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Editor's Note

As our team worked on the second issue of this year, several significant developments were taking place across central Africa. The conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) deepened with tensions rising between the country and its neighbours, while a rebel-led coup worsened the humanitarian situation for already affected populations in Central African Republic (CAR). Keerthi Sampath Kumar examines the DRC crisis and the role of regional actors, particularly Rwanda and Uganda, in the conflict. Ahana Banerjee provides an insight into several important aspects of the crisis in CAR and the main drivers behind it. With media platforms having become an indispensable tool for states to complement their foreign policy, an understanding of this industry has become key to influencing local and global opinion; Sneha Bhura shares her study of the changing face of international media in Africa today. For our readers who have taken an interest in the developments in North Africa over the past two years, and for those who may be looking for an insightful appraisal of the Arab Spring, Hamid Dabashi's *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism* will prove a useful read; Saurabh Mishra reviews the book in this issue.

Among the most important events that have taken place over the past two months are the strengthening of relations between emerging international powers, and African countries. Japan has announced plans to host ministers from several African countries to discuss cooperation in the area of natural resources; this was followed up by the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development that took place in early June. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmedinejad sought broader strategic relations with African countries during a three-nation visit to West Africa, while China has pledged to remain an "all-weather friend and partner" to Africa and continue investing in the continent for mutual benefit.

India remains on the radar, with the government signing a MoU with Mauritius to cooperate in the field of election management and administration; and, the country's Tata Motors is set to open bases for the Jaguar Land Rover in Zambia. India is also in deliberations with Angola to assist the country in development of human capital, and increasing investments by Indian public and private entities in Angola.

Egypt and India signed several agreements aimed at boosting bilateral ties during a visit by Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi to India in mid-March. In the world's youngest country, fear and violence prevails more than two years after independence; a report from the Sudd Institute highlights the many unresolved issues that continue to plague South Sudan's population. In Mali, the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (Afisma) which had been operating under the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was formally moved to an African Union (AU) mandate in late March, following widening participation by countries outside of West Africa. Malian presidential elections are scheduled to be held on July 7 as the country moves towards addressing long-standing issues of security and governance, particularly in northern Mali. Following South Africa's military engagement in CAR and the death of 27 South African soldiers during operations, the country's government is facing questions over its involvement in the crisis, and the costs associated with a continued presence in that country.

In economic developments, Nigerian oil traders have reported declining demand from buyers that are posing serious threats to the country's oil exports; several reasons are attributed to the

decreased demand. Meanwhile, a subsidiary of the Australia-based Mantra Resources has been issued the first Tanzanian licence to mine uranium.

We look forward to your feedback.

Country Watch

CRISIS IN EASTERN CONGO AND THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS

The crisis in eastern DRC cannot be resolved by merely accusing countries like Rwanda and Uganda of interference; Kinshasa has to review its response to the crisis.

KEERTHI SAMPATH KUMAR

In November 2012, the M23 rebel group (which takes its name from the March 23, 2009 peace agreement signed between the Congolese government and the CNDP (National Congress for the Defence of the People)), after prolonged fighting with the UN-backed Congolese forces, took control of the city of Goma in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Despite initiatives taken by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region since July 2012 to resolve the conflict in eastern DRC, the M23 managed to consolidate its position and gained control over additional terrain with the help of allied armed groups and the continued support of the Rwandan and Ugandan armed forces.¹ The M23 rebellion also aggravated tensions between Congo and its neighbour, Rwanda, with the Kabila government accusing Kigali of orchestrating insurgency to grab the mineral wealth of eastern Congo. This article analyses the role of regional actors, especially Rwanda and Uganda, in fuelling the DRC crisis while briefly touching upon the part played by other influential actors such as the US and the UK in the region.

The takeover of Goma by M23 rebels exposed the loopholes in the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country and the inability of the peacekeepers to protect civilians.

The takeover of Goma by M23 rebels exposed the loopholes in the mandate of the UN peacekeeping mission in the country and the inability of the peacekeepers to protect civilians. Following the UN Security Council condemnation of the M23 takeover of Goma, a joint statement was brought out by DRC's Joseph Kabila and Rwanda's Paul Kagame which called on the rebel groups to immediately cease violence. Subsequently, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) issued a communiqué that restricted the M23 to a 20-kilometre zone around Goma. Though the government and the rebel group remained committed to negotiations, the peace talks mediated by Uganda faltered amid tensions between both parties.

