

Africa Trends

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A Bimonthly Newsletter on Africa and the Indian Ocean Region



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EDITOR'S NOTE

This edition of the newsletter carries the News Track that traces the developments in the region during the last couple of months, a review of the book *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond* by Daniel Bach and Mamdouh Gazibou, and a commentary on India's growing ties with Africa.

In the Northern African region, Russians have been consulting Algeria that has strong ties with the Assad regime, on the Syrian crisis. Russia has also accused Libya of arming and training Syrian rebels; the Syrians have denied this allegation. Turkey and Egypt are on the verge of concluding a historic maritime agreement that would facilitate transportation between Eurasia and Africa via Egypt. In Egypt, a new poll shows that most Egyptians do not want to receive American financial assistance. In Morocco, the United States Africa Command scheduled a joint exercise called African Lion 2012 in partnership with the Morocco Royal Armed Forces to promote military cooperation. In South Sudan, instability continues, while India has proposed fresh investment in the oil infrastructure and has appointed Amarendra Khatau, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, as a special envoy to broker peace between Sudan and South Sudan. Meanwhile, China has cancelled funding for agricultural projects in Sudan. In a significant development, Sudan and South Sudan have agreed to give their citizens basic freedoms in both the nations. In Tunisia, Islamists took to the streets in a bid to step up their demand for the creation of an Islamic state.

In Southern Africa, China has stepped up efforts to improve ties with Angola, Botswana, Cameroon and Namibia. It was reported that nearly 40 per cent of Angolan oil is exported to China and that the Chinese are assisting in development of the Douala shipyard in Cameroon. On the other hand, the Central African Republic has expressed interest in increasing Indian investments in infrastructure and uranium mining projects in the country. In the Western African region, instability continues with military coups in Guinea Bissau and Mali, and attacks by the Boko Haram group in Nigeria. It was reported that Nigeria-India trade has risen to US\$ 19 billion in 2010-11. In East Africa, India is involved in human resource development in Ethiopia and Rwanda, while the US has suspended aid to Malawi over governance and other issues. Other important developments in the region were discovery of oil in Kenya and an agreement between Mauritius and Seychelles for the creation of the world's largest offshore management area. In Somalia, the situation continues to remain grim with attacks by armed groups increasing. Indian Defence Minister AK Antony has called for greater international cooperation to contain piracy in the Indian Ocean region.

COMMENTARY

INDIA AFRICA TIES: SURGING AHEAD

Ruchita Beri

India's relations with African countries are surging ahead in the political, economic and multilateral spheres. To an extent, this reflects India's recognition of the economic and political transformation of Africa in the recent years. Last year, there was a spurt in the number of countries going to the polls in Sub-Saharan Africa including Ivory Coast in the west to the Seychelles in the east; the Democratic Republic of Congo in central Africa and Zambia in southern Africa. At the same time, Africa has performed quite well economically. While Europe registered negative growth rate in 2011, the African continent, in contrast, averaged a growth rate between 5.5 per cent to six percent, with more than 10 countries touching growth rates between 7 to 11 per cent. No wonder, during the Second India Africa Forum at Addis Ababa last year, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh termed Africa as the "new growth pole" in the world. There is no doubt that Africa is an emerging priority for India's foreign policy.

India is making strides towards strengthening its partnership with African countries. Politically, the relationship has progressed from the earlier phase of idealism and sentimentalism to a more pragmatic and mutually beneficial partnership. India's engagement with African countries is on three levels - bilateral, regional and multilateral. There were a number of high-level visits from the continent to India in the last couple of years, including South African President Jacob Zuma; Armendo Guebuza, the President of Mozambique; Hailemariam Desalegn, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia and President James Michel of Seychelles. Over the past one year, foreign ministers of several African countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Libya, Seychelles, Egypt, Eritrea, and Sudan have visited New Delhi. Earlier in March, trade ministers from several African countries gathered at New Delhi for an India - Africa trade ministers meet. These visits were reciprocated by Indian leaders to Africa; however, the Indian Prime Minister or President made very few visits.

India has been criticised often in the past for its "visibility deficit" in Africa compared to other major powers - particularly the Chinese in Africa. Chinese high-level visits to African continent have been quite regular. Thus, it was no surprise that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spent six days in the summer of last year visiting Ethiopia and Tanzania. Here it is important to note that it was the first ever visit by an Indian Prime minister to Ethiopia. He was back in Africa in October to participate in the IBSA summit at Pretoria, South Africa. Similarly, Indian President Pratibha Patil has recently toured the Seychelles and South Africa. These high profile visits indicate the interest of both India and Africa for expanding political relations.

Africa is a diverse continent and each region has its own unique features. With this in mind India has, since 2010, opened a dialogue with the eight African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) recognised by the African Union. In November 2011, representatives from six of these organisations including the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Inter-governmental Authority

on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) participated in the second meeting in New Delhi. In recent years, African countries have speeded up the process of regional integration, with an emphasis on harmonisation among the RECs. As India's trade and investment engagement in Africa increases, an ongoing dialogue with the African RECs becomes of critical importance.

At the same time, the relationship with African countries has become more structured and institutionalised. A step towards this direction was taken with the first India- Africa Forum Summit in 2008. The ties with Africa also got a fillip with the second India- Africa Forum Summit held in May 2011 at Addis Ababa. It should be noted that Indian officials have stressed the consultative approach in India's policy towards Africa, which is apparent in the India- Africa Forum Summit process. It is the African Union that decides the number of countries that are to be part of the process. Moreover, at the multilateral level, whether it is at the UN, WTO or the climate change negotiations, India has shown its appreciation of the Africa group's perspective.

Economically, the trade between the two regions is booming, with two-way trade reaching US\$ 52 billion in 2010-11 and expected to reach US\$ 90 billion in 2015. There is no doubt that India Inc. has been quite proactive in building economic ties with Africa. Over the years, there has been a surge in investments by Indian private sector companies in Africa. These investments span a wide spectrum ranging from energy to consumer goods, telecommunications, agriculture, cement and textiles. Various industry conclaves held in India and Africa indicate the heightened interest of Indian industry representatives and their counterparts in Africa for doing business together. The recently organised Eighth CII-EXIM Bank Project partnership conclave in New Delhi was attended by 700 delegates from 41 African countries; 200 projects worth \$30 billion were discussed during this meeting. The areas of future cooperation include infrastructure, mining, information technology, pharmaceuticals and health care, power generation and agriculture. This latest round of meeting of business leaders will enhance the footprint of Indian industry in Africa. During the second India- Africa Trade Ministers meet in March 2012, the ministers announced the setting up of the India - Africa Business Council that will explore areas of economic cooperation.

Although the Indian engagement with Africa is expanding, there are still a number of challenges. First is the implementation of the pledges made during the last two India- Africa Forum summits. During the first India - Africa summit India had offered to set up 19 institutions to help in capacity building in Africa. Last year at Addis Ababa Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced an attractive package that included a US\$ 5 billion line of credit for development initiatives, US\$ 700 million for education and skill development in Africa and support for setting up several more institutions in Africa. Through these initiatives, India has established that it is interested in a long-term partnership with African countries. However, African countries have often criticised Western countries for their failure to keep their development aid promises. In order to save face, India will have to move at a faster pace to implement these projects.

At the same time the recent developments in North Africa and also the conflict between Sudan and South Sudan have brought to the fore the high risk nature of investments in the African region. India has invested over a billion dollars in acquiring a stake in energy assets in Sudan. In 2003, India's ONGC Videsh Limited had acquired 25 per cent stake in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company. However, ever since the secession of South Sudan from Sudan last year, the future of Indian investments in the region has been bleak. Earlier this year, production in these oil fields stopped because of the dispute over the sharing of oil production between the governments of Sudan and South Sudan. Recently, the ONGC facility in Heglig was partially

damaged due to escalation of conflict between the two countries. In the past India has shied from commenting on conflicts in the African region; however as its economic stakes in the region increase it will have to be more pragmatic and make all possible efforts to influence the parties concerned. As India's engagement with African countries surges, New Delhi will have to skillfully and diplomatically balance the task of supporting African development endeavours while keeping India's best interests in mind.

BOOK REVIEW

Bach, Daniel C. and Gazibo, Mamoudou (eds.), Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond, Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London and New York, 2012, pp. xii+260, 978-0-415-68793-5

Saurabh Mishra

The theory of neopatrimonialism describes the sets of power functions between private and public interests of the ruler and the ruled. Jean Francois Medard applied the concept of neopatrimonialism to the study of an African state in the late 1970s. The confusion between the public and private spheres was, in his view, the essence of neopatrimonialism. It refers to “patrons using state resources in order to secure the loyalty of clients in the general population”. The patron derives and exercises authority due to his personal influence, which she/he attains by using these resources rather than through modern rational impersonal state institutions and functions. Nearly all the states in Africa are considered neo-paternal in nature and the term has become almost synonymous with the character of African states.

This book has 16 chapters and is in three parts. The first discusses the “meaning and relevance of the concepts”. The second analyses the “transformations that affect the actors, contexts and processes” with which neopatrimonialism in Africa has been associated and the third explores neopatrimonialism in the contexts beyond Africa.

Hinnerk Bruhns starts by giving the different interpretations of Weber’s patrimonial domination. He is of the view that ‘patrimonialism’ and ‘Weberian sociology’ are manifestly two distinct fields of research and he attempts to clear any confusion about patriarchalism, patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism. Describing the elements of traditional and legal-rational legitimacy, he elaborates the differences between the traditional and modern contexts of dominance and authority.

According to Daniel C. Bach, Guenther Roth argued for two forms of patrimonial dominance – the surviving forms of traditional patrimonialism and the detraditionalised forms of patrimonialism. The latter was ‘inextricably linked with material incitements and rewards’ rather than bonds of kinship, family and clan. Shmuel Eisenstadt added the prefix *neo* to clear the ambiguities in the “distinction between modern ‘traditional’ and ‘post-traditional’ regimes”. He used neopatrimonialism as a hybrid model type to explain the new “power systems in the ‘post-traditional’ societies of Latin America, South Asia and the Middle East”. Bach points out that Africa was absent from Eisenstadt’s list and concern and describes how the neopatrimonial state has become the archetype of the African anti-development state. Though Africa has accepted rational democratic ideals in theory, the society and the political culture in general is far from rational in practice. He distinguishes Latin America, South-East Asia and Russia from Africa as patrimonialism in those regions has been counterbalanced by the ongoing lexicological adjustments in the discourse on the regulated and predatory forms of patrimonialisms.

Daniel Capagnon, states that a “comparative study of African neopatrimonialism would not have been complete without an analysis of the political leaders’ specific role and leadership styles”. He attempts to present a model of the strategies of conquest and preservation of political power by the political entrepreneur in neopatrimonial regimes in different regions. There are patterns of the political entrepreneur using the wealth acquired through corruption and business and

disbursing it to gain loyalties beyond kinship. "The supreme political entrepreneur is constantly obliged to extract new resources from his society in order to regulate political competition" and each political leader has to craft his own personal system of domination and resource accumulation.

Jean-Francois Medard narrates and analyses the neopatrimonial power system and the way it functioned for the 'big man' of Kenya, Charles Njonjo. Mamoudou Gazibo also seeks to answer the most pertinent question related to the subject: Can neopatrimonialism dissolve into democracy? At the theoretical level, "neopatrimonialism and democracy are obviously based on antithetical logical bases and are, at first glance, incompatible" and mutually exclusive. But, his identification of patrimonial practices at a historical level as the political norm rather than an aberration illustrates the notion of the "solubility of neopatrimonialism in democracy".

Alice Sindzingre interprets neopatrimonialism within the dimensions of development economics. She shows how the concept has helped to explain the underperformance of several developing countries. She recognises that "neopatrimonialism refers to composite processes and phenomena that are simultaneously 'public' and 'private', political and economic, individual and social, 'old' and 'new'."

Nicolas van de Walle focuses on "what happens to the political clientelism following the democratisation of neopatrimonial regimes". He distinguishes between different types of clientelism based on the 'regime type' and the 'level of economic development'. He argues that neopatrimonialism and democracy are incompatible and clientelism will not disappear since it has become a ubiquitous trait of the modern state.

The chapter by Morten Boas and Kathleen M. Jennings discusses rebellion and 'warlordism' as aspects of neopatrimonialism by using examples from the rebellion in the Niger Delta and Sierra Leone. Chris Albin-Lackey and Mahaman Tidjani Alou deal with the phenomenon of 'godfatherism' in Nigeria and the status of the politicians, customs officials and traders in the Niger as neopatrimonial agents who bypass the state and render it impotent.

Dominique Caouette, Yves-Andre-Faure, Alisher Ikhamov, Mauro Barisione and Daniel Bourmaud use case studies from different regions in order to prove the ubiquitous nature of neopatrimonialism which is present as *caciquismo* in the Philippines, *Jeitinho* in contemporary Brazil, factionalism and patronage in post-Soviet Uzbekistan and *Berlusconismo* as a case of 'hybrid neopatrimonialism' because of the systemic and cultural specificities of the Italian context. Bourmaud highlights the importance of clientelism and patrimonialism in international relations as a source of power as in the case of France's African policy.

The book is a departure from the general stereotypical understanding of neopatrimonialism as confined only in Africa, and is a leveler that highlights the neopatrimonialism that exists beyond Africa. The book goes deep into the theory of neopatrimonialism and then uses examples from different regions to validate its postulations. The authors have diligently researched and explained neopatrimonialism in their respective areas and the book is a must for understanding neopatrimonial rule in the contemporary world.

