".

**- Militia on the offensive -**

There was no immediate response from the government, although on Tuesday its spokesman Philippe Nzobonariba used state radio to condemn mounting diplomatic pressure and signal that Nkurunziza would not bow to international criticism.

In the lakeside capital Bujumbura on Wednesday, police were again out in force in order to halt any renewed anti-Nkurunziza protests, with tear gas used to quickly break up gatherings. Only small groups of demonstrators gathered in the districts of Cibitoke and Buterere, and shots were heard ringing out in the area, AFP correspondents said.

Outside the capital in Matana, a town in southern Bururi province, a protestor was killed by police fire, a local official said.

On Tuesday evening at least one person was killed in the capital in a raid by the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of the CNDD-FDD that has been branded as a pro-government militia, residents said. A medical source said 32 people were also wounded, many by gunshots, on Tuesday.

Leading opposition campaigner Pacifique Nininahazwe said the Imbonerakure's activities, including "punitive operations" against opponents, were being stepped up in the capital.

Nkurunziza, a former rebel leader and born-again Christian, argues that his first term did not count as he was elected by parliament, not directly by the people. His bid for re-election also has strong support in rural areas and among sections of the Hutu majority.

Asked to rule on the issue of a third term, Burundi's constitutional court found in the president's favour, but not before one of the judges fled the country claiming its members had received death threats.

The East African Community (EAC) -- a regional grouping of Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and also Burundi -- has announced plans to hold a second meeting on the crisis on Sunday in Tanzania's main city of Dar es Salaam.

Nkurunziza was at an EAC summit in Dar es Salaam on May 13 when the coup attempt was launched, but an EAC statement said all the bloc's leaders would attend the next meeting.

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## **Burundi asks for donations from citizens for elections**

Source: AFP

### **Foreign donors warn of aid cuts if President Pierre Nkurunziza runs for a third term.**

**Kampala, 28 May 2015** - Burundi's government is asking Burundians to donate money to pay for elections as some foreign donors warn of aid cuts if President Pierre Nkurunziza runs for a third term, a presidential spokesman said Wednesday.

Demonstrators were in the streets again Wednesday, holding leafy tree branches as peace symbols, confronting soldiers and demanding that Nkurunziza withdraw from the elections.

Gervais Abayeho told The Associated Press that "a political vacuum in this country ... would be worse than a coup d'état," and that elections will happen whether or not Western governments help. He said the government has already set aside money for the June 26 elections but needs Burundians to give more for elections.

The president's effort to extend his stay in power has sparked almost daily street protests in which at least 20 people have been killed and at least 471 injured. The turmoil sparked a failed coup against Nkurunziza by some senior military officers.

The presidency said on its official Facebook page on Tuesday that it needs "patriotic citizens" to donate voluntarily for elections.

Belgium has already cut funding to Burundi amid the unrest, and Abayeho said France and the Netherlands have also indicated some aid will be suspended if Nkurunziza persists with his controversial bid for a third term.

## **Most Security Council members support Burundi elections delay**

Source: AFP

**28 May 2015** - United Nations, United States--Most of the 15 members of the UN Security Council believe that elections scheduled for next week in Burundi should be postponed, the council's Lithuanian chair said Wednesday.

Russia, however, expressed a dissenting view, arguing that the elections were an internal matter, diplomats said, reflecting ongoing divisions within the council on the Burundi crisis.

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During a behind-closed-doors meeting, the council heard a report from UN envoy Said Djinnit on the turmoil sparked by President Pierre Nkurunziza's bid for a third term.

Parliamentary elections set for May have been postponed to June 5, and presidential polls are to follow on June 26.

"The predominant opinion was that elections were not possible to carry out in the present circumstances," Lithuanian Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaite told reporters.

The ambassador said council members cited tensions in the country, growing unrest and refugee flows as signs that "elections would not be sustainable in that kind of context."

At the weekend, the council issued a joint statement condemning the murder of opposition leader Zedi Feruzi and warning that it was ready "to respond to violent acts which threaten peace and security in Burundi."

But the top UN body has been divided over how to address the crisis, with Russia arguing that the council should support efforts to help Burundians resolve the dispute themselves.

Weeks of violent demonstrations in Burundi have left at least 30 dead.

In his report to the council, Djinnit stressed the need to move quickly to prevent the political violence from stoking ethnic hatred between Hutus and Tutsis that was at the heart of the 12-year war, diplomats said.