Meanwhile, two reports prepared by the UN Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo that were released last year, laid bare the Rwandan and Ugandan involvement in fuelling the conflict in the DRC. The first report, released in May 2012, stated that Rwandan authorities were seemingly complicit in recruiting soldiers for the Congolese rebel leader, Gen. Bosco Ntaganda. The November 2012 report stated that the "...government of Rwanda continues to violate the arms embargo by providing direct military support to the M23 rebels, facilitating recruitment, encouraging and facilitating desertions from the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and providing arms, ammunition, intelligence and political advice."

The report further added that “senior officials of the Government of Uganda have also provided support to M23 in the form of direct troop reinforcements in Congolese territory, weapons deliveries, technical assistance, joint planning, political advice and facilitation of external relations.”²

It further alleged that units of the Ugandan People’s Defence Forces and the Rwandan Defence Forces jointly supported the M23 in a series of attacks in July 2012 to take over the major towns of Rutshuru territory and the Congolese army base in Rumangabo and that both governments had also cooperated to support the creation and expansion of the political branch of M23 and have consistently been advocating the cause of the rebels. The report also noted that Uganda and Rwanda were not the only supporters of the rebels, but, “some criminal networks within the Congolese armed forces continue to sell small amounts of ammunition to the rebels.” In addition, “several traders have contributed to financing M23 rebels using profits resulting from the smuggling of Congolese minerals into Rwanda.” According to the experts, Ugandan troops were deployed along the Congolese border to ensure that M23 territory was not left unprotected during imminent offensive. The UN report also disclosed the M23’s de facto chain of command that culminated with Rwanda’s defence minister, General James Kabarebe.

Both, Rwanda and Ugandan have denied these allegations. An official statement issued by the Rwandan government stated that: “Rwanda has maintained from the outset that the current instability in eastern DRC is a matter for the Congolese government and military.” It further added that “Rwanda’s national interest is served by containing conflict and building deeper bonds of peace with our neighbours.”³ Terming the UN reports “fictitious”, Kagame in turn went on the offensive and called on the Congolese government to take responsibility for the rebel fighting as it was an internal matter between “the different shades of Congolese”.⁴ It is ironic that while the UN Reports accuse Rwandan and Ugandan of being involved in the crisis, Paul Kagame, along with other leaders, publicly urged the M23 to pull out of Goma in November, 2012 while Uganda is leading the efforts to resolve the conflict.

The Past

Interference in each other’s internal affairs is not a new phenomenon in Central African politics. It has been a part of the DRC’s history since the time of the Zaire dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko. In the past, Kigali supported the oppressed Banyamulenge in South Kivu when they raised up against the persecution of the Bukavu Zairian authorities. Arms and irregular Rwandan troops infiltrated across the border as the ADFL (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire) prepared to launch its rebellion against Mobutu’s government in late 1996. Throughout the rebellion, Paul Kagame denied the involvement of regular Rwandan forces in the struggle. The intervention of Ugandan forces under Yoweri Museveni was also largely underplayed due the success of the ADFL. Both Museveni and Kagame played a key role in the overthrow of Mobutu. Rwanda along with Uganda was also involved in the Congolese war and invaded the DRC to prevent Laurent Kabila from ‘taking the war to Rwanda’.⁵ During the war, an anti-Kabila faction backed by Rwanda came close to seizing power in Kinshasa.

The Rwandan Patriotic Army and other outside forces remained in the DRC after the signing of the Lusaka Accords of 1999. UN Reports in 2001 revealed the extent of Ugandan and Rwandan involvement in the plunder of the DRC’s natural resources. Subsequent UN Reports also exposed the objective of the Rwandan government to repopulate the region with Rwandans in addition to using its military might to extract and exploit the wealth of the occupied lands. Rwanda was also

accused of supporting Laurent Nkunda and his movement, the CNDP that in 2008 threatened to overthrow the Congolese government.

Other Actors – The UK and the US

The position of Rwanda's allies - especially the US and the UK - on Rwanda's involvement in the DRC crisis has not been consistent. Recently, Tony Blair, the former UK Prime Minister and personal adviser to Paul Kagame, defended Rwanda saying that the causes of the conflict were complex and that Kigali should not be singled out for blame. He also argued in favour of Rwanda stating that the UN report is "dispute(d) over the facts".⁶ But, on the other hand, the UK announced that it was stopping the 21 million pound aid and described the UN report as "credible and compelling".⁷ The UK, once among Kagame's closest allies chose to distance itself, which was a severe diplomatic blow for Kigali.