NEWS TRACK

NORTHERN AFRICA

ALGERIA

Russia and Algeria hold consultations on Syria; Algeria and UAE discuss judicial cooperation; EU deploys Election Observation Mission to Algeria; Algeria and US discuss terrorism and regional issues; Mozambique and Algeria agree to cooperate on hydrocarbons; Pakistan plans to import LNG from Algeria; Algeria and Tunisia to strengthen security cooperation

Russian President Dmitri Medvedev's Middle East envoy Mikhail Bogdanov visited Algeria to discuss "joint steps" with its Foreign Minister Mourad Medelci on the crisis in Syria as Algeria remains one of the few Arab countries that still has strong ties with the Assad regime. Separately, the Arab League has urged an international investigation into the Syrian crisis, but avoided calling on President Bashar al-Assad to step down.¹

During his meeting with Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, Algerian Justice Minister Tayib Belaiz discussed bilateral cooperation between the UAE and Algeria, especially with regard to bilateral cooperation agreements between both countries.² Later, Dr. Hadeef Jowan Al Dhahiri, UAE's Minister of Justice, said that they were keen to boost programmes and projects of mutual cooperation to broader horizons through exchanging expertise and developmental projects which are aimed at boosting justice systems, judicial and legal services and integration of working systems.³

An EU Election Observation Mission is being deployed in Algeria at the invitation of the Algerian government to observe the parliamentary elections due to take place on May 10, 2012. The mission includes more than 120 observers, who will be deployed across the country and cover all stages of the electoral process, thus "contributing to transparency and confidence in the elections".⁴

Algeria's African Affairs Minister Abdelkader Messahel met with General Carter Ham, head of US military operations in Africa, and Johnnie Carson, US Assistant Secretary of State for African

¹ "Russian envoy in Algeria for consultations on Syria", *Ahram Online*, March 25, 2012, at <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/37654/World/Region/Russian-envoy-in-Algeria-for-consultations-on-Syri.aspx>

² "Shaikh Mohammad receives visiting Algerian minister", *Gulf News*, March 27, 2012, at <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/government/shaikh-mohammad-receives-visiting-algerian-minister-1.1000396>

³ "Minister of Justice and Algerian counterpart discuss judicial cooperation", *WAM*, March 27, 2012, at http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1289998242377&pagename=WAM%2FWAM_E_Layout&parent=Query&parentid=1135099399852

⁴ "EU deploys election observation mission to Algeria", *ENPI Info Centre*, March 30, 2012, at http://enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=28513&id_type=1&lang_id=450

Affairs, to discuss issues including the fight against terrorism, the situation in coup-stricken Mali, and also Libya, Somalia and Sudan. During the meeting, the officials stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation. Earlier, Algeria had condemned the Mali coup and expressed “deep worries” over the situation in its neighbouring nation.⁵

Mozambique and Algeria agreed to reactivate their cooperation in the area of hydrocarbons, as announced by the Minister of Mineral Resources, Esperanca Bias, after his meeting with the Algerian Minister of Energy and Mines, Youcef Yousfi. Mozambique is interested in producing liquefied natural gas (LNG), an area in which Algeria has a great deal of experience. Therefore, the areas in which Algeria could provide advice included monitoring and negotiations with hydrocarbon companies. The visit is also aimed at strengthening the cooperation between the two countries in energy and other areas of common interest.⁶

Quoting Algerian Trade Minister Mustapha Benbada, APS news agency said Pakistan is seeking to start liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from Algeria; a plan to build a re-gasification terminal in Karachi was discussed with the North African country during a meeting of a joint commission on bilateral trade ties. It is expected to cost around US\$ 1.5 billion.⁷

Algeria and Tunisia wrapped up the 16th meeting of the Algerian-Tunisian Monitoring Committee in Algiers with a focus on strengthening cooperation between the two Maghreb countries in a number of areas, with a particular emphasis on Sahel security. Other discussions during the conference focused on additional partnerships in tourism, small and medium enterprises, industry, agriculture, health and vocational training.⁸

EGYPT

Egypt vows to strengthen ties with Tanzania; Egypt keen to establish ‘Golden Triangle’ with Sudan, Libya; Egypt and Turkey discuss maritime agreement; Israel, Egypt talks over embassy, prisoner exchange; US grants US\$ 1.3 billion aid to Egypt; Egypt launches operation in Sinai; Egypt accuses UK over frozen assets; Egypt offers mediation for Sudan-South crisis

Egypt’s Ambassador to Tanzania, Hossam Moharam, stated that healthcare would form the significant part of Egypt’s assistance to Tanzania. In return, the Tanzanian Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Dr Hadji Mponda, assured him of the government’s commitment to strengthening of bilateral relationship and how it valued it. Earlier, the two countries signed a Joint Permanent Commission (JPC) pact and have sent a team of doctors to provide health services in the country to be followed by medical investment in dispensaries and hospitals.⁹

⁵ “Algeria, US talks on Mali, attacks”, *AFP*, April 4, 2012, at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i2zC-dqAXhahLIThpwQyBShuAlQ?docId=CNG.a0a01accf5b674c7f971ad0bbf018150.b51>

⁶ “Mozambique: Country and Algeria to Cooperate on Hydrocarbons”, *AllAfrica*, April 16, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204161556.html>

⁷ “Pakistan plans LNG imports from Algeria”, *Reuters*, April 18, 2012, at <http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJOE83H00Q20120418?feedType=RSS&feedName=investingNews&sp=true>

⁸ “Algeria, Tunisia strengthen unity”, *Magharebia*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2012/04/19/feature-02

⁹ “Tanzania: Egypt, Nation Vow to Strengthen Ties”, *AllAfrica*, March 6, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203061040.html>

Speaking during a meeting with Sudanese State Minister, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr affirmed Egypt's keenness to finding out the potentials of cooperation with Sudan and Libya through achieving integration using natural and human resources of the three countries in the framework of the so-called "Triangle Project". The two ministers also discussed the developments related to establishing joint farms projects to be extended on wide areas to achieve the goal of food security for the two peoples. Meanwhile, the Sudanese minister briefed on the latest developments in the Sudan as he presented a full report on the situation in the country, the formation of the new government, peace agreement and relations with South Sudan, and stability in Darfur.¹⁰

Turkish Ambassador Huseyin Avni Botsali said that Turkey and Egypt would soon conclude a historic maritime agreement to facilitate transportation between Eurasia and Africa via Egypt. When signed, the RoRo Agreement will constitute a strategic bridge between continents across Egypt. He added that Turkey has every intention of continuing with and diversifying its partnership with Egypt in the form of direct investments and joint ventures.¹¹

An Israeli delegation of senior officials, including high ranking officials from the foreign ministry and the security establishment, held negotiations with senior Egyptian officials in Cairo on the issue of locating a new embassy building. The discussions also included a possible prisoner exchange that would free an Israeli citizen, Ouda Tarabin, who has been in an Egyptian prison for the past 12 years, in exchange for the release of 63 Egyptian prisoners.¹²

Just after the United States decided to keep sending US\$ 1.3 billion in annual aid to the Egyptian military, a new poll shows that most Egyptians do not want their country to receive American financial assistance. Pollsters say Egyptians suspect that taking money from foreigners will end up impinging on their nation's sovereignty.¹³

Egypt announced that it was launching an operation in the Sinai Peninsula aimed at restoring the state's security control in the region, which has been overrun by terrorist and extremist elements. An Israeli official in Jerusalem said the Sinai operation had been coordinated with Israel. It came after a Katyusha rocket was fired from Sinai into Israel, exploding in Eilat.¹⁴

Egypt has strongly criticised the UK for "not helping enough" with the recovery of Egyptian assets frozen since 2011. Head of Illicit Gains Department in the Egyptian Ministry of Justice, Assem Algouhary, accused the UK Treasury of violating the United Nations Convention against

¹⁰ "Egypt: Govt Ready to Establish 'Golden Triangle' With Sudan, Libya", *AllAfrica*, March 12, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203120886.html>

¹¹ "Egyptian-Turkish meeting to boost investments", *The Egyptian Gazette*, March 28, 2012, at <http://213.158.162.45/~egyptian/index.php?action=news&id=23598&title=Egyptian-Turkish%20meeting%20to%20boost%20investments>

¹² "High-level Israeli-Egyptian talks held in Cairo", *Haaretz*, March 29, 2012, at <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/high-level-israeli-egyptian-talks-held-in-cairo-1.421388>

¹³ "U.S. grants Egypt \$1.3 billion – poll says Egyptians don't want it", *Los Angeles Times*, March 29, 2012, at http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/03/egyptians-oppose-us-aid-poll.html

¹⁴ "Egypt launches operation to gain control of Sinai", *The Jerusalem Post*, April 8, 2012, at <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=265183>

Corruption and a European Union regulation about freezing the assets. However, the UK Treasury's Asset Freezing Unit denied the Egyptian claims that it was not cooperating.¹⁵

Meeting Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, Egypt's Foreign Minister Mohammed Kamel Amr said that Egypt is hoping to mediate in the crisis between Sudan and South Sudan, in the heat of the most serious border clashes since the South's independence. Bashir welcomed Egypt's role but he clarified that Sudan would refuse to negotiate with the South unless it withdraws from the Heglig oil region.¹⁶

LIBYA

Libya announces US\$ 100 million aid to Syrian opposition; Arrested British journalists accused of spying; Libya denies Russian allegations of arming and training Syrian rebels; Ban Ki-moon expresses concern over rights abuses in Libya; Scores killed in tribal clashes in Sabha; UN Mission voices concern over violence in north-western towns; Libya rules out ICC trial for Saif al-Islam

In a further sign of its strong support for forces fighting President Bashar al-Assad, Libya announced that it would donate US\$ 100 million in humanitarian aid to the Syrian opposition and allow them to open an office in Tripoli. Separately, representatives from the Syrian National Council (SNC) visited Tripoli after Mustafa Abdel, chairman of Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC), made the initial offer to host an SNC office.¹⁷

Two British journalists working for Iran's Press TV, Nicholas Davies and Gareth Montgomery-Johnson, who were detained in February 2012 in Libya, are suspected of being spies. Faraj al-Swehli, commander of the Swehli Brigade, said his men found official Libyan documents, equipment used by the Israeli military and footage of them firing weapons, among the journalists' possessions. However, he said it was too early to say what country they were spying for but that this would be established by an investigation.¹⁸

After meeting US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Washington, Libya's Prime Minister Abdurrahim El-Keib denied Russian accusations that his country was running camps to train and arm Syrian rebels, but expressed strong support for Syrians "who are raising their voice asking for freedom." Libya had been the first to recognise Syria's National Opposition Council. The US later said El-Keib's comments had firmly denied the existence of any such training camps.¹⁹

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said that Libyan authorities should address human rights violations after a UN report found that both sides committed war crimes during the conflict

¹⁵ "Egypt sues UK over frozen assets", *BBC News*, April 15, 2012, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17717988>

¹⁶ "Egypt hopes to mediate Sudan-South crisis", *AFP*, April 15, 2012, at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5g40spgNLFgM_4kvDReusGaWumR3w?docId=CNG. eff51d7e811b9e0af02def6520354c8e.a51

¹⁷ "Libya to give Syrian opposition \$100m in aid", *IOL News*, March 1, 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/libya-to-give-syrian-opposition-100m-in-aid-1.1246656>

¹⁸ "Two British journalists accused of spying in Libya", *Reuters*, March 4, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/04/us-libya-journalists-idUSTRE8230P320120304>

¹⁹ "Libya PM "not aware" of arming, training Syria rebels", *Reuters*, March 8, 2012, at <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/03/08/libya-syria-idINDEE8270DK20120308>

and that killing, torture and pillage were ongoing. He also noted that UN Human Rights Council investigators found that the NATO “did not deliberately target civilians” in Libyan air strikes. Further, Russia had criticised the investigators for failing to adequately probe deaths caused by NATO bombs.²⁰

Libya’s health minister Fatma al-Hamroush announced that six days of tribal clashes in a remote desert town in southern Libya have killed 147 people. The fighting in Sabha has also left 395 wounded. Around 180 people have been transported to the capital Tripoli for emergency treatment. The rivalry burst into open conflict after a Tabu tribe member shot a member of the Arab Abu Seif tribe, and then a delegation of Tabu elders and armed men going to participate in reconciliation talks was ambushed. In response, the Libyan government was trying to move relief supplies to the area with the assistance of the UN team in Libya.²¹

The UN mission in Libya expressed concern over the intensification of violence in three towns in the country’s north-west and deplored reports of a growing number of casualties. The mission urged parties involved in the fighting around the towns of Zuwara, al-Jumail and Regdalin to immediately cease hostilities while talks continue, and welcomed efforts by authorities and local leaders to broker a ceasefire and restore calm.²²

Justice Minister Ali Ashour confirmed that Libya would not send Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, the most prominent son of the country’s former leader, to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. Instead, Saif al-Islam will be put on trial in Libya by Libyan judges on charges of financial corruption, murder and rape. Earlier, an ICC defence lawyer alleged that Saif al-Islam was being mistreated and beaten, but Ashour denied the allegations. Separately, pressure is mounting on Libya to hand Gaddafi’s son to the ICC, as human rights organisations say the country will be unable to give him a fair trial.²³

MOROCCO

Morocco and Spain accelerate security partnership; Economic and social situation in Morocco discussed; Ranbaxy opens new production facility in Morocco; US and France support Morocco’s plan for Western Sahara dispute; US soldiers observe training at Moroccan Field Artillery Center; Morocco and US participate in African Lion 12 Exercise

Morocco and Spain have agreed to strengthen the relationship between their security services as both countries face terrorism, organised crime, smuggling and illegal immigration. During a visit by Spain’s Interior Minister Jorge Fernandez Diaz to Rabat, the ministers agreed that two joint police centres, one in Tangier and the other in Algeciras, would be set up to boost cooperation.

²⁰ “Ban Ki-moon says Libya should end rights abuses”, *Reuters*, March 13, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/13/us-libya-un-idUSBRE82C1BK20120313>

²¹ “Libya: 147 killed in 6 days of clashes in south”, *Haaretz*, March 31, 2012, at <http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/libya-147-killed-in-6-days-of-clashes-in-south-1.421834>

²² “Libya: UN mission voices concern over violence in north-western towns”, *UN News Centre*, April 4, 2012, at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41710&Cr=libya&Cr1>

²³ “Libya rules out ICC trial for Saif al-Islam”, *Al Jazeera*, April 9, 2012, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/04/2012499216767703.html>

The countries will also hold a summit in Morocco to coordinate efforts against terrorism in the Sahel-Saharan region.²⁴

The EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy Štefan Füle received a delegation of the Economic and Social Council of Morocco (CES) in Brussels, discussing with its president, Chakib Benmoussa, the current economic and social situation in Morocco and the reforms launched in the wake of the Arab Spring. Füle also noted that the positive vote of the European Parliament on the EU-Morocco Agricultural Agreement was an important step which paved the way for further dynamics in bilateral relations. They also noted the scope for common work on issues such as improving working conditions for agricultural workers, reducing child labour or providing adequate social security coverage.²⁵

Ranbaxy Laboratories has opened a new production facility at Casablanca in Morocco, a move which would help the drug maker access the African nation's US\$ 1 billion pharma market. This would pave the way for a direct business presence for Ranbaxy in North Africa. The facility has undergone successful audit of the plant by Moroccan Health Authorities.²⁶

Echoing a statement by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe called Morocco's autonomy initiative for Western Sahara "the only realistic proposal" for resolving the decades-old conflict over the territory. Clinton and Juppe both praised Morocco's role in advancing human rights and democratic reforms in the region. The statements came on the eve of a ninth round of informal talks on Western Sahara, hosted by the United Nations in Manhasset, New York. The informal talks aim to resume formal negotiations between Morocco and the Polisario Front with the participation of Algeria and Mauritania, to end the conflict.²⁷

In order to help improve the security of Morocco, 20 members of the 15th Royal Artillery Group purchased approximately 60 armoured vehicles called M109A5 howitzers through the US Foreign Military Sales programme. At the request of the Royal Moroccan Field Artillery Training Center, an artillery tactics military-to-military exercise was executed in the cities of Fes and Guercie on March 4-10, 2012 to train Moroccan soldiers in the maintenance, safety and firing of the M109A5 system.²⁸

The United States Marine Corps has deployed its "Few and Proud" to Morocco to take part in African Lion 2012, a joint and combined annual iteration sponsored by the Chairman of the Joint

²⁴ "Morocco, Spain accelerate security partnership", *Magharebia*, March 1, 2012, at http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en_GB/features/awi/features/2012/03/01/feature-01

²⁵ "Morocco: Moving forward to more dynamic relations", *ENPI Info Centre*, March 7, 2012, at <http://www.enpi-info.eu/medportal/news/latest/28223/Morocco:-Moving-forward-to-more-dynamic-relations>

²⁶ "Ranbaxy opens new manufacturing facility in Morocco; eyes \$1 bn drug market", *The Economic Times*, March 12, 2012, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-03-12/news/31153094_1_daiichi-sankyo-group-ranbaxy-laboratories-pharma-market

²⁷ "U.S., France Voice Strong Support for Morocco's Autonomy Plan to Resolve Western Sahara Dispute, Remove Obstacle to Peace in Region", *PR Newswire*, March 12, 2012, at <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/us-france-voice-strong-support-for-moroccos-autonomy-plan-to-resolve-western-sahara-dispute-remove-obstacle-to-peace-in-region-142316285.html>