More than 80,000 Burundians have fled to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda during the crisis, diplomats said.

The UN envoy is working with regional governments to press for a return to dialogue that was suspended after Feruzi was gunned down at the weekend.

The crisis in Burundi worsened after a coup attempt this month that has raised alarm over revenge attacks.

Opposition leaders argue that Nkurunziza's bid for another five-year term violates the terms of the Arusha accord that ended Burundi's 13-year civil war in 2006.

But the president's supporters maintain that he is eligible to run because he was elected by parliament and not by popular vote to his first term.

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## **Burundi: senior UN officials step up engagement to ease country's political crisis**

Source: United Nations News Centre

**28 May 2015** - The United Nations Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, arrived in Burundi today [28 May 2015] as the top UN political official met with a Burundian government representative at UN headquarters and discussed the need to prevent and investigate political violence and killings.

Also in Burundi today [28 May], a “consultative political dialogue” resumed today [28 May], under the facilitation of Said Djinnit, the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, with all parties being represented.

In a phone call yesterday to the Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said it was vital that Burundian stakeholders take concrete steps to de-escalate tensions and create an enabling environment for credible legislative elections to take place.

In New York, UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman met today with the chargé d'affaires of the Burundi Mission to the United Nations, Anesie Ndayisimiye, and underlined that the Government needed to take concrete steps to prevent and investigate political violence and killings.

Mr. Feltman also said “there must be security of the electoral process; security for political and civil society actors; disarmament of armed civilians; strengthening of the national independent electoral commission (CENI); and provisions for the vote of refugees.”

He noted that the risk of escalation of violence remains in Burundi and that the UN's Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide had arrived in the capital of Bujumbura today.

In his meeting with Ms. Ndayisimiye, Mr. Feltman underlined that “the Government must take concrete steps to prevent and investigate political violence and killings, as well as violence targeting journalists and other civil society representatives. He also stressed the importance of respect for the UN-backed Arusha Agreement going forward.

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## UGANDA

### Uganda parliament urges to withdraw troops from South Sudan

Source: Sudan Tribune

**Kampala, 27 May 2015** – Ugandan lawmakers on Tuesday called on the government of president Yoweri Museveni to withdraw the country's troops from the neighbouring South Sudan, saying the cost for their operations was very high and a burden to taxpayers.

Thousands of troops of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) backed with helicopter gunships, tanks and other armoured vehicles, have been deployed in South Sudan since December 2013 to rescue president Salva Kiir from rebel fighters led by former vice president, Riek Machar.

President Museveni on many occasions said the intervention was necessary to maintain the government of President Salva Kiir and stability in the new nation. He also said the forces will not withdraw until he was rest assured that Juba was "secure."

But Uganda parliament on Tuesday said the cost for keeping UPDF in South Sudan had been a huge burden shouldered by the taxpayers in the country.

In a report presented to the parliament by its specialized committee on defence and internal affairs, the document called on the government to pull out the forces and instead to ask the East African regional bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), to provide alternative forces to protect Juba and other vital areas.

"The committee urges government to continue engaging IGAD to ensure a neutral force is deployed," the report said as reported by Ugandan Daily Monitor.

"This is because the continued presence of the UPDF in South Sudan is proving to be a very high cost to the Ugandan taxpayer," the lawmakers further said.

Uganda defence ministry also revealed that the country has so far spent over 119 billion Shillings to finance its intervention in South Sudan, saying this was costlier than the country army's operations in Somalia.

#### UPDF will not withdraw

However, defence minister, Crispus Kiyonga, told the parliament, Tuesday, that Ugandan troops will not withdraw from South Sudan despite the cost, adding that Juba



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government continues to pay UPDF for its other expenses including fuel for the operations against the rebels.

He said the previously talked about alternative force from IGAD had not materialized and therefore UPDF will continue to help defend president Kiir's government.

"The IGAD force that was supposed to take the place of the UPDF has not yet become a reality. To that extent, therefore, we will remain put in South Sudan," he declared.

However observers doubt that the parliament, which is controlled by the ruling party, will come out with a resolution directing the government to effect withdrawal of the forces.

A cessation of hostilities agreement (CoHA) signed by the two warring parties on 23 January, 2014, under the mediation of IGAD, and which called for withdrawal of all foreign forces from South Sudan, has not been implemented.

IGAD is yet to announce a date on which the peace negotiations will resume in Addis Ababa under a new expanded mechanism that will include countries and international bodies outside the African continent.