The United States suspended its \$200,000 military aid to Rwanda in July 2012 because of concerns over human rights abuses by the Rwandan government.⁸ But critics have argued that this is a small sum compared to the \$200 million aid programme. Domestically, the US was under pressure from NGOs following the seizure of Goma by the M23 rebels. The NGOs noted that the US had failed to respond to the crisis and had failed to change Rwanda's policy. The US has also been criticised for its muted response to the crisis. The US ambassador to the UN, Susan Rice was censured for attempting to block the publication of evidence gathered by the UN group of experts.⁹ Subsequently, in December 2012, President Obama urged President Kagame to halt support for rebels in eastern DRC and the US also imposed sanctions against two leaders of the M23.

Other external actors such as the European Union, the Netherlands, and Sweden also suspended aid to Rwanda whose inputs from aid amounts up to 40 per cent of its total budget. Though it is believed that the withdrawal of aid forced Rwanda to stop its support to the M23 rebels, but with the German resumption of aid to Kigali, there are apprehensions about Rwanda being 'let off the hook in return for cosmetic peace'.¹⁰

Peace deal of February 2013

After the takeover of Goma by the M23 rebels and the release of the UN report that accused Rwanda and Uganda of backing the rebels, tension mounted in the Kivus and the ICGLR started a series of meetings that eventually culminated in the Kampala peace talks between the M23 and Kinshasa. In February this year, 11 African countries including Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Ugandan, Tanzania and Zambia came together to sign the 'Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region' as per which they agreed to preserve and protect the territorial sovereignty as well as the peace and stability of the DRC. The agreement calls on the neighbouring states to refrain from covertly supporting armed groups in the region.

The deal also demanded a commitment from the Congolese government to deepen democratisation and reorganise its security sector, and initiate basic financial and structural reforms. The most crucial aspect of the agreement is the establishment of the 11+4 regional oversight mechanism that includes the UN, the African Union, the 11-country ICGLR and the 14-member Southern

...the 'Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Region'... has been criticised for not addressing specific issues related to improving the tense security situation and the root causes of the conflict.

African Development Community which is tasked with monitoring the implementation of the agreement. Thus, the agreement and the regional oversight mechanism involve all the regional actors in the peace process.

Given allegations of Ugandan and Rwandan involvement in the DRC rebel movement, their commitment at least on paper is crucial and is a first step towards peace in the region. Observers hope that the regional oversight mechanism will open up lines of communication and facilitate cooperation between the interested states. However, the M23 has refused to recognise the treaty, as they were not involved in the drafting process.¹¹

Though the peace deal is a much awaited and a welcome development for the region as a whole, it is not without its shortcomings. It has been criticised for not addressing specific issues related to improving the tense security situation and the root causes of the conflict. A major problem is the lack of progress in the negotiations between the M23 rebels and the Kinshasa government because both the sides refuse to make concessions. Experts opine that despite the peace deal, eastern Congo remains susceptible to the resumption of conflict.

The framework has also been criticised for its exclusive top-down focus which lays emphasis on the regional dynamics and the Congolese government's need to implement democratisation and financial and security sector reforms.¹² It neglects to take into account the role of crucial local actors in the eastern provinces. Another drawback is its overemphasis on the role of Uganda and Rwanda to the neglect of internal dynamics in the region and the rebel groups operating here. The government's handling of the crisis is also flawed. By playing on the anti-Rwandan feelings of the several militias excluding the M23 operating in the North Kivu area and forging alliances with them, the government has paved the way for the undisciplined militias to terrorise the local population and to stir up ethnic rivalries.¹³

Towards the end of February, the M23 split into two factions; one loyal to Bosco Ntaganda and the other to Sultani Makenga. Fighting between the two groups led Ntaganda's men surrendering to UN peacekeepers or to the Makenga faction. Subsequently, Ntaganda handed himself over to the US embassy in Kigali and this raised questions as to why he surrendered himself in Rwanda and not Uganda. However, his surrender raises hopes that Makenga and his faction will sign a peace deal with the Kabila government.