²⁸ "Morocco: U.S. Soldiers Observe Training At Moroccan Field Artillery Center", *AllAfrica*, March 26, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203261773.html>

Chief of Staff (CJCS), scheduled by the US Africa Command (AFRICOM), executed by Marine Force Africa (MARFORAF), and hosted by Morocco's Royal Armed Forces (RAF). The exercise will serve to promote military cooperation, reinforce interoperability, and consolidate the two nations' counter-terrorism strategy and merge their vision of regional stability.²⁹

SOUTH SUDAN

Nearly 200 die in South Sudan tribal feud; India proposes investment in South Sudan's oil infrastructure; South Sudan rebels kill SPLA General and two Colonels; Indian Special Envoy in South Sudan on oil mission; Israel considers sending police force to South Sudan; US urges Sudan and South to settle conflict

According to Kuol Manyang, governor of Jonglei state, more than 200 people have been killed in South Sudan in a spree of cattle-rustling attacks. Members of the Murle tribe attacked several groups of ethnic Lou Nuer who were in temporary camps where they had brought their herds for grazing. The Murle crossed from Pibor County, in Jonglei, into neighbouring Ethiopia, then traveled north before re-entering South Sudan to carry out the attacks. Security forces were unable to be deployed to the remote region of Nasir County in the state of Upper Nile, as it is inaccessible by road. The UN peacekeeping mission said it is investigating the attacks, but could not confirm Manyang's report of 200 dead and more injured.³⁰

Reinforcing India's efforts to secure energy resources overseas, state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd (ONGC) is in talks with South Sudan to help it build oil pipelines, crude oil stores and refineries in the newly formed African nation. The proposed investment by ONGC assumes significance as South Sudan stopped and capped crude oil production from all its 900 wells in January 2012. However, with other countries also eyeing the opportunity, India might face stiff competition.³¹

The South Sudan Liberation Army (SSLA) forces attacked Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) positions and inflicted lot of casualties on the enemy. The SSLA forces conducted reconnaissance after the end of the battle and found the body of Brig. Gen. Gatwech Gai Marial and two other colonels from the Dinka tribe. After the operation, SSLA operational commanders marched towards Bentiu town.³²

Responding to the ongoing conflict between Sudan and South Sudan, India appointed a special envoy to broker peace between the two countries; this holds the key to India's pursuit of oil and other hydrocarbon resources in Africa. MEA additional secretary Amarendra Khatua (who handles

²⁹ "Morocco: US Marines' African Lion 12", *Morocco Board*, April 6, 2012, at <http://www.moroccoboard.com/viewpoint/60-ahmed-tb/5596-morocco-us-marines-african-lion-12>

³⁰ "More than 200 die in South Sudan tribal feud, official says", *CNN*, March 12, 2012, at http://articles.cnn.com/2012-03-12/africa/world_africa_south-sudan-violence_1_south-sudanese-peacekeeping-mission-attacks?_s=PM:AFRICA

³¹ "India, South Sudan in oil infra talks", *Live Mint*, March 27, 2012, at <http://www.livemint.com/2012/03/27000444/India-South-Sudan-in-oil-infr.html>

³² "South Sudan rebels kill SPLA general and two colonels", *Sudan Tribune*, April 1, 2012, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/South-Sudan-rebels-kill-SPLA,42106>

the passport division) is on a visit to both Juba and Khartoum as India's special envoy to help promote peace and protect India's interests in other African nations as well.³³

Israel has considered sending a police force to South Sudan to assist the UN. In this regard, Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon met Robert Orr, a top aide of UN Secretary-General Ban-Ki-moon, and told him that Israel was considering the possibility of sending 14 police officers to the African country. However, Israel's final decision is being delayed due to the war that broke out between Sudan and South Sudan recently. At the same time, Foreign Ministry officials said Israel would not send the officers if there is any chance that their lives would be in danger.³⁴

US President Barack Obama urged Sudan and South Sudan to end their fighting and begin negotiations to settle the intensifying conflict between the newly separated countries. Obama put part of the onus on the government of Sudan, which he said "must stop its military actions, including aerial bombardments." He said the heated words between the countries had raised the risk of war at a time when neither side can afford continued conflict. Further, he said, "Likewise, the government of South Sudan must end its support for armed groups inside Sudan, and it must cease its military actions across the border".³⁵

SUDAN

ICC issues war crimes warrant for Sudan minister; China cancels funding for agricultural project in Sudan; Sudan and South agree on basic freedoms for citizens

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Abdelrahim Mohamed Hussein, the Sudanese defence minister, as part of investigations into crimes committed in Sudan's western region of Darfur. The court said that there were sufficient grounds to hold Hussein responsible for 20 counts of crimes against humanity, including persecution and rape, and 21 counts of war crimes, including murder and attacks on civilians. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is also wanted by the ICC for alleged war crimes in Darfur. However, Sudan dismissed the ICC move.³⁶

President Omar al-Bashir revealed that an agricultural project in Sudan's Nile River state has been put on hold because China cancelled a loan that was needed to extend electricity in the area. Bashir said that his government gave Qatar 250,000 acres of land in the state to encourage investments from the rich Arab Gulf state. The Chinese loan was in return for oil shipments which stopped after the secession of the South. Qatar has decided to step in and provide the loan.³⁷

³³ "Indian envoy in South Sudan on oil mission", *The Times of India*, April 2, 2012, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-04-02/india/31274931_1_south-sudan-juba-khartoum

³⁴ "Israel considers sending police force to S. Sudan", *Y Net News*, April 19, 2012, at <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4218328,00.html>

³⁵ "Obama Urges South Sudan and Sudan to End Strife", *The New York Times*, April 21, 2012, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/world/africa/obama-urges-sudan-and-south-sudan-to-end-fighting.html>

³⁶ "War crimes warrant for Sudan minister", *Al Jazeera*, March 2, 2012, at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/03/20123263020568112.html>

³⁷ "China refused to fund agricultural project in Sudan for lack of oil collateral: Bashir", *Sudan Tribune*, March 10, 2012, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/China-refused-to-fund-agricultural,41864>

African Union mediators have said that Sudan and South Sudan have agreed on a framework agreement to give their citizens basic freedoms in both nations. They have agreed to allow citizens of the other state to live, work and own property on either side of the border, and travel between the two nations. However, bitter disagreements over disputed land and oil remain unresolved.³⁸

TUNISIA

UK Foreign Office Minister visits Tunisia; Differences emerge in Tunisia over religion in state affairs; US announces US\$ 100 million to boost Tunisian finances

In his third visit to Tunisia since the revolution, UK Foreign Office Minister Alistair Burt underlined the UK's support for Tunisia's transition process. He also traveled to the city of Sfax to meet local business leaders and British investors. Burt underlined the UK's strong bilateral relationship with Tunisia, which would be further strengthened by the UK's support for the democratic transition. The ministers also discussed regional issues, including in North Africa, and Burt welcomed the efforts Tunisia was making to bring together the countries of the Maghreb region.³⁹

Thousands of Tunisian Islamists took to the streets to step up their demands for the creation of an Islamic state in one of the most secular Arab nations. About 8,000 conservative Salafi Islamists filled the capital's Habib Bourguiba Avenue, a focal point of the 2011 revolution that sparked uprisings across the Arab world. Waving black flags, they shouted slogans demanding that Islamic law, or Sharia, be defined as the main source of legislation in Tunisia's new constitution.⁴⁰

In response, Tunisia's governing Islamist party said it will not support making Sharia, or Islamic law, the main source of legislation in a new constitution and will maintain the secular nature of the state. Ennahda, which emerged as the biggest party in Tunisia's first democratic elections in 2011, said it would keep the first article of the 1956 constitution in the new basic law now being drafted. The article enshrines the separation of religion and state.⁴¹

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said that the United States would give Tunisia US\$ 100 million to buttress short-term government finances as the country negotiates a democratic transition. Pending congressional notification and approval, the US money would go directly to debt that Tunisia owes the World Bank and the African Development Bank, freeing Tunis to concentrate on its own priority programmes and job creation.⁴²

³⁸ "Sudan and South Sudan leaders agree basic freedoms", *BBC News*, March 13, 2012, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17361311>

³⁹ "Foreign Office Minister visited Tunisia", *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*, March 15, 2012, at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=PressR&id=742357182>

⁴⁰ "Tunisian Islamists step up demand for Islamic state", *Reuters*, March 25, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/25/us-tunisia-salafis-protest-idUSBRE82O0D120120325>

⁴¹ "Tunisia constitution will not be based on Islamic law: party", *The Daily Star*, March 27, 2012, at <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Mar-27/168167-tunisia-constitution-will-not-be-based-on-islamic-law-party.ashx#axzz1t3FCESRo>

⁴² "U.S. to give \$100 million to boost Tunisia finances: Clinton", *Reuters*, March 29, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/29/us-tunisia-usa-aid-idUSBRE82S0PB20120329>

WESTERN SAHARA

UN Western Sahara envoy embarks on regional tour; UN suspects Moroccan spying over its Western Sahara mission; UN renews Western Sahara mission

Following informal talks with the parties, the United Nations envoy for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, announced that he would embark on a regional tour starting in mid-May 2012, including an extensive visit to the disputed territory. Morocco presented a plan for autonomy while the position of the Frente Polisario was that the territory's final status should be decided in a referendum on self-determination that includes independence as an option. They also deepened their discussion on demining, natural resources and environment, without prejudice to the definitive status of the territory, and welcomed the progress accomplished on these topics. In addition, the next round of informal meetings will take place in Europe in June 2012.⁴³

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon suggested that Morocco may have been spying on the world body's monitoring force in the disputed territory of Western Sahara and hampering its ability to function. This assessment came after the latest round of UN-mediated talks between Morocco, the Polisario Front independence movement, Algeria and Mauritania on the future of Western Sahara failed to make any real progress. In his report to the UN Security Council, Ban complained that the UN force in Western Sahara, known as MINURSO, is "unable to exercise fully its peacekeeping monitoring, observation and reporting functions, or avail of the authority to reverse the erosion" of its ability to function. Among the difficulties the force has been facing, Ban wrote, is Moroccan spying on the UN force.⁴⁴

The United Nations Security Council renewed the mandate of a peacekeeping force in the disputed territory of Western Sahara, but South Africa expressed disappointment that the 15-nation body did not ask UN troops to monitor alleged rights abuses. After the council unanimously voted to approve the force for another year, South Africa's UN Ambassador Baso Sangqu accused the council of ignoring the rights of the Western Saharan people.⁴⁵

SOUTHERN AFRICA

BOTSWANA

Kazungula Project runs into financial shortfalls; Botswana seeks joint tourism ventures with Zambia; Botswana invites Chinese investment in textile sector

Kazungula Bridge Project runs into financial shortfalls as Zambia and Botswana have a shortfall

⁴³ "UN Western Sahara envoy to embark on regional visit in May", *UN News Centre*, March 13, 2012, at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=41534&Cr=western+sahara&Cr1=>

⁴⁴ "Morocco may have spied on Western Sahara mission: UN", *Yahoo News*, April 13, 2012, at <http://news.yahoo.com/morocco-may-spied-western-sahara-mission-un-052010603.html>

⁴⁵ "UN renews Western Sahara mission", *IOL News*, April 25, 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/un-renews-western-sahara-mission-1.1283132>

of over US\$ 130 million for the construction of the bridge project. Both the governments are working out modalities to source funds to build the bridge.⁴⁶

Botswana has called for joint marketing ventures with Zambia aimed at developing and boosting tourist arrivals in both countries. It is important for the two countries to work together so that tourists visiting both countries would enjoy the peace.⁴⁷

During a ceremony to sign Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with China, Botswana's Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Kenneth Matambo, has invited Chinese textile investors to set up their manufacturing plants in the country. He mentioned that it would benefit both countries if Chinese textile and other investors set up their production units in Botswana. Further, there exists lot of untapped opportunities for investment, particularly in textile and other manufacturing sectors.⁴⁸

LESOTHO

Lesotho King announces general elections in May; EU supports social security programmes in Lesotho; China and Lesotho review health services

Following a dialogue that ended the deadlock among the main political players, the King of Lesotho has set May 26, 2012 as the date for general elections. The agreement was reached after negotiations mediated by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) aimed at finding a lasting solution to the political challenges in the country. Meanwhile, King Letsie III dissolved the Lesotho Parliament on March 15, 2012 to pave way for campaigning by the country's 10 political parties.⁴⁹

The Minister of Finance and Development Planning Timothy Thahane and the Ambassador of the European Union (EU) to the Kingdom of Lesotho Hans Duynhouwer signed financing agreements for the second phase of poverty reduction budget support program (to the amount of •45 million) and the second phase of the program for protection of orphans and vulnerable children (to the amount of •10 million). The assistance is provided on condition of maintaining sound economic policies and progress in finance management reforms.⁵⁰

In a bid to review the work of the Chinese Medical Team based in Lesotho, the People's Republic of China Vice Minister of Health, Dr Liu Qian visited the country. The Lesotho Minister of Health

⁴⁶ "Zambia, Botswana in shortfall of US\$ 130 million for construction of the Kazungula Bridge project", *Lusaka Times*, April 1, 2012, at <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/04/01/zambia-botswana-shortfall-130-million-construction-kazungula-bridge-project/>

⁴⁷ "Zambia: Botswana Seeks Joint Tourism Ventures", *AllAfrica*, April 16, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204161600.html>

⁴⁸ "Botswana invites Chinese investment in textile sector", *Fibre2fashion*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/fabrics-news/newsdetails.aspx?news_id=110220

⁴⁹ "Lesotho: King Announces May Election", *AllAfrica*, April 10, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204100610.html>

⁵⁰ "Lesotho to benefit from M563 million EU support", *Informativ*, April 11, 2012, at http://www.informativenews.co.ls/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5204:lesotho-to-benefit-from-m563-million-eu-support&catid=34:news&Itemid=27

and Social Welfare, Dr Mphu Ramatlapeng said they have been working together in an exchange programme for a period of eight years, adding that this visit will give them a chance to decide on their way forward.⁵¹

NAMIBIA

Namibia seeks tangible economic cooperation with India; Namibia and Angola discuss water and power issues; China step up bilateral relations with Namibia

Namibia's Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Tjekero Tweya and its High Commissioner to India S K Mbabo visited Gujarat to seek tangible economic cooperation with India. At the same time, efforts are underway to finalise the plans to set up an Entrepreneurship Development Centre (EDC) in Namibia. Tweya said, "The four reasons why we are here are dairy, port, bajra and Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Ahmedabad".⁵² Namibian Agriculture, Water and Forestry Minister, John Mutorwa, and Angolan Minister of Water and Energy, Joao da Silva Borges, have held consultative meetings on issues related to water and energy supplies in the Cunene and Cuvelai basins. The meeting started off with a tour to the Calueque Dam and Ruacana Waterfall where the two ministers visited the hydro and power infrastructures. They discussed matters related to the water supply along the common border and reviewed the progress made on the Kunene Trans-boundary Water Supply Project. Furthermore, progress in the replacement of the Mahenene (Calueque) - Oshakati Canal with a pipeline and plans to rehabilitate the Calueque Dam also formed part of the discussion.⁵³

Visiting Chinese Vice Premier, Hui Liangyu said that China plans to step up its efforts to implement a comprehensive and substantial cooperation programme in various aspects in a bid to strengthen its ties with Namibia. In reply, the Namibian president said his country would work hand-in-hand with China to promote the traditional friendship between the two countries and explore new ways to enhance bilateral cooperation. Both countries also signed five documents on bilateral cooperation on economic, technological and fishing related fields.⁵⁴