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

### Central Africa: Rwanda Re-Admitted Into ECCAS

Source: The New Times (Rwanda)

By Collins Mwai

**27 May 2015** - Rwanda has officially rejoined the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), eight years after pulling out of the regional bloc.

The membership was confirmed this week during an annual Conference of Heads of State and Government of the organisation in N'djamena, Chad.

Rwanda expressed the intention to rejoin the bloc in 2013 after pulling out in 2007 saying it was trying to avoid overlapping memberships in several regional community groupings.

Reacting to the development on Twitter, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo said that the country was upbeat on readmission to the bloc and proud of the Central African Heritage.

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Rwanda was one of the founding members of ECCAS in 1983. The primary objectives of the body include championing the process of economic cooperation and integration of Central African states.

Acting Director General in charge of Multilateral Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Olivier Nduhungirehe said that the readmission would further place Rwanda favourably in the integration agenda.

"With Rwanda's readmission into ECCAS, our country, already member of EAC, ICGLR & COMESA, consolidates its position at the heart of Africa," Nduhungirehe on his Twitter timeline.

Following Rwanda's readmission, the body now has eleven members including; Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, and Sao Tome & Principe.

Other than ECASS, Rwanda is a member of the East African Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.

## KENYA

### Kenyan president cancels Nigeria trip for Burundi crisis summit

Source: Xinhua

**Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta will not attend Friday's inauguration ceremony of Nigeria's President-elect Muhammadu Buhari, as he is preparing for an emergency summit over Burundi crisis due on Sunday in Tanzania's capital, an official said on late Thursday.**

**29 May 2015** - Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Karanja Kibicho, told reporters that Kenyatta had delegated Deputy President William Ruto to lead a delegation to Nigeria.

"President Kenyatta was to lead Kenyan delegation to attend the inauguration of Nigerian President on May 29. However, the president will not attend the fete and will instead remain behind to prepare for Sunday's emergency summit on Burundi to be held in Dar-er-salaam," Kibicho said.

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He denied that the president's absence reflects a diplomatic fall out with Africa's largest economy.

He also disowned reports circulating on social media that 85 people would be in the delegation to Nigeria.

"The government wish to clarify the purported list of persons to accompany the president to Nigeria is a fabrication from unscrupulous elements," Kibicho said, adding that Ruto will be accompanied by ten people.

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 June elections.

Clashes between protesters and police, mainly in the capital Bujumbura, have left more than 30 dead, according to Burundi's civil society groups.

## SOUTH SUDAN

### Soudan du Sud : l'ONU proroge le mandat de sa mission pour une durée de six mois

Source: Agence de presse Xinhua

**29 mai 2015** - Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU a adopté jeudi à l'unanimité de ses 15 membres une résolution prorogeant le mandat de la Mission des Nations Unies au Soudan du Sud (MINUSS).

Dans cette résolution, le Conseil de sécurité décide de proroger le mandat de la MINUSS jusqu'au 30 novembre 2015 et de l'autoriser à user de tous les moyens nécessaires pour s'acquitter de son mandat, à savoir la protection des civils, la surveillance et la conduite d'enquêtes en matière de droits de l'homme, l'instauration des conditions nécessaires à l'acheminement de l'aide humanitaire et l'appui à la mise en œuvre de l'Accord de cessation des hostilités dans le pays.

Le Conseil de sécurité approuve la recommandation faite par le secrétaire général des Nations Unies, Ban Ki-moon, dans son rapport du 29 avril 2015 de maintenir l'effectif global de la MINUSS à l'appui de son mandat.

En conséquence, les membres du conseil décident que la MINUSS sera constituée d'une composante militaire comptant jusqu'à 12.500 hommes, tous grades confondus,

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et d'une composante de police comprenant un nombre approprié d'unités de police constituées et comptant jusqu'à 1.323 hommes.

Le conseil prie en outre la MINUSS "d'intensifier sa présence et de patrouiller plus activement dans les zones à risque de conflit élevé et à forte concentration de déplacés, notamment dans le cadre de l'exécution de sa stratégie d'alerte rapide, dans les zones contrôlées aussi bien par le gouvernement que par l'opposition".

Les membres du conseil condamnent avec la plus grande fermeté toute attaque et menace contre le personnel de la MINUSS et les installations des Nations Unies, ainsi qu'à l'encontre du personnel et des installations de l'Autorité intergouvernementale pour le développement (IGAD).