While the peace agreement was being signed, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon proposed the formation of a UN Security Council-authorized Intervention Brigade to be comprised of several thousand troops from the existing UN peacekeeping force in Congo. The brigade, according to the proposal, was to be "tasked with containing the expansion of both Congolese and foreign armed groups, neutralising these groups and disarming them".¹⁴ In the last week of March, through the UNSCR 2098, the Security Council authorised the deployment of an intervention brigade to carry out targeted offensive operations, with or without the Congolese national army against the armed groups that threatened peace and security in the eastern part of the DRC. The brigade consisting of a total of 3,069 peacekeepers is to be based in North Kivu whose aim is to neutralise armed groups, reduce the threat posed to state authority and civilian security and make way for stabilisation activities.¹⁵ The brigade will also support the political objectives of the peace deal signed in February.

This brigade is a milestone in the history of UN peacekeeping because it is for the first time, that the UN has authorised a brigade for peace enforcement that would open fire without being fired upon first and would have the capacity to carry out targeted offensive operations, either

unilaterally or in support of the Congolese army, to neutralise armed groups. However, there is widespread scepticism that the UN too, could now become a party to the conflict which may compromise its neutrality and impartiality.

Meanwhile, the M23 has rejected the UN's decision and criticised it for taking the "war option" against "one of the partners for peace" instead of promoting dialogue to end the conflict.¹⁶ While at the moment, talks in Kampala between the M23 and the Congolese government are continuing with the mediation of Uganda, experts warn against any complacency in international efforts to bring peace to the country. As stated earlier, the crisis in eastern DRC cannot be resolved by merely accusing countries like Rwanda and Uganda of interference. Kinshasa has to review its response to the crisis and bring all stakeholders on board and accommodate their concerns, to amicably resolve the conflict. In this light, it becomes all the more imperative for Kabila to strike a peace deal with the M23 and address issues of governance in the country, especially in eastern Congo.

¹ UN Security Council Panel of Experts Report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, November 15, 2012, pg. 6,7

² Ibid., pg 3

³ "U.N. report says Rwandans recruited to fight in Congo", *The New York Times*, May 28, 2012 at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/africa/un-says-rwandans-recruited-to-fight-in-congo.html?_r=1&

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⁵ Colin M Waugh (2004), *Paul Kagame and Rwanda – Power, Genocide and the Rwandan Patriotic Front*, North Carolina: McFarland and Company Inc., pg. 130.

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⁸ Louisa Slocum, "The M23, Rwanda, the Conflict in the Congo and Possible Implications on U.S. National Security", *National Security Law Brief*, December 08, 2012 at <http://nationalsecuritylawbrief.com/2012/12/08/the-m23-rwanda-the-conflict-in-the-congo-and-possible-implications-on-u-s-national-security/>

⁹ See footnote 7.

¹⁰ "Just another peace-making spasm in DR Congo", *The Guardian*, February 20, 2013 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/feb/20/war-congo-addis-peace-deal>

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¹² Lewis Brooks, "Cooperation in the Congo: Will the regional peace deal bring stability", *Think Africa Press*, March 11, 2013 at <http://thinkafricapress.com/drc/cooperation-congo-can-regional-initiatives-end-violence>

¹³ "Despite peace accord, eastern Congo still on edge", *UT San Diego*, February 25, 2013 at <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2013/feb/25/despite-peace-accord-eastern-congo-still-on-edge/>

¹⁴ "Secretary-General urges special 'intervention brigades' within United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo", Security Council 6928th Meeting, SC/10929, March 5, 2013.

¹⁵ "Security Council approves intervention force to target armed groups in DR Congo", *UN News Centre*, March 28, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44523#.UX9MCalE4y4>

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Viewpoint

PERSPECTIVES ON CRISIS IN CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The Central African Republic's political crisis is driven by international politics and resource competition.

AHANA BANERJEE*

The stand-off between the Central African Republic (CAR) President Francois Bozizé and the rebel forces Seleka ended with the ousting of President Bozizé from office on March 24, 2013. The coup in CAR witnessed the deployment of French and South African military troops leading up to a final clash between South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and Seleka on March 23, near Bangui in CAR. The onset of the crisis in CAR has highlighted – first, that CAR's firewall against the regional contagion of conflicts and coups had proved ineffective; second, that CAR's foreign relations with China, France and South Africa in the recent years have been largely influenced by competition for the country's natural resources; third, the CAR crisis has dented South Africa's international image as a continental leader. Consequentially, the emerging issues include South Africa's ability to influence continental affairs and France's military non-intervention.