SOUTH AFRICA

Nigeria and South Africa embroiled in diplomatic spat over Yellow Fever jabs; South Africa plans to have alternatives to Iranian oil; South Africa formalises diplomatic ties with Somalia; South Africa pitches for greater Indian investment

South Africa and Nigeria have been embroiled in a diplomatic spat after authorities at Johannesburg airport deported 125 Nigerians, alleging that their yellow fever vaccination

⁵¹ "China, Lesotho Health Ministers to Review Working Relations", *Government of Lesotho*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.gov.ls/articles/2012/china_lesotho_health_ministers_review_relations.php

⁵² "EDI in Namibia on GoI's agenda", *The Times of India*, March 24, 2012, at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-03-24/ahmedabad/31233793_1_edi-dinesh-awasthi-africa-india-forum-summit

⁵³ "Namibia: Country/Angola Tackle Water and Power Issues", *AllAfrica*, April 2, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204021087.html>

⁵⁴ "China to cement bilateral relation with Namibia", *Capitalfm*, April 5, 2012, at <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2012/04/china-to-cement-bilateral-relation-with-namibia/>

certificates were fakes. Spokesman for South Africa's Home Affairs department, Ronnie Mamoepa, said the decision to deport the Nigerians stemmed purely from concerns about health. Nigeria responded with undisguised tit-for-tat deportations of 84 South Africans. Olugbenga warned that Nigeria could take broader retaliatory measures, including a clampdown on South African companies.⁵⁵

South Africa's energy minister, Elizabeth Dipuo Peters, said that the South African government plans to have alternatives to Iranian oil in place by the end of May 2012 as Western powers tighten sanctions against the Islamic republic. South Africa relies on Iran for about 29 per cent of its oil imports, according to the US Energy Information Administration. It was the only big customer of Iranian crude not to have revealed that it was seeking alternative supplies.⁵⁶

South Africa established formal diplomatic relations with Somalia, and committed R100 million to help the transitional Somali government build adequate institutions of governance. South African International Relations Minister, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, met with her Somali counterpart, Abdullahi Haji Hassan, in Pretoria and signed an agreement for the establishment of diplomatic relations. Further, the South African government would work with Somalia's Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and international partners to ensure that Somalia has institutions of governance that will be sustainable beyond the TFG's mandate, which should ultimately see that country equipped to govern itself.⁵⁷

With an ambitious programme for development, South Africa plans to conduct road shows and business events in major Indian cities to attract investments in sectors as diverse as information technology, financial services and agro-processing. The South African Trade and Industry Minister, Rob Davies, has stated that a stable, diverse economy, a large market and relatively strong consumer spending power makes South Africa an attractive market in the African context. He hopes to raise two-way trade to over US\$ 15 billion by 2014 from around US\$ 11 billion now.⁵⁸

SWAZILAND

Swaziland Army exposed of its attempted spy equipment purchase; US expresses concern over crackdown on demonstrations

The Swaziland Army was exposed after a court revealed it had tried to purchase spy cameras and phone monitoring equipment worth US\$ 1.25 million. It is suspected that the gadgets would be used against the growing number of pro-democracy campaigners in the kingdom, ruled by King

⁵⁵ "Nigeria, South Africa feud over yellow fever jabs", *Yahoo News*, March 8, 2012, at <http://news.yahoo.com/nigeria-south-africa-feud-over-yellow-fever-jabs-060706385.html>

⁵⁶ "South Africa looks for alternatives to Iran oil", *Financial Times*, March 13, 2012, at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4e5ae514-6d26-11e1-ab1a-00144feab49a.html#axzz1t4af03kA>

⁵⁷ "South Africa, Somalia formalise ties", *South Africa Info*, March 14, 2012, at <http://www.southafrica.info/news/international/somalia-140312.htm>

⁵⁸ "South Africa pitches for greater Indian investment", *The Economic Times*, April 8, 2012, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-08/news/31308445_1_indian-investments-india-south-africa-president-jacob-zuma

Mswati III, sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarch. The Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force (USDF) was sued in the Swaziland High Court because it ordered the equipment, but did not pay for it.⁵⁹

The United States expressed concern about a crackdown on anti-monarchy demonstrations in Swaziland. A statement released by the US Embassy in Mbabane criticised security forces in the southern African nation for preventing peaceful gatherings, and the government for banning a union. It also urged the government to take necessary steps to ensure the promotion and protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Swazi citizens.⁶⁰

ZAMBIA

Zambia and Namibia agree for transfer of sentenced persons

Zambia and Namibia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and an agreement for the Transfer of Sentenced Persons which seeks to enable the two countries to cooperate in combating cross-border crime and improve the standards of services at prisons as well as immigration departments. Zambian Home Affairs Minister Kennedy Sakeni opined that the Joint Permanent Commission on Defence and Security (JPCDC) was cardinal in enhancing cooperation and strengthening Zambia and Namibia's relationship as it was a forum where all the defence and security matters affecting the two countries were discussed and possible solutions harmonised. He said that the threat of illegal migration and transnational crimes such as human trafficking, migrant smuggling and terrorism had necessitated the need for technical cooperation between Zambia and Namibia through the immigration departments.⁶¹

CENTRAL AFRICA

EU urges Central Africa to ratify economic partnership agreements by 2014

At the meeting between the inter-ministerial committee for the negotiation of economic partnership agreements between the European Union and the Central African sub-region, the European Union urged all the countries of the region to sign and ratify economic partnership agreements by 2014.⁶²

ANGOLA

Nearly 40 per cent of Angolan oil exported to China, the two countries in talks to expand trade; UN Secretary-General condemns treatment of illegal migrants in border region;

⁵⁹ "Swaziland: Army Tried to Buy Spy Equipment", *AllAfrica*, April 5, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204050882.html>

⁶⁰ "US Expresses Concern About Swaziland Crackdown", *ABC News*, April 18, 2012, at http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/us-expresses-concern-swaziland-crackdown-16161047#.T5gzIXlc6_0

⁶¹ "Southern Africa: Zambia, Namibia Agree to Fight Cross-Border Crime", *AllAfrica*, March 31, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203310316.html>

⁶² "European Union-Cameroon: Economic partnership discussed", *CRTV.com*, April 13, 2012, at http://www.crtv.cm/cont/nouvelles/nouvelles_sola_fr.php?idField=11077&table=nouvelles&sub=economie

Angola to open embassy in East Timor; South Sudan seeks to increase ties with Angola; Angola and Congo-Brazzaville sign deals for exploration of Lianzi trans-frontier oil situation; Military mission to Guinea-Bissau to end; Angola: President of AU Peace and Security Council

According to Chinese news reports, nearly 40 per cent of Angolan oil is exported to China which accounts for 16 per cent of Chinese imports of hydrocarbons. Angolan exports to China stood at over US\$ 20 billion in 2011 which is expected to increase in 2012.⁶³ The Angolan government is in talks with China to explore the possibility of exporting Angolan mining products which could 'increase and diversify' trade between the two countries. The Chinese government in exchange will export machinery and other instruments useful for Angola's development programme. China has also set aside US\$ 1 billion in an effort to strengthen its relations with Portuguese speaking nations.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern over the treatment of illegal migrants in the border regions between Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where systematic rape of displaced Congolese women and girls by men in uniform remains unabated.⁶⁵

According to reports, Angola is set to open a diplomatic representation in East Timor in an effort to 'restore the historical relations of privilege' between the two countries. After the legislative elections in East Timor, the Angolan embassy is likely to open in Dili.⁶⁶ In other developments, South Sudan is keen on strengthening its ties with Angola in various fields, particularly the oil sector, and will soon appoint an Ambassador to Luanda.⁶⁷

In the interim, Angola and Congo-Brazzaville signed two deals for development and exploration of the Lianzi trans-frontier oil situation in the maritime zone between the two countries. These deals set the mechanism for sharing revenue from the exploration of the field that will start production in 2015 and the opening of a joint account for deposit of the incomes resulting from the operations.⁶⁸

⁶³ "China imports almost 40 per cent of Angolan oil", *Angola Press*, February 29, 2012, at http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/economia/2012/1/9/China-imports-almost-percent-Angolan-oil,bd1b377b-7c2e-4854-a130-d36da9a4ea87.html

⁶⁴ "Angola plans to diversify its exports to China by adding mining resources", *Macauhub.com*, March 30, 2012, at <http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/2012/03/30/angola-plans-to-diversify-its-exports-to-china-by-adding-mining-resources/>

⁶⁵ "UN worried over rapes in Angola", *IOL News*, February 27, 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/un-worried-over-rapes-in-angola-1.1243698>

⁶⁶ "Angola to open embassy in East Timor", *Angola Press*, February 22, 2012, at http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/politica/2012/1/8/Angola-open-embassy-East-Timor,0db89cb0-e745-4cfe-a176-520bca2b154f.html

⁶⁷ "South Sudan keen to strengthen ties with Angola: minister", *People's Daily*, March 31, 2012, at <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90777/7775523.html>

⁶⁸ "Angola and Congo sign oil fields exploration deals", *Angola Press*, March 16, 2012, at [http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/economia/2012/2/11/Angola-and-Congo-sign-oil-fields-exploration-daels,8bffc0e2-69d5-4b2c-aea7-417dac281c7a.html](http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/economia/2012/2/11/Angola-and-Congo-sign-oil-fields-exploration-deals,8bffc0e2-69d5-4b2c-aea7-417dac281c7a.html)

In other developments, Angola will end its military mission to Guinea-Bissau that was agreed to in 2010 to help modernise the army. The decision to end the mission had followed requests from 'some sectors in Guinea Bissau'.⁶⁹

Angola assumed the rotating presidency of the African Union Peace and Security Council from April 01, 2012 for a period of two years. The presidency is to be marked by the management and search for solutions to major crises that the African continent currently faces.⁷⁰

CAMEROON

Border security tightened after attack by Boko Haram; Chinese navy to supply material for shipyard; India and Cameroon sign MoU

Cameroon tightened its border security by increasing the number of security officers along its border with Nigeria after an attack by members allegedly belonging to Boko Haram which left 15 people dead.⁷¹

During the visit of a Chinese marine delegation to the country, the Chinese navy agreed to supply material for the Douala shipyard in Cameroon. This assistance comes on the heels of cooperation between the two countries to secure Cameroonian waters especially the Gulf of Guinea when the Chinese navy had earlier offered some equipment.⁷²

In other developments, India and Cameroon signed a Memorandum of Understanding during the recent visit of the President of the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts to India. Cameroon also acknowledged the low penetration of Indian entrepreneurs into Cameroon and assured Indian investors an enlarged circle of cooperation links for the country.⁷³

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

CAR woos Indian investment; UN Envoy for Central Africa: Kony in CAR; 11 CAR soldiers killed by Sudanese rebels

The Central African Republic has wooed Indian investment in the country's road, rail, hydro-

⁶⁹ "Angola to end military reform aid in Guinea Bissau", *Reuters Africa*, April 10, 2012, at <http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E83900P20120410>

⁷⁰ "Angola takes over AU Peace, Security Council", *Angola Press*, April 2, 2012, at http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/internacional/2012/3/14/Angola-takes-over-Peace-Security-Council,2c41dd90-7a10-4520-add3-f5a5af73982a.html

⁷¹ "Cameroon tightens border security after Boko Haram", *Bloomberg.com*, April 13, 2012, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-04-13/cameroon-tightens-border-security-after-boko-haram-attack.html>

⁷² "Armed Forces: Chinese Navy promises more support", *Cameroon Tribune*, February 28, 2012, at http://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67146:armed-forces-chinese-navy-promises-more-support&catid=1:politique&Itemid=3

⁷³ "Branding Cameroon in India", *Cameroon Tribune*, March 21, 2012, at http://www.cameroon-tribune.cm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67470:branding-cameroon-in-india&catid=1:politique&Itemid=3

power and uranium mining projects. The other key area for potential Indian investment is in low-cost housing. In order to meet its growing energy needs, India is looking to access uranium from Africa and other regions.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, the UN envoy for Central Africa disclosed that according to information received by investigators, Lord's Resistance Army's fugitive leader, Joseph Kony is in the Central African Republic. Countries in the region have set up a new coordinated force of 5,000 troops to hunt Kony.⁷⁵

In other developments, Sudanese rebels killed 11 Central African Republic soldiers in a cross border ambush that was aimed at stealing weapons and ammunition. CAR's army is part of a joint security operations team conducted with Sudan and Chad in the lawless border region.⁷⁶

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Reports say that November 2011 elections were flawed; Refugee influx in Ugandan camps

Election observers reported that the legislative elections of November last year lacks credibility and the integrity of the national assembly results were compromised.⁷⁷ European Union monitors too have voiced concern about the lack of reliability of the flawed polls.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, a UN report has brought to light 'serious human rights violations' during the elections. The investigating team allegedly has credible information of several victims buried in a mass grave by 'men in military uniform and others wearing white coats'.⁷⁹

According to reports, the influx of refugees from DRC who fled the post-election related violence and the continued militia activity in the eastern parts of the country is stretching the capacity of refugee camps in Uganda. The UNHCR reports at least 2,000 DRC refugees crossing into western Uganda since January.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ "Central African Republic woos Indian Investment", *Yahoo News*, March 19, 2012, at <http://in.news.yahoo.com/central-african-republic-woos-indian-investment-143627769.html>

⁷⁵ "Joseph Kony believed to be in Central African Republic, UN envoy says", *NationalPost .com*, March 23, 2012, at <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/03/23/joseph-kony-believed-to-be-in-central-african-republic-un-envoy-says/>

⁷⁶ "CAR blames Sudan rebels for cross-border ambush", *Reuters.com*, April 20, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/04/20/us-car-attack-sudan-idUSBRE83J12L20120420>

⁷⁷ "DR Congo legislative results lack credibility: Carter Centre", *StarAfrica.com*, February 24, 2012, at <http://www.starafrica.com/en/news/detail-news/view/dr-congo-legislative-results-lack-credib-219908.html>

⁷⁸ "EU says Congo election "not credible"", *The Guardian*, March 30, 2012, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/feedarticle/10170691>

⁷⁹ "'Serious violations' by DR Congo forces in vote period: UN", *AFP*, March 20, 2012, at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h57WxxkW_a1M1c6_wLkIzFB7x9kQ?docId=CNG.886eb52df8eb9735aee24d498123d774.2e1

⁸⁰ "Uganda: DRC refugee influx stretching camp facilities", *IRIN News*, February 27, 2012, at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/94966/photodetail.aspx?ImageId=201202271116390875>

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Equatorial Guinea closes border with Cameroon; France threatened of reprisal for arrest warrant issued against Obiang's son

Equatorial Guinea closed its border with Cameroon following clashes between traders and soldiers at the border village of Kye-Ossi. Guinea depends heavily on Cameroon for its supplies of goods and services.⁸¹

Meanwhile, the government warned French companies of the reprisal that they could face if Paris did not agree to cancel the arrest warrant for the son of President Teodoro Obiang Ngeuma. The French magistrates had earlier issued the warrant as part of an investigation into alleged corruption by African leaders including Obiang, Congo-Brazzaville's President Denis Sassou Nguesso and Omar Bongo, the late president of Gabon.⁸²

GABON

First ever state visit to Australia, countries to strengthen partnership

The Gabonese President Ali Bongo Ondimba's visit to Australia following a 4-day visit to South Korea marked the first ever state visit of a Gabonese President to the country. The main focus of the visit was to increase partnership between the two countries specifically in the area of capacity-building.⁸³