Le conseil exige du gouvernement sud-soudanais et de toutes les parties concernées qu'ils coopèrent pleinement au déploiement et aux opérations de la MINUSS et mettent immédiatement fin à toutes formes de violence, de violations des droits de l'homme et d'atteintes à ces droits, aux violations du droit international humanitaire, notamment aux viols et aux autres formes de violence sexuelle et sexiste.

## SUDAN

### UN concerned over reports of mass displacement in Sudan

Source: UN

**28 May 2015** - United Nations: The UN humanitarian coordinator in Sudan, Geert Cappelaere, has expressed concern over reports of large-scale displacement, including possible forced relocations in the country.

Cappelaere on Wednesday said that as conflict has increased in Blue Nile State, civilians continue to bear the brunt of fighting, while aid agencies are often not permitted to independently assess humanitarian needs and respond accordingly, Stéphane Dujarric, the UN spokesman, said at a daily news briefing here, Xinhua reported.

Recent fighting in parts of Sudan's South Kordofan and Blue Nile states has displaced or affected an estimated 16,500 people, deputy UN spokesman Farhan Haq said in early May.

The figure, released by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), came from the Sudanese government and is based on statistics gathered over the past two weeks, Haq told reporters here at a daily news briefing.

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According to the UN, at least 3,000 people have arrived in Abyei, fleeing violence in South Sudan's Unity State in late April, bringing the total number of South Sudanese in the area to 6,000. The influx was stretching the existing resources to people in need.

## **Leaders of Saudi Arabia & Qatar to participate in Bashir's oath ceremony: report**

Source: Sudan Tribune

**Khartoum, 28 May 2015** - Saudi Arabia's King Salman Bin Abdel-Aziz and Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad will be present at the swearing-in ceremony of Sudanese president Omer Hassan al-Bashir in Khartoum next Tuesday, according to a news report.

The government-sponsored Sudanese Media Center (SMC) website quoted an unnamed official in the preparatory inauguration committee as saying that Egyptian president Abdel-Fatah al-Sisi, Eritrean president Isaias Afewerki, Ethiopian Prime minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Chadian president Idriss Deby and South Sudan president Salva Kiir will also be present.

Previously, the government in Juba announced that VP James Wani Igga will represent Kiir in the ceremony.

If the visit by King Salman materializes, it will be the first by a Saudi monarch to Sudan since 1976 when late King Khalid made a state visit lasting four days for talks with then president Ja'afar Nimeiri.

This will also be King Salman's second international visit since he assumed the throne last January following the death of his half-brother King Abdulla.

The Saudi King has snubbed planned appearances in Egypt for an economic conference in March and in Washington this month for a summit with US president Barack Obama.

Relations between Khartoum and Riyadh appear to have normalized after the former distanced itself from Iran which was a cause of concern by the Arab Gulf states.

Hours after Bashir's visit to Riyadh last March, it was announced that Sudan has joined the Saudi-led military operations against Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Last week, the Sudanese leader made a brief and unannounced visit to Riyadh for talks with his Saudi counterpart. It was followed by a short trip to Qatar as well.

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Sudanese officials have expressed strong hope that Saudi Arabia and other Arab Gulf states would generously reward Khartoum for shifting alliances away from Iran.

But a Gulf diplomat speaking to Reuters last month downplayed these hopes.

"There is no trust in the Gulf for Omer al-Bashir...The leaders in the Gulf think that Bashir can betray them at any time, so they won't give him aid until he shows he is serious about joining them and leaving Iran," the diplomat said.

In April, the Saudi ambassador in Sudan denied local media reports that his country provided any cash assistance to Khartoum.

## TANZANIA

### Tanzania's general elections set for October 25: electoral body

Source: Xinhua via Standard Digital

(<http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2000163566/tanzania-s-general-elections-set-for-october-25-electoral-body>)

**29 May 2015** - Tanzania will hold its general elections on October 25, the country's electoral body announced on Monday.

Damian Lubuva, the chairman of the National Electoral Commission, said all political parties should nominate candidates for presidential, parliamentary and civic posts by August 21, and campaigns will start on August 22 and last till October 24. President Jakaya Kikwete will leave office after finishing his second five-year term in October as the constitution bars the president from running for a third term. The ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party announced on Sunday that those members who want to run for president can get nomination forms from June 3, but they have to visit at least 15 regions of the country to collect endorsement signatures of no less than 450 party members within one month before they return the forms.