The conflict between SANDF and Seleka left 13 South African soldiers dead, making it South Africa's biggest military loss in the post-apartheid era. The situation further deteriorated as the South African engagement in CAR became controversial following reports in the *Mail and Guardian* that South African troops had been deployed to safeguard South African business interests in CAR. However, the South African government maintained that their presence in CAR was in accordance with a 2007 bilateral defence agreement signed between CAR and South Africa.

The domestic political crisis in CAR has exposed deeper political fault lines. The retention of South African troops after Bozizé's ouster is telling. It has been reported that the SANDF had 'deployed more troops to the CAR following days of clashes between armed forces and rebels'.¹ There was extreme confusion on the ground as the troops did not have a specific mandate nor were they withdrawn. The sub-optimal policy response on South Africa's part, at worst, reinforces the allegations that private interests were the key drivers of the bilateral defence agreement between

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CAR and South Africa, and at best is indicative of poor decision making. The largest opposition party in South Africa, the Democratic Alliance commented that: "The conclusion is inescapable that the South African troops were deployed to defend the faltering and dictatorial Bozizé regime,"² and called for the immediate withdrawal of troops.³ President Zuma responded by reiterating that the troops were deployed in accordance with the 2007 agreement and subsequently stated that the troops were going to be called back on account of 'deteriorating security and absence of a legitimate government in Bangui'.⁴ The final call for troop withdrawal came in as late as April 3, 2013 highlighting the delayed political response. This has led experts to comment that South Africa will be well advised to take pointers from 'the knowledge and understanding of the African context amassed over decades by traditional powers.'⁵

The French and South African military deployments both need to be examined in the light of recent oil concessions and uranium extraction deals made by the Bozizé government ... business interests determine the interaction between the global powers and CAR apart from the desire for stronger relations with China.

In addition to the criticism of the South African policy, the bilateral defence agreement has also been strongly condemned. The *Mail and Guardian* reported that: 'Zuma failed to inform Parliament, as required by the Constitution, of plans for deploying the troops'.⁶ The report further quoted Maître Zarambaud Assingambi, a constitutional lawyer in CAR who said: 'There is nothing wrong with the president signing a defence agreement, but any such agreement must be ratified by the national assembly, and Bozizé did not do that'.⁷ Zarambaud is reported to have stated that there was no clear reason for bringing in external troops in the CAR for a domestic problem.⁸ In this context, the South African minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula's response that: "South Africa's involvement in the Central African Republic, just as was the case in Burundi, DRC, Sudan and elsewhere, has been in pursuance of our international obligation to ensure stability and peace in the continent,"⁹ - does little to dispel concerns relating to South African policy drivers.

It is interesting to note that Article 28 of the constitution of CAR has been cited¹⁰ to draw attention to the fact that defence agreements are signed for external aggression and do not extend to civil wars. This may explain why the French troops did not intervene in the current coup, despite the CAR-France defence agreement of 2010. President Hollande explained it thus: "if we are present it is not to protect any regime but to protect our citizens and our interests."¹¹ However, this statement needs to be studied in the context of France's decreasing resource access in CAR which stresses that the impact of competition for natural resources on political decisions should not be discounted.

The crisis in CAR has exposed that resource driven policies and governance failure are the necessary adjuncts of coups and violent conflicts.

The French and South African military deployments both need to be examined in the light of recent oil concessions and uranium extraction deals made by the Bozizé government. The competition for oil and uranium resources between China, France and South Africa in CAR is of particular significance in this regard. The contracts signed by the Bozizé government from 2009¹² clearly indicate that the final beneficiaries have been the South African and Chinese corporations. This proves that business interests determine the interaction between the global powers and CAR apart from the desire for stronger relations with China. Therefore, despite Hollande's statement, the lack of French intervention can possibly be attributed to their desire for natural resources.¹³ This has gained momentum in view

of the CAR coup leader Michel Djotodia's statement that the contracts given to Chinese companies could be reviewed.¹⁴ The priority accorded to business interests is further reinforced by the impending deployment of South African soldiers in the fragile security matrix of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Zuma's decision to deploy 1000 soldiers in eastern DRC as a part of the United Nations mandate against rebels¹⁵ in a region where Zuma's nephew has extensive business interests has fuelled speculation regarding South Africa's policy motives. This indicates that domestic accountability and efficient decision making in South Africa's foreign policy is hampered by business and corporate manoeuvrings.