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Series of explosions in Brazzaville

In a series of munitions explosion in Brazzaville, 292 people were killed, 2,500 injured and about 14,000 displaced.⁸⁴ Following the incidents, four high-ranking army personnel were arrested. An army officer who serves on the country's national security council is also under investigation.⁸⁵

⁸¹ "Equatorial Guinea shuts border with Cameroon", *Africa Review*, March 29, 2012, at <http://www.africareview.com/News/Equatorial+Guinea+shuts+border+with+Cameroon/-/979180/1375870/-/e0nmhk/-/>

⁸² "Equatorial Guinea warns of reprisals for France after arrest warrant for President Obiang's son", *RFI English*, March 29, 2012, at <http://www.english.rfi.fr/africa/20120329-equatorial-guinea-warns-reprisals-after-arrest-warrant-president-obiangs-son>

⁸³ "Gabon: After South Korea, Gabon strengthens its ties with Australia", *AllAfrica*, March 29, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203301068.html>

⁸⁴ "Congo Brazzaville munitions explosion", *Afrique en ligne*, April 3, 2012, at <http://www.afriquejet.com/congo-brazzaville-munitions-explosion-2012040336241.html>

⁸⁵ "4 army officers arrested after Congo blasts", *The Washington Times*, April 11, 2012, at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/apr/11/briefly-four-congo-army-officers-arrested-after-bl/?page=all>

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

Sao Tome recognizes Kosovo; World Bank donates US\$ 4.2 million

Sao Tome and Principe became the 89th country to recognise Kosovo.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the World Bank through the International Financial Association provided Sao Tome and Principe with US\$ 4.2 million as direct budgetary aid. In 2013 and 2014, the country would receive the same amount of donation.⁸⁷

WESTERN AFRICA

West African police chiefs recommend operations against transnational crime; ECOWAS chiefs of defence meet on sub regional security

West African police chiefs met in the first of two preparatory meetings ahead of the West Africa Police Chiefs Committee (WAPCCO) General Assembly to be held in June 2012, and recommended various police operations against transnational crimes including drug and human trafficking, and illegal circulation of small and light weapons. According to recommendations, seven countries - Togo, Benin, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso - will participate in pilot operations. The meeting also urged ECOWAS member states to intensify efforts to inform national stakeholders on law enforcement based on INTERPOL tools and ECOWAS legal instruments on security.⁸⁸

A meeting of chiefs of defence of ECOWAS member states met in the last week of February to fine-tune an overall plan to meet new challenges to security and stability in the West African region. The meeting focused on the Boko Haram threat in Nigeria, the Tuareg rebellion in the north of Mali, and destabilisation in the Gulf of Guinea region. The new ECOWAS Chairman, President Alassane Ouattara has made sub regional security a priority of his mandate.⁸⁹

COTE D'IVOIRE

Ivorian president expects "friendly and cooperative" ties with North Korea

President Alassane Ouattara welcomed the new North Korean ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire, Jong Hak Se, on his appointment, and congratulated Kim Jong-un on his election to the top post of the Korean Workers' Party. Ouattara expressed expectation that the friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries would grow stronger.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ "Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe is 89th country to recognize Kosovo", *Focus News*, March 17, 2012, at <http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n273504>

⁸⁷ "World Bank provides Sao Tome and Principe with US \$4.2 million", *Macauhub.com*, April 11, 2012, at <http://www.mcauhub.com.mo/en/2012/04/11/world-bank-provides-sao-tome-and-principe-with-us4-2-million/>

⁸⁸ "West African police to launch pilot operations against transnational crime", *Daily Trust* website, Abuja, March 27, 2012

⁸⁹ "West African ECOWAS military chiefs fine-tune security plan for subregion", *Le Patriote* website, Abidjan, February 27, 2012

⁹⁰ "Ivorian president upbeat on friendly ties with North Korea", *KCNA website*, Pyongyang, April 23, 2012

GHANA

Ghana to shut down diplomatic mission in Serbia over Kosovo recognition; Turkey-Ghana trade to grow; China seeks stronger trade ties with West African countries

A diplomatic row has ensued between Serbia and Ghana following Kosovo's recognition by Ghana. Serbia tried to pressure Accra to reverse the decision following which it expelled Ghana's ambassador. In response, Ghana will be closing its diplomatic mission in Belgrade. The Ghanaian foreign minister said that long years of cordial relations between the two countries had been damaged by the issue.⁹¹

A meeting of the Turkey-Ghana Business Council held in Istanbul in March has indicated that Turkey and Ghana could aim to reach US\$ 1.5 billion in trade volume by 2014. Ghana is seen as a new destination for investments and an important market for Turkish businesses.⁹²

Meanwhile, the second China-ECOWAS Economic and Trade Forum opened in Accra on March 20; the Ghanaian vice president in his address said that the forum should strive to promote integration through sustainable economic growth and strategic partnership with China. The forum provides a framework for regular consultations to promote direct investment and trade between ECOWAS member states and China. Ghana and China have signed agreements sanctioning loans of US\$ 3 billion from the China Development Bank to support infrastructure development in Ghana. Ghana has called on the private sector in West African countries to advance business-to-business relations with their Chinese counterparts.⁹³

GUINEA-BISSAU

Military coup in Guinea-Bissau, interim president and premier detained, then released; Military alleges "secret" deal between Bissau government and Angola; Angolan troops to withdraw; ECOWAS to deploy troops to secure country to constitutional order

Days before the launch of the second round of presidential elections in Guinea-Bissau, soldiers attacked the residences of the acting president, Raimundo Pereira and Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Jr. and detained them at an army barracks.⁹⁴

The Guinea-Bissau army later claimed that it had staged the coup because of an alleged secret military deal signed by the government with Angola.⁹⁵ Angolan troops have been in Guinea-Bissau since March 2011 to help reform the country's armed forces as part of a bilateral military agreement. The troops remain in the country though their mission had recently ended. A communiqué from an unidentified military commander in Bissau stated that "The Military Command does not want power but it was forced to act in this way to defend itself from the diplomatic maneuvers of the Guinea-Bissau government, which aims to annihilate the (country's)

⁹¹ "Ghana to close down diplomatic mission in Serbia over Kosovo recognition", *Blic website*, Belgrade, March 1, 2012

⁹² "Turkey, Ghana aim to reach trade volume of 1.5bn dollars", *Anatolia news agency*, Ankara, March 14, 2012

⁹³ "China seeks strengthening trade ties with West African countries", *Xinhua news agency*, Beijing, March 20, 2012

⁹⁴ "Guinea-Bissau army holding acting president, fate of premier unclear", *RTP Africa TV*, Lisbon, April 13, 2012

⁹⁵ "Angola denies troops role in Bissau coup", *news24*, April 26, 2012, at <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Angola-denies-troops-role-in-Bissau-coup-20120426>

armed forces using foreign military force"; it also claimed that it was in possession of a "secret document" of the Guinea-Bissau government that legitimises intervention by the Angolan Armed Forces in Guinea-Bissau through an AU Peace and Security Council mandate.⁹⁶ Angola has denied that its troops had any role in the coup and has agreed to recall its approximately 600 troops from Guinea-Bissau.

The AU Commission chairperson, Jean Ping, strongly condemned the attacks and stressed that the AU will not accept any unconstitutional seizure of power or attempt at undermining the democratic process in Guinea-Bissau.⁹⁷ The ECOWAS Speaker of Parliament described the military coup as "an affront on democratic governance".

Following an ECOWAS announcement to deploy a force in Guinea-Bissau to secure return to civilian rule and threats of targeted sanctions against soldiers who blocked the process, the interim president and premier were released on April 27. The soldiers have accepted the deployment of ECOWAS soldiers to the country.⁹⁸

Guinea-Bissau's president died in January this year of ill-health leaving Pereira as interim president of the coup-prone nation. The country has also been destabilised by growing drug trade with traffickers using it as a transit hub for Latin American cocaine mostly headed for Europe.

LIBERIA

China to provide technical assistance to Liberia

Liberia has signed a US\$ 1.4 million agreement with China to provide technical assistance to the state-run Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS). The assistance will not be limited to LBS alone but will also expand China's cooperation with Liberia in its reconstruction efforts. The Chinese ambassador to Liberia noted the importance of this project since "the media has become more important in all societies and deserved to be provided with such equipment and technical assistance".⁹⁹

MALI

Malian President blames Tuareg rebellion on AQIM, Libyan crisis; Malian soldiers storm presidential palace, seize power in Bamako; MNLA captures key northern towns, declares independent state of Azawad; ECOWAS brokers peace deal, coup leaders to hand over power to interim president; Seven Algerian diplomats kidnapped by AQIM-linked group

Following heightened activity by the Tuareg rebels in the northern regions of Mali, former Malian President Amadou Toumani Toure, in an interview in the last week of February,¹⁰⁰ blamed al-

⁹⁶ "Guinea-Bissau Soldiers Attack Capital", *TIME*, April 13, 2012, at <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2111917,00.html>; "Guinea-Bissau military reveals reasons for uprising, censures Angola", *RDP Africa website, Lisbon*, April 13, 2012

⁹⁷ "AU condemns Guinea Bissau's coup", *ENA website, Addis Ababa*, April 13, 2012

⁹⁸ "Guinea-Bissau President, ex-PM freed by soldiers", *ZEENews*, April 28, 2012, at http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/guinea-bissau-president-ex-pm-freed-by-soldiers_772149.html

⁹⁹ "China offers technical assistance to Liberia", *Xinhua news agency*, Beijing, March 20, 2012

¹⁰⁰ "Malian president blames Tuareg rebellion on Al-Qa'idah, Libyan crisis", *Radio France Internationale*, Paris, February 26, 2012

Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and the presence of “mercenaries” who arrived from Libya following the crisis there, for the Tuareg rebellion in northern Mali that escalated beginning January 17 this year. He indicated that the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) had been a “peaceful and apolitical” organisation until the arrival of arms from Libya. He also denied that the military had been involved in drug trafficking in the Sahel region and pointed to the Tuareg rebels as being perpetrators of this. Toure rejected reports that the rebels were approaching the capital but admitted that equipment and reinforcements sent to the Malian army in the north had not reached them. He blamed the international community for not reacting sufficiently to the threat of the AQIM in Mali and its neighbouring regions.

As the government tried to counter the advance of the Tuareg rebels, by the second week of March, an Islamist group, Ancar Dine, led by a Tuareg rebel that is also fighting for autonomy in northern Mali, called for application of Sharia law in northern Mali by armed struggle.¹⁰¹ The group is thought to have links with the AQIM.

Amidst the violence in the north, on March 22, reports emerged that Malian soldiers had seized power by force in Bamako, after storming the presidential palace and detaining government officials. Sources stated that the soldiers were demanding more means to fight the Tuareg rebellion.¹⁰² The mutineers called themselves the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Democracy and Restoration of the State (CNRDR), led by Captain Amadou Sanogo. In the wake of the coup, Toure was said to be under the protection of the elite presidential guard forces. (Toure was allowed to leave Mali for Senegal on April 19).¹⁰³ Initial reports indicated that the coup was received with some indifference by the public, resulting from Mali’s economic situation and the government’s perceived mishandling of the Tuareg situation in the north. Young army officers were reported to be abandoning their posts in the north and moving to the south to support the coup in Bamako.¹⁰⁴ Reports indicated a split within the armed forces between those supporting the coup and opposing it, and discontent among ordinary soldiers sent to the north while officers remained in the safety of the capital. Humanitarian agencies within the country reported one to three deaths among the military, with 28 people including civilians injured, apparently during clashes between supporters of the coup and those opposing it.¹⁰⁵

The UN Security Council, ECOWAS, the EU, neighbouring countries and other members of the international community condemned the coup and called for immediate restoration of constitutional law.¹⁰⁶

A special ECOWAS summit was held on March 27 that denounced the coup d’état and called for immediate restoration of constitutional order. It also launched an ultimatum of April 2 to the CNRDR to restore constitutional order or face political, diplomatic and financial sanctions, and

¹⁰¹ “Tuareg Islamist group says to apply Shari’ah law in parts of Mali it holds”, *Liberte*, Algiers, March 21, 2012

¹⁰² “Mali soldiers take control of state-media - report”, *Xinhua news agency*, Beijing, 21 March, 2012

¹⁰³ “Malian junta allows ex-leader to leave for Senegal, frees officials”, *Misna news agency website*, Rome, April 20, 2012

¹⁰⁴ “Former Malian president reportedly in “a safe place””, *Africa No 1 radio*, Libreville, March 22, 2012

¹⁰⁵ “Malian army divided”, *Misna news agency website*, Rome, March 23, 2012; “Regional body ECOWAS slaps political, diplomatic sanctions on Malian junta”, *Africa No 1 radio*, Libreville, March 30, 2012

¹⁰⁶ “UN Security Council slams mutiny in Mali, demands release of detained officials”, *Xinhua news agency*, Beijing, March 22, 2012

closure of seaports and common borders with neighbouring countries for all but humanitarian goods.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, the MNLA had seized Kidal, a key town in the north and were advancing rapidly to capture areas from where Malian troops had withdrawn following the coup, taking advantage of the chaos following the coup in Bamako. An offer by Mali's coup leader Amadou Sanogo to negotiate with the Tuareg rebels to end fighting in the north was rejected by the MNLA; the MNLA stated it would be prepared for peace talks only on condition that the self-determination of the people of Azawad is recognised.¹⁰⁸ The MNLA sees the three regions of Timbukta, Gao, and Kidal as comprising the independent state of Azawad. By April 1, the rebels were reported to have captured Timbuktu, hours after taking over the garrison town of Gao. Al-Jazeera quoted a MNLA spokesman as stating that the rebels had no intention to advance south towards Bamako, but would instead begin political processes and institution building in Azawad.¹⁰⁹ Some reports suggested the Ancar Dine group fighting for control of Kidal, Gao, and Timbuktu from the MNLA; the MNLA has denied that any other groups control these regions.¹¹⁰ An offshoot of the AQIM called the Movement for Unity and Jihad was also reported to be operating alongside the MNLA in the northern region of Gao.¹¹¹ The group has claimed the kidnapping of seven Algerian diplomats from the Algerian consul in Gao on April 5; latest reports suggest the group is willing to release them.¹¹²

The MNLA declared "the independence of Azawad" on April 6 with Gao as their capital city; the declaration was dismissed by the AU, Algeria, Morocco, and France.¹¹³ Azawad sources are reported to have said that a transitional national council would be formed to lead the Azawad state until a parliamentary constituent assembly is formed.¹¹⁴ The ECOWAS denounced the declaration, calling it "null and void", and stated it would take all necessary measures to ensure the territorial integrity of Mali.¹¹⁵

Following talks between the ECOWAS and coup leaders in Bamako, an agreement was brokered on April 6 in which the Malian President and the coup leaders would step down.¹¹⁶ President

¹⁰⁷ "ECOWAS to impose diplomatic, financial sanctions on Mali following coup", *This Day website*, Lagos, April 1, 2012

¹⁰⁸ "Tuareg rebel spokesman rejects Malian coup leader's talks offer", *Al-Jazeera TV*, Doha, March 27, 2012

¹⁰⁹ "Tuareg begin state-building process in northern Mali - Al-Jazeera", *Al-Jazeera TV*, Doha, April 1, 2012

¹¹⁰ "Tuaregs tighten grip on northern Mali, to declare independence soon - Al-Jazeera", *Al-Jazeera TV*, Doha, April 2, 2012

¹¹¹ "Malian junta says rebels have committed "grave" rights violations - Al-Jazeera", *Al-Jazeera TV*, Doha, April 4, 2012

¹¹² "Mali kidnappers say willing to free Algerian diplomats", *AFP*, April 24, 2012, at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j5-4PuADjCoYE4VapM41nC3TckmA?docId=CNG.82f99a6e478d920f9407dc666cba263e.7e1>

¹¹³ "Algerian diplomats kidnapped in northern Mali released", *Al-Arabiya News*, April 8, 2012, at <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/04/08/206338.html>

¹¹⁴ "Malian official urges Algeria, Mauritania to intervene in north", *Echourouk El Youmi website*, Algiers, April 16, 2012

¹¹⁵ "West African regional body pledges to ensure Mali's "territorial integrity"", *This Day website*, Lagos, April 7, 2012

¹¹⁶ "Mali coup leaders agree on ECOWAS deal to stand down", *Aljazeera.net website*, Doha, April 6, 2012

Toure officially resigned on April 8 and according to the handover deal, the military government handed over power to Parliament Speaker Diounounda Traore. The deal also included lifting of ECOWAS sanctions and amnesty for those who involved in the coup. The transitional president, Traore, is tasked with organising elections and returning Mali to constitutional rule, in addition to handling the crisis in northern Mali.¹¹⁷ The agreement framework also stated that if elections were not possible within 40 days as required by the constitution, due to the situation in the north, a transition structure would be created in the interim. Traore has vowed to wage war to reclaim the country's territory and secularism, though he hoped that the MNLA and other Islamist groups in the north would leave peacefully.¹¹⁸

Around 1,000 Malian soldiers have fled to neighbouring Niger and are now residing in a refugee camp on the border.¹¹⁹ In northern regions, it is reported that Malians are facing abuses, with extremists levying severe punishments in their bid to impose Sharia law.¹²⁰ There are also reports of mass looting and shortage of food and water.