The crisis in CAR has exposed that resource driven policies and governance failure are the necessary adjuncts of coups and violent conflicts. The new government formed by rebel leaders will continue to face the dual challenges of legitimacy and resource politics. Though CAR's rebel leaders have been criticised by multilateral bodies such as the African Union, the moot point is that the crisis has revealed the need for such multilateral bodies to create frameworks for resource governance. With continued speculation regarding the French, Chinese and South African agenda in CAR the competition for resources in the 21st century is likely to intensify in the foreseeable future.

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Commentary

THE CHANGING FACE OF INTERNATIONAL MEDIA IN AFRICA

Making a breakthrough in the complicated arena of news media broadcasting requires more than a generous dosage of money and technology, especially if it involves diminishing the influence of traditional players in the media-scape of the continent.

SNEHA BHURA*

The media sector in Africa is presently registering an above-average growth and is considered to be one of the fastest growing industries in the continent. Opportunities for investment in platforms like television, digital media and mobile are plentiful in countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana because of rapid urbanisation and an emerging middle-class that comprises a relatively younger demographic. However, the conventionally well-established western media companies like the BBC, CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Times*, London are closing down their overseas bureaus due to budget constraints.¹ This has freed up space in a tempting business opportunity for emerging players like China and India by expanding their media footprint in the continent – to tell their own stories without the myopic first-world prejudices of the Western media.² But is the African populace ready to shift its allegiance from the time-honoured, well established Western media sources to the new entrants from developing countries like India, China, Russia and Latin America for their daily dose of international news? Which country is better poised to satiate the enormous appetite for local/international news in a continent witnessing a dramatic upsurge in literacy rates? Here, we compare the performance of two important competitors – India and China.

China is now taking steps that go beyond bricks and concrete. And there is no better tool for creating a favourable perception of their country than the media industry to project an image of being a benign and a committed internationalist.

In a bid to influence world public opinion in its favour, China is now taking steps that go beyond bricks and concrete. And there is no better tool for creating a favourable perception of their country than the media industry to project an image of being a benign and a committed internationalist.³ The Chinese government earmarked \$8.7 billion in 2009-10 for its global media expansion and the major beneficiaries of this funding are the four big state-owned media corporations – the China Radio International (CRI), the Xinhua news agency, CCTV, and *The China Daily* (website and newspaper). All four already have a presence in Africa. CRI began broadcasting from Nairobi in 2006.

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Xinhua is believed to have more than 20 bureaus across the continent whereas its television variant, CNC World started operations in Africa in the beginning of 2011. That very year, Xinhua partnered with a mobile phone operator in Kenya to provide news feeds to African customers.⁴ Later in January 2012, CCTV set up CCTV Africa (its first outside China). Locally known as *da kucha* (big boxer shorts), it is based in an imposing 54-storey building overlooking the central business district of Nairobi.⁵ The latest big-ticket Chinese media initiative in Africa was the launch of the *China Daily's* Africa edition on December 14, 2012. With the formation of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in 2000, Sino-African media exchanges have become more frequent and since 2006 this engagement has been further strengthened. In the early years of the last decade, the relationship had primarily focussed on providing technical infrastructure assistance to African State broadcasters. But gradually the relationship has diversified from hardware support to training African media practitioners by conducting workshops for African journalists in China. Sino-African media relations have therefore acquired greater depth and substance in consonance with the improving bilateral ties.⁶

On the other hand the Indian media has not been able to make a mark in Africa, and has failed to go beyond the limited scope of Bollywood and Indian TV soaps – the only few cultural exports to Africa. The “vacuum” in the African media space, presents an incredible opportunity for the Indian media to establish a strong foothold in the country. And it must fill up that space before China can further build on its already growing media presence in the continent. Not that Indian entrepreneurs in the media sector are not aware of this opportunity. Only recently Infinity Media which is a joint venture between India’s Essel Media, South Africa’s Oakbay Investments and Black Economic Empowerment programme launched a 24 hour local and current affairs news channel in South Africa.⁷ Essel Media is part of the Essel group that controls Zee news, Zee entertainment and other verticals in India and globally and Oakbay holds a majority shareholder in *The New Age* – South Africa’s newest daily newspaper. However India needs a stronger strategic push to really make its presence count. The revival of the old warhorse Doordarshan is a big step in the right direction.⁸ The chairman of the National Innovation Council, Sam Pitroda, is heading a committee that is looking to make progressive changes in PrasarBharti which oversees Doordarshan –for the purpose of launching a channel, for the first time ever, in Africa.⁹ It is a laudable move considering that India, despite having the technical and journalistic expertise, has not really carved a niche for itself in the international media space while other state-funded channels such as Al Jazeera have marched ahead proving that a state-funded channel can also function efficiently. Strong financial backing is of course important. Instead of solely relying on government money, a licence-fee model of funding can generate considerable annual revenue for Doordarshan, which would be enable it to free itself of financial constraints and focus on becoming a credible and top-of-the-line news broadcaster. Then India can concentrate on leveraging its core strengths – quality journalists, a relatively freer media and better fluency in English – to give stiff competition to China in Africa. In fact, with an increasing number of Indians engaged in business ventures and investments in Africa, coupled with the goodwill of democracy, a strong Indian media presence in Africa can give it huge diplomatic advantage. Boosting media relations in a way also gives credence to the “commerce of ideas” that Mahatma Gandhi believed was a core component of India-Africa ties.¹⁰

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But even with China and India readying themselves to grab a substantial chunk of the media pie

in Africa, the entrenched influence of Western media organisations is undeniable, as was stated in an editorial piece in the *China Daily*. “Even decades into independence, top-level media executives and editors across most of Anglophone and Francophone Africa trace their professional training and lifestyles to the West. The prism that informs civility, excellence, and success in most of Africa is largely Western.”¹¹ Making a breakthrough in the complicated arena of News media broadcasting requires more than a generous dosage of money and technology, especially if it involves diminishing the influence of traditional players in the media-scape of the continent. It entails moving out of the comfort zone into the unknown and the controversial.¹² Until the Chinese media in Africa grabs that big story without being held hostage to the dictates of its political superiors, it will continue to be visible only in terms of physical splendour unlike India which has a real chance of winning the hearts and minds of the African people on the back of its commendable track record of media activism at home.

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 - 2 “Chinese media expands Africa Presence”, *Aljazeera*, 24 January 2013 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/01/201312071929822435.html>
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 - 4 “China’s African media footprint”, *Consultancy Africa Intelligence*, 2 April 2013 at http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1259:chinas-african-media-footprint&catid=58:asia-dimension-discussion-papers&Itemid=264
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 - 7 “SA New Age partners Indian firm to launch news channel”, *The BRICS Post*, 8 February 2013 at <http://thebricspost.com/sa-new-age-partners-indian-firm-to-launch-news-channel/#.UYdOuKJHJe9>
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 - 11 “China’s media challenge in Africa”, *China Daily*, 22 March 2013 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2013-03/22/content_16333027.htm
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Book Review

Hamid Dabashi, *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism*

Zed Books, London and New York, 2012, ISBN: 978-1-78032-223-0, 272 pp.

SAURABH MISHRA

The Arab Spring has surprised the world with its pace, transnational nature and the diverse repercussions it had for different countries and peoples in the region. It began with a thump and later slowed and crept into the social realm while fighting against the persistent counter-revolutionary forces on the socio-political fault lines. This book explores the revolution unfolding in the so called 'Arab World' from a different perspective. The author takes the view that the term 'revolution' as understood from Karl Marx to Hannah Arendt does not aptly describe the phenomenon underway in the geographical space from Morocco to Iran and from Syria to Yemen.

The transnational uprising of the people, especially the youth, has affected the whole geographical space and socio-economic political environment of the peoples involved. The author claims that the colonially casted Middle East, North Africa and the Arab and Muslim world is now overcoming the cast and its fixated consciousness. He is so excited about the unfolding that he feels what is unfolding is "the inaugural moment of discovering new worlds" precisely through the "transformation of consciousness" without dogma or violence (p. xviii), though his fascination with the non-violent character of the uprising may now be questioned.