Once seen as one of the most stable democracies in West Africa, Mali now faces a re-energised rebellion in its northern region. Malian officials are not ruling out intervention by foreign military forces to fight terrorism in these regions.

MAURITANIA

Mauritania sends military reinforcements to Mali border

Mauritania sent military reinforcements to its eastern border with Mali following the military coup there, to fortify border security. Mauritanian government officials have been reported to be concerned over the growing influence of al-Qaeda and armed rebels in northern Mali.¹²¹

NIGERIA

Protests against Boko Haram as attacks continue; Nigeria safe for local, foreign investors, says President Goodluck Jonathan; Germany, Italy, UK pledge support, offer assistance in fight against terrorism; Nigeria-India trade to hit US\$ 19 billion; Poverty, unemployment heightens security situation

As Boko Haram continued its attacks against schools, with gunmen setting fire to at least five schools in the first week of March,¹²² members of an inter-religious group held protests to condemn the violence. Christian and Muslim leaders denounced the continuing violence in the name of

¹¹⁷ "Ousted Malian leader officially resigns ahead of power transfer", *Aljazeera.net* website, Doha, April 8, 2012

¹¹⁸ "Mali's Interim President Takes Oath of Office", *VOA News*, April 12, 2012, at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Malis-Interim-President-Sworn-Into-Office-147129275.html>

¹¹⁹ "Fleeing Malian soldiers seek refuge in neighbouring Niger", *Radio France Internationale*, Paris, April 6, 2012

¹²⁰ "Mali's Interim President Takes Oath of Office", *VOA News*, April 12, 2012, at <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Malis-Interim-President-Sworn-Into-Office-147129275.html>

¹²¹ "Mauritania sends military reinforcements to border with Mali - agency", *Al-Akhbar* website, April 5, 2012

¹²² "Nigeria: Five schools set on fire by suspected Boko Haram members in Borno State", *Daily Trust website*, Abuja, March 2, 2012

religion, expressed unity and encouraged peaceful co-existence in the country.¹²³ The Nigerian police chief has noted an improvement in the security situation in the country and has pledged to liaise with the public, civil society groups and other key stakeholders to formulate more effective policing policies.¹²⁴ Meanwhile, the Nigerian army chief has said that more measures need to be taken to tighten Nigeria's porous borders in order to check the security threats posed by Boko Haram.¹²⁵

The Nigerian Chief of Defence Staff has said that more than 1,200 people have been killed so far in Boko Haram attacks, noting that security forces have gained more intelligence from the frequent arrests of Boko Haram members. He said the Boko Haram's days were numbered as security forces are decimating their network.¹²⁶ Attempts by the Nigerian government to negotiate with the Boko Haram fell through in the last week of March with a Boko Haram spokesman calling the government "insincere".¹²⁷

Separately, President Goodluck Jonathan has stated that only a section of Nigeria has been affected by Boko Haram's attacks and insisted that Nigeria is safe for both local and foreign investors to do business. Jonathan was speaking at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit in South Korea.¹²⁸

On a state visit to Germany in the third week of April, Jonathan appealed to the German government to assist in tackling the Boko Haram threat through deployment of German technology to track down the group's network. German Chancellor Angela Merkel stressed Germany's resolve to work with the Nigerian government to bring the situation under control. The Italian government has also offered to provide security services to Nigeria to address the Boko Haram issue; Italy has said it wants to strengthen bilateral ties to help Nigeria tackle terrorism, human trafficking and poverty.¹²⁹ The British government is set to increase the £30 million budget earmarked for a programme to improve security in Nigeria, to £50 million within its five year duration. The programme is intended to facilitate changes in law enforcement and the judiciary and includes assisting the Nigeria Police Force to be more accountable to the public and enable community policing by creating model police stations.¹³⁰

Bilateral trade between Nigeria and India was projected to hit US\$ 19 billion at the end of the 2010-2011 financial year. India, with an investment of US\$ 5 million, was the largest investor in Nigeria in 2010. These figures were noted at the opening of the Second India-Africa Academic

¹²³ "Nigeria: Muslims, Christians in Rivers State hold protest against Boko Haram", *Daily Trust website*, Abuja, March 2, 2012

¹²⁴ "Nigerian police chief notes "tremendous improvement" in security situation", *Vanguard website*, Lagos, March 2, 2012

¹²⁵ "Nigerian borders remain porous - army chief", *Daily Trust website*, Abuja, March 7, 2012

¹²⁶ "Chief of defense staff says Boko Haram killed 1,200 people in Nigeria", *Vanguard website*, Lagos, March 10, 2012

¹²⁷ "Nigeria: Boko Haram withdraws from talks with government", *Radio France Internationale*, Paris, March 21, 2012

¹²⁸ "Nigerian president says country Safe for investors despite attacks by Boko Haram", *The Guardian website*, Lagos, March 27, 2012

¹²⁹ "Nigerian leader seeks Germany's help in tackling militant group", *Vanguard website*, Lagos, April 20, 2012

¹³⁰ "UK government to provide funds to improve security in Nigeria", *Daily Trust website*, Abuja, April 16, 2012

Conference organised by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and the Indian Council on World Affairs (ICWA). Both institutions called for increased interaction between research institutions in both countries in order to facilitate exchange of ideas and inputs, and promote better mutual relations between the two countries. The Nigerian foreign minister added that India, with its rich credentials as a democracy must move beyond its “pro-sovereignty, anti-interventionist approach to international politics to become proactive” in its support for democratic consolidation in Africa. He also asked that India assist in tackling and redefining the unequal global power balance.¹³¹

Nigeria has signed an economic cooperation agreement with Iran. The signing took place at the closing of Fourth Joint Economic Commission between the two countries held in Tehran on April 17. Nigeria-Iran bilateral trade amounts to US\$ 50 million. The agreement aims to boost bilateral relations in all economic fields.¹³²

The opposition Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) has expressed concern over rising poverty in the country. According to Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the percentage of Nigerians living in poverty was estimated to be around 60 per cent in 2010,¹³³ while a 2011 news report notes that 70 per cent of Nigeria’s population lives below the poverty line.¹³⁴ The ACN statement also noted that poverty levels were the highest in the northwest and northeast of the country that have been worst hit by Boko Haram activities, revealing the correlation between poverty and social disorder. High poverty rates have likely provided a fertile recruiting ground for the Boko Haram. The Nigerian labour minister has also pointed to the high unemployment figures in the country. The NBS has placed unemployment rate at 23.9 per cent, with 21 per cent unemployment among the youth population. He indicated that the lack of jobs has meant that young job seekers turn to part-time or temporary jobs as assassins, kidnappers or thugs to earn a living. A senior military official has also stated that the wave of insecurity in Nigeria could be partially attributed to the lack of job security.¹³⁵

SENEGAL

Senegal polls show “high political maturity”, says Iran minister

Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, has wished success to the newly elected president Macky Sall. He said that the presidential election indicated the high degree of political maturity of Senegal and the growing trend towards more development and democracy.¹³⁶

¹³¹ “Nigeria, India’s bilateral trade volume projected to hit 19bn-dollar mark”, *The Guardian website*, Lagos, March 14, 2012; Also see “India, Nigeria trade set to touch \$12 b in FY’11”, *The Hindu Business Line*, March 16, 2012, at <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article1543370.ece>

¹³² “Iran, Nigeria sign economic cooperation agreement”, *Islamic Republic News Agency website*, Tehran, April 17, 2012

¹³³ “Opposition ACN raises concern over worsening poverty in Nigeria”, *The Guardian website*, Lagos, March 8, 2012

¹³⁴ “Nigeria’s Poverty Ratio Rises to 70% of Population, Trust Says”, *Bloomberg News*, January 18, 2011, at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-01-18/nigeria-s-poverty-ratio-rises-to-70-of-population-trust-says.html>

¹³⁵ “Nigerian labour minister says unemployment fuelling insecurity in country”, *The Guardian website*, Lagos, March 8, 2012

¹³⁶ “Polls in Senegal show “high political maturity” - Iran deputy foreign minister”, *Islamic Republic News Agency website*, Tehran, March 27, 2012

EASTERN AFRICA

BURUNDI

Deepening corruption crisis; Rwanda-Burundi illegal routes to be closed

Despite the establishment of anti-corruption agencies, Burundi is facing a deepening corruption crisis that threatens to jeopardise a peace that is based on development and economic growth bolstered by the state and driven by foreign investment.¹³⁷

Bugesera district mayor Louis Rwagaju asserts that short cuts have been closed because some criminals had started entering the country with drugs, alcohol and illegal business. Rwagaju asserts that the decision was taken by officials of both Rwanda and Burundi.¹³⁸

COMOROS

Comoran island Mayotte is now a French department; Minister seizes newspaper's supplement, suspends editor

Despite strong protests from the government of Comoros, the island of Mayotte has officially become the 101st department of France, or an integral part of the French territory. Mayotte is a part of the Comoran archipelago in the Indian Ocean, with Comoran language and culture being the dominant on the island. But as Comoros gained independence from France in 1996, the population of Mayotte voted in favour of staying a French colony. Since then, Comoros has slipped from one political crisis to another, also plagued by weak economic development.¹³⁹

Reporters Without Borders is dismayed by Comorian Interior Minister Hamada Abdallah's decision to withdraw the state daily *Al Watan's* latest monthly supplement from distribution and to issue a decree suspending its managing editor, **Pétan Mouignihazi**. The supplement had a special report on corruption and waste in the state sector.¹⁴⁰

DJIBOUTI

Djibouti, US and French Navies Share Best Maritime Practices

Sailors from three nations assembled at the Djibouti National Navy Headquarters, February 27 through 29, to discuss best practices for ensuring the sovereignty of the seas around the Horn of

¹³⁷ "Burundi: A Deepening Corruption Crisis", *International Crisis Group*, March 21, 2012, at <http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/burundi/185-burundi-la-crise-de-corruption.aspx>

¹³⁸ "Rwanda-Burundi Illegal Routes to Be Closed", *News of Rwanda*, April 19, 2012, at <http://newsforwanda.com/ibikorwa/6617/rwanda-burundi-illegal-routes-closed/>

¹³⁹ "Comoran Island Mayotte is now a French Department", *Afrol News*, March 3, 2012, at <http://www.afrol.com/articles/37509>

¹⁴⁰ "Minister seizes newspaper's supplement, suspends editor", *Reporters without Borders*, April 11, 2012, at <http://en.rsf.org/comores-minister-seizes-newspaper-s-11-04-2012,42297.html>

Africa. This was the first time the Djiboutian Navy coordinated and executed an event of this type together with the American and French navies. In this exchange, the three navies shared best practices on building support operations and raising maritime domain awareness.¹⁴¹

ERITREA

Provocative attacks by the TPLF regime

As reported, with much bravado, by the news media of the TPLF regime, its armed forces “penetrated 18 km inside sovereign Eritrean territory to carry out an attack on Eritrean army outposts”. This is not surprising, nor is it occurring for the first time. However, it amplifies the extraordinary situation where the culprit “strikes but cries first” while all along pleading with its protectors to “disarm the victim”.¹⁴²

ETHIOPIA

India assisting Ethiopia’s human resource development; IMF says Ethiopia will join list of middle income countries soon; Ethiopian defence force successfully destroys Eritrea’s mercenary camps; Ethiopia condemns Italy’s irresponsible position on Eritrea’s disruptive activities in Horn; 36-member Chinese delegation arrives in Addis; Meles: Ethiopia desirous to further strengthen relations with Sudan; Meles Zenawi says Ethiopian troops will soon withdraw from Somalia

India is providing significant support in capacitating the human capital of Ethiopia, as it has been key to the success of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), the Ministry of Education said. Ethiopia has prioritised science and technology, business and economics as instruments of development.¹⁴³

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Ethiopia will join the list of middle income countries if its rapid growth further continues and strengthens within a short period. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi here on Saturday discussed with IMF Deputy Managing Director Naoyuki Shinohara. Shinohara lauded Ethiopia for implementation of its Growth and Transformation Plan and reiterated the commitment of the IMF to work with Ethiopia.¹⁴⁴

The Ethiopian Defence Force announced Thursday that it has destroyed Eritrea’s three mercenary camps. It successfully annihilated the ‘destructive force’ of the Eritrean government based in Ramid, Gelahben and Gembe areas which are close to the Ethiopian border.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ “U.S. and French Navies Share Best Maritime Practices”, *AllAfrica*, March 8, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203080319.html>

¹⁴² “Provocative Attacks by the TPLF Regime”, *Shabait.com*, March 16, 2012, at <http://www.shabait.com/news/local-news/8805-provocative-attacks-by-the-tplf-regime>

¹⁴³ “India assisting Ethiopia’s human resource dev’t: Ministry”, *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 2, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/02Mar12/161050.htm>

¹⁴⁴ “IMF says Ethiopia will join list of middle income countries soon”, *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 3, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/03Mar12/161168.htm>

¹⁴⁵ “Ethiopian defense force successfully destroys Eritrea’s mercenary camps”, *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 15, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/15Mar12/161907.htm>

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that despite glaring facts, Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued a totally biased and ill-formed statement on March 19, 2012. The Ministry said Eritrea's destabilisation activities throughout the Horn of Africa sub-region have long been condemned by the international community.¹⁴⁶

A 36-member Chongqing Provincial delegation of China arrived here on a visit to Ethiopia. In a press statement sent to ENA, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the members of the delegation led by Wu Jianong, Chongqing Provincial Administration Consultative Committee Deputy Chairman were received upon arrival at the Bole International Airport by Ethiopian Consulate General in Chongqing Girma Temesgen.¹⁴⁷

Prime Minister Meles Zenawi expressed Ethiopia's desire to further strengthen existing relations with Sudan in all aspects including in people-to-people relations. While holding talks with a delegation led by the Minister of Interior Affairs of Sudan, Ebrahim Mohammed Hamid here, Meles said Ethiopia is keen to enhance friendship with neighbouring Sudan to further intensify people-to-people ties.¹⁴⁸

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi stated for the second time this year that his troops would leave Somalia shortly.¹⁴⁹

KENYA

Oil found in Turkana; Uganda police take control of Migingo fishing; Sudanese influx strains Kakuma refugee camp; MPs drag feet over Africa treaty on fair elections; Collymore appointed to sit on key UN Board; Kenya firms most heavily taxed in region

Oil has been discovered in Turkana North District by British company Tullow Oil in the first well it has drilled in Kenya. The oil deposits were found in Ngamia-1 exploration well block 10BB, located in a remote area off the road to Lokichar shopping centre.¹⁵⁰

Ugandan police have invaded Migingo and arrested six fishermen, the island's caretaker group has reported. The Migingo Beach Management Unit yesterday said the Ugandans have further barred Kenyans from fishing in the island. The Ugandan police have brought in their countrymen to fish on the Kenyan side of Lake Victoria, the unit's chairman, Juma Ombori, said.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁶ "Ethiopia condemns Italy's irresponsible position on Eritrea's disruptive activities in Horn: Ministry", *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 21, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/22Mar12/162313.htm>

¹⁴⁷ "36-Member Chinese Delegation Arrives in Addis", *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 27, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/28Mar12/162658.htm>

¹⁴⁸ "Meles: Ethiopia desirous to further strengthen relation with Sudan", *Ethiopian News Agency*, March 31, 2012, at <http://www.ena.gov.et/EnglishNews/2012/Mar/31Mar12/162941.htm>

¹⁴⁹ "Meles Zenawi says Ethiopian troops will soon withdraw from Somalia", *Garowe Online*, April 18, 2012, at http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Meles_Zenawi_says_Ethiopian_troops_will_soon_withdraw_from_Somalia.shtml

¹⁵⁰ "Oil Found in Turkana", *The Star*, March 26, 2012, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/national/national/68603-oil-found-in-turkana>

¹⁵¹ "Uganda Police Take Control of Migingo Fishing", *All Africa*, April 01, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204030068.html>

Over the past few weeks refugees fleeing violence in parts of Sudan and South Sudan have been arriving in Kakuma refugee camp in northwestern Kenya in large numbers, and aid agencies fear the camp's capacity could soon be exceeded. Kakuma was initially designed to accommodate 100,000 people, and currently accommodates some 91,000, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).¹⁵²

Kenya is unable to make use of an important charter on free and fair elections because MPs have not passed a law guiding the new process of approving treaties. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance was approved by the government in 2007 before the new constitution was passed in 2010. In the old constitution, the executive arm of the government would sign and ratify a treaty on its own without parliamentary approval. But under the new constitution, only Parliament can ratify treaties. This means the treaty cannot be effective until it meets the requirements of the new constitution.¹⁵³

Safaricom CEO, Bob Collymore, has been appointed as an honorary board member to the United Nations Global Compact Board. The body is a voluntary UN initiative that encourages businesses globally to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies.¹⁵⁴

Kenya has been singled out as the most heavily taxed country in the East African Community (EAC) partner states. According to a joint report by the World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) availed to East African Business Week in Dar es Salaam, five countries of the EAC implemented a combined 10 regulatory reforms across nine areas.¹⁵⁵

MALAWI

Prisoner transfer agreement with Mozambique; US suspends aid to Malawi over governance and receiving Sudanese president; US warns government not to host Sudan's Bashir at AU summit; Malawi president Bingu wa Mutharika 'dies'; Mrs Joyce Banda appointed to the highest office: Constitutional democracy triumphs in Malawi

Mozambique and Malawi have reached an agreement on the transfer of sentenced prisoners, whereby any Mozambican sentenced to a jail sentence by a Malawian court can serve it in a Mozambican jail. Likewise, Malawians sentenced in Mozambique can serve their time in Malawian prisons.¹⁵⁶

The United States announced that it is suspending US\$ 350 million allocated to Malawi through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) citing deteriorating human rights in the country.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² "Sudanese Influx Strains Kakuma Refugee Camp", *IRIN*, April 05, 2012, at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/95242/KENYA-Sudanese-influx-strains-Kakuma-refugee-camp>

¹⁵³ "MPs drag feet over Africa treaty on fair elections", *The Star*, April 06, 2012, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/national/national/70324-mps-drag-feet-over-africa-treaty-on-fair-elections>

¹⁵⁴ "Collymore Appointed to Sit on Key UN Board", *The Star*, April 19, 2012, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/business/local/72225-collymore-appointed-to-a-un-board>

¹⁵⁵ "Kenya Firms Most Heavily Taxed in Region", *AllAfrica*, April 22, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204231324.html>

¹⁵⁶ "Prisoner Transfer Agreement With Malawi", *AllAfrica*, March 20, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203201309.html>

¹⁵⁷ "US suspends aid to Malawi over governance and receiving Sudanese president", *Sudan Tribune*, March 23, 2012, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/U-S-suspends-aid-to-Malawi-over,42015>

The United States told Malawi that the hold on hundreds of millions of dollars in aid may remain in place if it decides to allow Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir to attend the African Union summit in June 2013.¹⁵⁸

President Bingu wa Mutharika who suffered a cardiac arrest Thursday morning is reportedly dead. Former head of state Bakili Muluzi held a press conference at his residence urging the government to come out in the open about the president's condition while calling for Vice President Joyce Banda to assume leadership should President Mutharika be declared unfit to hold office.¹⁵⁹

The ascendance of Joyce Banda to the high office of President of Malawi, in line with the provisions of the central African nation's constitution, following the death of Mutharika, has renewed hope for a continent steadily breaking with past practices that have long cast it in poor light.¹⁶⁰

MAURITIUS

Mauritius and Seychelles sign 'groundbreaking' treaty to create world's largest offshore joint management area

At a ceremony held on March 12, 2012 as part of Mauritius' National Day celebrations, the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, and the President of Seychelles, James Michel, signed a historic treaty, to provide for the joint management of a vast area of seabed for the benefit of present and future generations.¹⁶¹

MOZAMBIQUE

Loan and grant agreements with France; ENI announces further gas discovery; Chinese grant for transfer of technology; Renamo threatens a bloodbath; Airline companies still banned from EU; First stone laid for new embassy in Brazil

The French government is to provide Mozambique with •40.9 million for water supply and health training projects.¹⁶²

The Italian energy company, ENI, has announced a further massive discovery of natural gas in the Rovuma Basin, off the coast of the northern province of Cabo Delgado. The results from this well, ENI says, increase the resource base of Area 4 by at least 10 trillion cubic feet of gas, bringing the total amount discovered by ENI from three wells in Area 4 to at least 40 trillion cubic feet.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ "U.S. Warns Gov't Not to Host Sudan's Bashir At AU Summit", *AllAfrica*, March 28, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203290345.html>

¹⁵⁹ "Malawi president Bingu wa Mutharika 'dies'", *The Herald Online*, March 6, 2012, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=38417:malawi-president-bingu-wa-mutharika-dies&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130

¹⁶⁰ "Constitutional Democracy Triumphs in Malawi", *Times of Zambia*, April 9, 2012, at <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=3897>

¹⁶¹ "Mauritius and Seychelles sign treaty to create world's largest offshore joint management area", *Commonwealth Secretariat*, March 13, 2012, at <http://www.thecommonwealth.org/news/245387/130312treaty.htm>

¹⁶² "Loan and Grant Agreements With France", *AllAfrica*, March 19, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201203191530.html>

¹⁶³ "ENI Announces further Large Gas Discovery", *Mozambique News Agency*, March 29, 2012, at <http://www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news/newsletter/aim442.html#story4>

China has made US\$ 2 million available for the third stage of the development of the Umbeluzi Research and Transfer of Agricultural Technologies Centre in Boane district in Maputo province.¹⁶⁴

Mozambique's main opposition party, the former rebel movement Renamo, has threatened that there will be a bloodbath in the northern city of Nampula if the police assault the residence of Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama, according to a report in the independent newsheet, "Mediafax".¹⁶⁵

The European Commission has maintained its ban forbidding all Mozambican airline companies from flying in European Union airspace despite the clean bill of health which the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) gave Mozambique last year.¹⁶⁶

Mozambican Prime Minister Aires Ali on Tuesday unveiled a plaque symbolising the start of work on building a new Mozambican embassy in Brasilia.¹⁶⁷

RWANDA

Indian varsity plans to open local campus; RDF deploys in South Sudan; Rwanda tops EAC in health spending; Rage as US court bails genocide suspect

One of India's oldest universities, Bangalore University, is exploring the option of establishing medical and traditional universities in Rwanda in collaboration with local education authorities, according to The Times of India.¹⁶⁸

The Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) will today begin to deploy in the new independent state of South Sudan as part of a newly created UN-backed stabilisation mission there.¹⁶⁹

According to the latest joint report by Society for International Development (SID) and Trade Mark East Africa, Rwanda leads the East African Community bloc in health expenditure with 48 followed by Uganda with 43. The region's economic power house, Kenya is third with 33 followed by Tanzania with 25 while Burundi trails with 20.¹⁷⁰

The government has expressed concern over the release on bail of genocide suspect Beatrice Munyenyezi, an act that is seen in Rwanda as the continuous reluctance by the West to bring to book genocide architects.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁴ "Chinese Grant for Transfer of Technology", *AllAfrica*, April 2, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204021370.html>

¹⁶⁵ "Renamo Threatens a Bloodbath", *AllAfrica*, April 4, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204040951.html>

¹⁶⁶ "Air Companies Still Banned From EU", *AllAfrica*, April 4, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204040964.html>

¹⁶⁷ "First Stone Laid for New Embassy in Brazil", *AllAfrica*, April 18, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204190237.html>

¹⁶⁸ "Indian Varsity Plans to Open Local Campus", *AllAfrica*, April 10, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204100043.html>

¹⁶⁹ "RDF deploys in South Sudan", *The New Times*, April 10, 2012, at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?a=52347&i=14959>

¹⁷⁰ "Rwanda tops EAC in health spending", *In2EastAfrica*, April 11, 2012, at <http://in2eastfrica.net/rwanda-tops-eac-in-health-spending/>

¹⁷¹ "Rage as US court bails Genocide suspect", *The Sunday Times*, April 15, 2012, at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=14963&a=11812>

SEYCHELLES

Accord opens new avenues of ties with Korea

Seychelles Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Maurice Loustau-Lalanne signed a memorandum of understanding with Tae-In Chung, the Deputy Director General of the South Korean Foreign Ministry's Africa and Middle Eastern Bureau, after day-long talks which will see follow-up discussions in June in Korea. Both the sides said that the agreement will open new avenues of cooperation and trade.¹⁷²

SOMALIA

Somali president, US extends emergency for Somalia; President Sharif outlines ministerial committee to hold talks with Somaliland; Somalia's presidential palace comes under mortar attack; Puntland state constitution adopted; Somali Islamists strike at departing Ethiopians, 3 killed; Turkish Foreign Minister pushes for talks with Al Shabaab; Puntland link compels Somaliland to abandon talks with TFG

US President Barack Obama said Tuesday the security situation in Somalia posed an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to the United States. Obama, in an executive order, declared that a national emergency with respect to Somalia was extended for another year.¹⁷³

Sheik Sharif Sheik Ahmed, the president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, formed a ministerial committee to hold talks with the Somaliland administration. The committee which consists of seven TFG ministers is chaired by the Minister of Interior and National Security Affairs, Abdisamad Mo'allin Mohamud.¹⁷⁴

Armed groups once again launched mortar rounds at Somalia's presidential palace in Mogadishu. Local residents near the palace told Shabelle Media by phone on condition of anonymity that they could hear mortars being fired on the night of April 14 at the heavily protected Somali presidential compound, the fourth attempt to strike at the heart of the government in a fortnight.¹⁷⁵

A four-day Puntland Constitutional Convention was held at the newly constructed parliament hall in its capital Garowe. The convention came to a close on April 18 with a finalised Puntland constitution, Radio Garowe reports. An overwhelming majority of 472 representatives voted to adopt the Puntland constitution.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² "Accord opens new avenues of ties with Korea", *Seychelles e News*, March 3, 2012, at http://www.seychellesweekly.com/March%202012/pol3_accord_opens.html

¹⁷³ "U.S. extends emergency for Somalia", *Shabelle News*, April 11, 2012, at <http://shabelle.net/2012/04/11/u-s-extends-emergency-for-somalia/>

¹⁷⁴ "Ministerial Committee to Hold Talks With Somaliland", *AllAfrica*, April 14, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201204160199.html>

¹⁷⁵ "Somalia's presidential palace came under mortar attack", *Shabelle News*, April 15, 2012, at <http://shabelle.net/2012/04/15/somalias-presidential-palace-came-under-mortar-attack/>

¹⁷⁶ "Somalia's presidential palace came under mortar attack; Puntland state constitution adopted", *Garowe Online*, April 18, 2012, at http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Puntland_state_constitution_adopted.shtml

Heavily armed militants from the Al Shabaab insurgent group ambushed, on April 19, an Ethiopian convoy alongside Ahlu Sunna fighters, a government-allied Sunni Islamist group that is in control of central Somalia, reports said. Locals said at least three Ethiopian soldiers were confirmed to have been killed in a landmine blast that ripped through an army convoy traveling on a road between Wabho and Daac, two small villages in the Galgadud region of central Somalia.¹⁷⁷

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said that Turkey has not given up on pushing for talks between the Al Shabaab and the TFG.¹⁷⁸

Authorities in Somalia's separatist region of Somaliland have abruptly pulled out of a proposed dialogue with the TFG after President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed included two Puntland ministers in the dialogue committee he appointed last week.¹⁷⁹

UGANDA

UN mounts pressure on LRA rebels; Muslims ask for protection law on veils; MPs angered by sh 245 billion World Bank loan request; What Term Limits Bill means for Museveni; Government bans acquisition of land titles in oil rich areas; Mitigating and eliminating the threat to civilians posed by the Lord's Resistance Army

The United Nations has intensified military patrols in the areas affected by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels in a bid to arrest leader Joseph Kony and his indicted commanders. The UN, through its peacekeeping missions in the region is working with the African Union (AU), UPDF, and the armies of DRC, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Sudan and several other agencies to mount pressure on the rebels who have committed various atrocities.¹⁸⁰

Muslims, in Uganda, have asked the government to enact a law that protects their right to wear veils both at work and in public institutions like schools. "We need a law to protect our sisters' right to wearing veils," Kassim Matovu, an official representing the Muslim Students' Association of Uganda said. He was speaking at the third annual Muslim sisters' conference organized by Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum (UMYDF) at Makerere University. The conference that was aimed at mentoring young women in control of challenges and identifying opportunities was attended by young Muslim women from the different universities across the country.¹⁸¹

Legislators, on April 18, refused to approve the ninth poverty reduction support credit loan request of sh 245 billion despite government threats that if not approved, the World Bank would cancel

¹⁷⁷ "Somali Islamists strike at departing Ethiopians, 3 killed", *Shabelle News*, April 19, 2012, at <http://shabelle.net/2012/04/19/somali-islamists-strike-at-departing-ethiopians-3-killed/>

¹⁷⁸ "Turkey foreign minister pushes for talks with Al Shabaab", *Garowe Online*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Turkey_foreign_minister_pushes_for_talks_with_Al_shabaab.shtml

¹⁷⁹ "Puntland link compels Somaliland to abandon talks with TFG", *Garowe Online*, April 21, 2012, at http://www.garoweonline.com/artman2/publish/Somalia_27/Somalia_Puntland_link_compels_Somaliland_to_abandon_talks_with_TFG.shtml

¹⁸⁰ "UN mounts pressure on LRA rebels", *New Vision*, April 12, 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/630289-un-mounts-pressure-on-lra-rebels.html>

¹⁸¹ "Muslims ask for protection law on veils", *New Vision*, April 13, 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/630310-Muslims-ask-for-protection-law-on-veils.html>

the offer. The legislators said they could not pass a loan that was not going to address priority issues that affect Ugandans.¹⁸²

Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi yesterday indicated that the ruling party was likely to fight a private members' bill seeking the restoration of term limits. But we understand that the fate of the bill may depend on how it deals with Museveni's stay in power.¹⁸³

The Ministry of Land Housing and Urban Development has put a moratorium on the issuance of land titles in the Albertine Graben oil exploration area until a physical planning process is completed to regulate land acquisition and use.¹⁸⁴

President Obama announced that the United States will continue the deployment of a small number of US military advisors to assist Uganda and other regional forces pursuing the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and seeking to protect local populations.¹⁸⁵

TANZANIA

Tanzania intensifies friendship with China; Nation set to host UNWTO convocation; Mexico ready to offer border security skills; Tanzania has largest number of staff at EAC

The Chinese government is cooperating with the Tanzania government in the drilling of wells in rural areas, so that more people have access to safe and clean drinking water. This promise was made by Chinese Ambassador to Tanzania, Mr Lu Youqing on March 20, when President Jakaya Kikwete officially launched the International Cooperative Year in Dar es Salaam.¹⁸⁶

Preparations are underway for Tanzania to host the First Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Tourism Management in National Parks and Protected Areas: Challenges and Opportunities, slated for October this year.¹⁸⁷

Tanzania can take a leaf from Mexico's experience in border protection and patrol where porous border areas have been a problem. Mexican Honorary Consul, Mohammed Reza Saboor said in Dar es Salaam on April 16, that the issue came up during a recent discussion with Tanzania's Chief of Defence Forces, Davis Mwamunyangi.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸² "MPs angered by sh 245 b World Bank loan request", *New Vision*, April 20, 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/630464-630464-mps-angered-by-sh245b-world-bank-loan-request.html>

¹⁸³ "What term limits bill means for Museveni", *The Observer*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18325:what-term-limits-bill-means-for-museveni&catid=78:topstories&Itemid=116

¹⁸⁴ "Gov't bans acquisition of land titles in oil rich areas", *New Vision*, April 20, 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/630466-630466-gov-t-bans-acquisition-of-land-titles-in-oil-rich-areas.html>

¹⁸⁵ "Mitigating and Eliminating the Threat to Civilians Posed by the Lord's Resistance Army", *The White House*, April 23, 2012, at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/04/23/fact-sheet-mitigating-and-eliminating-threat-civilians-posed-lord-s-resi>

¹⁸⁶ "Tanzania Intensifies Friendship With China", *Daily News*, March 23, 2012, at <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/features/popular-features/3223-tanzania-intensifies-friendship-with-china>

¹⁸⁷ "Nation Set to Host UNWTO Convocation", *Daily News*, March 24, 2012, at <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/3274-tanzania-set-to-host-unwto-convocation>

¹⁸⁸ "Mexico Ready to Offer Border Security Skills", *Daily News*, April 17, 2012, at <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/4170-mexico-ready-to-offer-border-security-skills>

Tanzania has the largest number of employees in the East African Community (EAC). Deputy Minister for East African Cooperation, Abdulla Juma Abdulla told the National Assembly that 65 per cent of all staff at the EAC Secretariat was Tanzanians. He said there were 35 Tanzanians who hold senior positions.¹⁸⁹

ZAMBIA

MCC Board approves Zambia Compact, suspends Compact with Malawi; Zambia, Namibia agree to fight cross-border crime; Sata back from India; Indian Investors to set up ICT institutions; World's largest transfrontier park becomes reality

The US Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Board of Directors, chaired by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, held its quarterly meeting yesterday. During the meeting the Board approved a new compact with Zambia, authorized Threshold Program assistance of US\$ 2 million for Niger, and voted to suspend the Malawi Compact due to a pattern of actions by the Government of Malawi that is inconsistent with the democratic governance criteria that MCC uses to select its compact partners.¹⁹⁰

Zambia and Namibia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and an agreement for the Transfer of Sentenced Persons which seeks to, among others, enable the two countries to cooperate in combating cross-border crime and improve the standards of services at prisons as well as immigration departments.¹⁹¹

President Michael Sata arrived back home in Lusaka on March 30 from India where he held several investment promotion meetings. President Sata was in India on a private visit which he, however, used to attract investors to the country. While in India, Mr Sata met with among other investors, Apollo International Limited, a multi-million dollar group of companies, which is interested in constructing a specialist hospital and grain silos in the country.¹⁹²

Talentedge, a consortium of Indian investors, is to establish training institutions to provide a wide range of courses in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in Lusaka and three other provinces with an initial investment of about US\$ 300,000 in each centre.¹⁹³

The world's largest transfrontier park became a reality in March when the Kavango-Zambezi was launched by five southern African countries. Environment ministers from Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe launched the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) at a ceremony in Katima Mulilo, Namibia.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ "Tanzania Has Largest Number of Staff At EAC", *Daily News*, April 18, 2012, at <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/parliament-news/4197-tanzania-has-largest-number-of-staff-at-eac>

¹⁹⁰ "MCC Board Approves Zambia Compact, Suspends Compact with Malawi", *Millennium Challenge Corporation*, March 23, 2012, at <http://www.mcc.gov/pages/press/release/release-032312-Boardrelease>

¹⁹¹ "Zambia, Namibia agree to fight cross-border crime", *Times of Zambia*, March 31, 2012, at <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=2823>

¹⁹² "Sata back from India", *Times of Zambia*, March 31, 2012, at <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=2759>

¹⁹³ "Indian Investors to Set Up ICT Institutions", *Times of Zambia*, April 9, 2012, at <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=3891>

¹⁹⁴ "The world's largest transfrontier park", *SANF*, April 12, 2012, at <http://www.sardc.net/editorial/NewsFeature/12120412.htm>

ZIMBABWE

‘Government has no treaty record’, says Justice Minister; Information Minister says no to media reforms; Zanu-PF under threat; US\$ 750 million Essar deal frozen; Constitution stalemate persists

Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa told parliament yesterday that government did not have an up-to-date record of which international human rights treaties and conventions it had signed and ratified since independence. Chinamasa made the remarks when he appeared before the Misheck Marava-chaired Senate Thematic Committee on Human Rights while apprising senators on Zimbabwe’s compliance with domesticating international treaties.¹⁹⁵

Information Minister Webster Shamu has broken his silence to snub calls for media reforms, allegedly ordered by the principal leaders in the coalition government.¹⁹⁶

Zimbabwe’s proposed new constitution threatens to wreck President Robert Mugabe’s faction-riddled ZANU PF, which has thrived on tribal and regional shenanigans to preserve the Unity Accord signed with the late vice-president Joshua Nkomo’s PF ZAPU in 1987.¹⁹⁷

The US\$ 750 million deal between the government and Essar Africa Holdings of India aimed at reviving the defunct steelmaking giant Ziscosteel is frozen. As it emerged, the Ministry of Mines and Mining Development is still scrutinising the agreement, infuriating the Ministry of Industry and Commerce which facilitated it.¹⁹⁸

The stalemate around the constitution-making process is persisting amid revelations there is still a log-jam over contentious issues ZANU-PF want removed from the draft, top among them the devolution of power. There are also serious concerns around the scrapping of two vice presidents, homosexuality, citizenship and the appointment of services chiefs.¹⁹⁹

INDIAN OCEAN REGION

Defence Ministry A K Antony: ‘Challenge of piracy yet to efficiently quarantined’; India proposes norms to combat piracy; India and China begin dialogue on maritime

¹⁹⁵ “Govt has no treaty record”, *Zimbabwe Independent*, March 23, 2012, at <http://www.theindependent.co.zw/local/34739-govt-has-no-treaty-record.html>

¹⁹⁶ “Information Minister says no to media reforms”, *SW Radio Africa*, April 23, 2012, at <http://www.swradioafrica.com/2012/03/23/information-minister-says-no-to-media-reforms/>

¹⁹⁷ “Zanu-PF Under Threat”, *The Financial Gazette*, April 12, 2012, at <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/top-stories/12263-zanu-pf-under-threat.html>

¹⁹⁸ “US\$750m Essar deal frozen”, *Zimbabwe Independent*, April 20, 2012, at <http://www.theindependent.co.zw/local/35091-us750m-essar-deal-frozen.html>

¹⁹⁹ “Constitution stalemate persists”, *The Financial Gazette*, April 20, 2012, at <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/top-stories/12353-constitution-stalemate-persists.html>

cooperation; India joins elite group with INS Chakra; Iranian forces free ship hijacked by pirates

India stressed the need for an international cooperative effort to contain the rising incidents of piracy in the Indian Ocean Region. At an event organized in Delhi, Indian Defence Minister, A K Antony pointed out that the challenge of piracy is yet to 'efficiently quarantined'. The minister also added that though global efforts are directed towards creating an international naval force, there is also a consensus that the real solution lies in addressing the root causes which are complex and located on land.²⁰⁰

India is spearheading an effort to create a naval standard operating procedure (SOP) for the 32 littoral nations of the Indian Ocean Region to jointly fight the menace of Somali piracy. In order to reduce the probability of repetition of the incident where innocent fishermen were shot off Kochi, India highlight the need to clearly demarcate 'piracy-affected waters based on ground realities'.²⁰¹

India and China have agreed to begin a dialogue on maritime cooperation which could include joint operations to combat piracy and sharing of technological know-how on seabed research. The first proposal is to involve the Coast Guards, the navies and the air forces in fighting piracy. The sharing of know-how on seabed research is aimed to douse India's apprehensions after China was permitted by the International Seabed Authority to explore south-west Indian Ocean.²⁰²

With the induction of the nuclear submarine, INS Chakra, India joined an elite league of nations which was so far occupied by the P5 members. This new platform would serve various roles such as surveillance, sea-denial, supporting amphibious programmes and covert operations.²⁰³

Iranian forces were successful in freeing a ship carrying tons of goods to Iran that was attacked and hijacked in the Indian Ocean by Somali pirates.²⁰⁴

Mauritius ranks 53rd in WEF report; Seychelles has agreed to accept 15 Somali pirate suspects from the United States Armed Forces for prosecution in Seychelles; Germany expands military mission against Somali pirates; Tsunami watch issued for Indian Ocean Indonesia earthquake; World sea piracy falls 28 percent in first quarter as attacks drop off Somali coast; Deposed Maldives president says coup has fueled radical Islam

According to the 11th edition of the Global Information Technology Report 2012 released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in New York, Mauritius is ranked 53rd among 142 economies in

²⁰⁰ "Fight against piracy needs global effort: India", *Twocircles.net*, February 27, 2012 at http://twocircles.net/2012feb27/fight_against_piracy_needs_global_effort_india.html

²⁰¹ "India proposes norms for Indian Ocean anti-piracy patrols", *The Economic Times*, April 13, 2012 at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-13/news/31337622_1_navy-chiefs-admiral-nirmal-verma-indian-navy

²⁰² "India, China move to maritime cooperation", *The Hindu*, March 1, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2951373.ece>

²⁰³ "India inducts INS Chakra", *Deccan Herald*, April 4, 2012 at <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/239476/india-commissions-nuclear-submarine-ins.html>

²⁰⁴ "Iran frees vessel hijacked in Indian Ocean - report", *Reuters.com*, April 4, 2012 at <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/04/04/iran-vessel-hijack-idINDEE83301F20120404>

the Networked Readiness Index. Mauritius is also described as the best performing sub-Saharan African nation. The WEF has featured Mauritius as a case study in the successful development of ICT in its prestigious report.²⁰⁵

The acceptance of suspected pirates from the US Armed Forces follows the entente between President James Michel and the US secretary of state, Hillary Clinton that the United States would endeavour to continue reinforcing Seychelles' capacity in the fight against piracy and collaborate with Seychelles in common actions against piracy in a proactive manner. Seychelles has today the highest percentage of Somali pirates in detention anywhere, amounting to 20% of its total prison capacity, which represents a huge burden on the prison system and restricts Seychelles' capacity, in terms of being able to incarcerate further Somali pirates.²⁰⁶

The German cabinet has agreed on new rights for the Bundeswehr in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia. If parliament approves, the mission – previously restricted to the sea – will be taken inland.²⁰⁷

Indonesia issued a tsunami warning after an 8.7 magnitude earthquake hit waters off westernmost Aceh province, followed by an 8.2 magnitude aftershock. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii said a tsunami watch was in effect for Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Australia, Myanmar, Thailand, the Maldives and other Indian Ocean islands, Malaysia, Pakistan, Somalia, Oman, Iran, Bangladesh, Kenya, South Africa and Singapore.²⁰⁸

Sea piracy worldwide dropped 28 per cent in the first quarter of the year as attacks fell sharply in Somalia's waters thanks to international naval patrols, an international maritime watchdog said Monday.²⁰⁹

Saying he was saddened and shocked by the speed with which his friends in Washington had abandoned him, the former president of Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, warned that radical Islam has gained ground across the sprawling Indian Ocean archipelago since he was deposed in February.²¹⁰

²⁰⁵ "Island ranks 53rd in WEF report", *The Independent*, April 6, 2012, at <http://theindependent.mu/2012/04/06/island-ranks-53rd-in-wef-report/>

²⁰⁶ "Seychelles has agreed to accept 15 Somali pirate suspects from the United States Armed Forces for prosecution in Seychelles", *Seychelles e News*, March 7, 2012, at http://www.seychellesweekly.com/March%205,%202012/pol2_15%20somali_pirates.html

²⁰⁷ "Germany expands military mission against Somali pirates", *Shabelle News*, April 18, 2012, at <http://shabelle.net/2012/04/18/germany-expands-military-mission-against-somali-pirates/>

²⁰⁸ "Tsunami Watch Issued For Indian Ocean Indonesia Earthquake", *The Telegraph*, April 11, 2012, at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/indonesia/9197229/Tsunami-watch-issued-for-Indian-Ocean-Indonesia-earthquake.html>

²⁰⁹ "World sea piracy falls 28 percent in first quarter as attacks drop off Somali coast", *The Washington Post*, April 23, 2012, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/world-sea-piracy-falls-28-percent-in-first-quarter-as-attacks-drop-off-somali-coast/2012/04/23/gIQAbGBLbT_story.html

²¹⁰ "Deposed Maldives president says coup has fueled radical Islam", *The Washington Post*, April 19, 2012, at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/deposed-maldives-president-says-coup-has-fueled-radical-islam/2012/04/19/gIQAW0qcTT_story.html

About the IDSA Africa, Latin America, Caribbean & UN Centre

The Centre's research focus includes understanding developments in the African region and analysing various hotspots like Egypt, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and the Indian Ocean Region. It also focuses on bilateral, regional as well as multilateral engagements between India and the countries of Africa. The Centre also endeavours to analyse India's engagement with Latin American countries, particularly in forums such as the IBSA and BRICS.

In addition, the Centre carries out research on the broader theme of India and the United Nations. It deals with important topics that come up in the Security Council and those that hold relevance and significance to India's foreign policy.

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