The author cites the time in the year of its commencement and the metaphorical declaration of hope, trust, fecundity and rebirth as the two reasons for his preference for the term 'Arab Spring' rather than 'Arab revolutions', 'Arab Awakening' (p.xviii). The racial, ethnic and sectarian divisions within Islam, according to the author, have been discredited by the revolution and have posed severe challenges that have to be dealt with. He is very positive that these revolutions are "collective acts of overcoming" crafting new identities, forging new solidarities, both within and without the binary of 'Islam and the West' - the material and moral colonial divide. They create a new framework of humanity which is being resisted at their fullest by the counter-revolutionary forces at work (p. xix). He declares he is writing the book to discover what the Arab Spring or the Arab World desires. He characterises the Arab Spring as the "End of the Postcoloniality" or a long awaited 'delayed defiance' of both European colonialism and its extended shadow and postcolonial aftermath.

The author also links the uprising to the larger anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist unrest of the anti-austerity movements in Greece and Spain and the unrest in UK. He highlights the sense of dissatisfaction extending well into the Mediterranean, from labour migrations to a variety of economic woes. In his opinion, "it would therefore be wrong to allow the notion of an 'Arab' or even 'Muslim' Spring to detract attention from larger frames of references" (p.24) as the unrest is not limited to the Arab or to the Muslim world.

The Arab Spring was inevitable. The only thing to be seen was where, how and when it would be ignited. The Green movement of 2009 was the premonition of "vastly consequential and yet inconclusive social uprisings which would force us to reconsider the notion of revolution." From the Green movement to the transnational uprising in the Arab world, a force to root out postcoloniality has set in. The longer the force acts, the deeper would be the impacts on the socio-

economic and political edifice of postcoloniality which has defined and sustained itself in Western terms for long. The marginalised in the Arab world are trying to create their own history, geography and language to define themselves defying the colonial, or its extended form, postcoloniality in different ideological forms like anticolonial nationalism, militant Islamism and socialism. The author is hopeful of the emerging world which is characterised by “cosmopolitan worldliness” which, according to him, is something innate to the societies experiencing the uprising.

The book documents the shades and effects of the unfolding Spring in different countries – Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Morocco, Algeria and Saudi Arabia. He also, very briefly in the same context, refers to the youth agitation in Kashmir. He has recognised the different colours of the Spring in all these countries and the reasons for the differences. The author delineates how the colonial capitalist and imperial forces are using all possible means to keep their constructions and control over the Arabs intact.

The author details the construction of the Arab world and the Orient as the ‘Other’ of the ‘West’ which has been embedded into the minds of the drivers of socio-economic and political agencies and institutions of the region. He firmly holds that the uprisings cannot be explained without deconstructing the stereotypes and ultimately creating a new semiotics, language and vocabulary. In fact, according to the author, the Arab Spring is trying to create a new liberated geography and language that is free of the ‘West’. He sees that the ‘West’ is no more the ‘West’ and the ‘East’ is no more ‘the East’. They are merging with each other producing a new and difficult to understand material for the traditional or postcolonial mindset. The ‘Arab World’ is not merely an area stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Sea, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean. It encompasses to 21 countries with about 360 million people, who have a sense of collective consciousness, in varying degrees that might be broadly identified as Arab transnationalism. It is also a ‘state of mind’ with its own contestations, dreams, visions, promises, vistas and landscape of emancipation. Due to sustained anticolonial struggles and various other reasons, the Arab nationalism has become “coterminous with a regional pan-Arabism that always dreamt of a common homeland stretching from the Atlantic across North Africa and into the Eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea” (p. 90). This dream never came true but the idea has existed for long. The consciousness towards such a transnational idea is working in the Arab Spring across the region.

The dynamics of the Arab Spring and the factors involved in the phenomenon have been discussed in detail – starting from the very ontology of the Arab world to its possible future. The book goes into almost every possible social aspect involved in and affected by the Spring. It has brought out the role played by the constructions of race, gender and class in the transnational revolutions which are protesting against the meanings and constructs imposed on them. The author himself is trying to interpret the unfolding historical events in order to change the world as he finds it as a real and effective instrument. The book has been written in the midst of the events that are still unfolding. Some of the author’s positive notes about the open-ended revolutions might be rejected by some people but his general analysis is logical. The uprising has come as a delayed defiance of postcoloniality but its future still remains uncertain. The developments like the emergence of the consciousness of an independent self from the ‘West’ cannot be ignored and the some of the prophecies of the author may come true.

The author locates himself in the Middle East to discuss and celebrate the unfolding Spring. The book is a rigorous analysis of the underlying dynamics of the evolution and development of Arab consciousness and its yearning for freedom from the yoke of postcoloniality and realisation of the free self. The book is a great help in understanding what is still unfolding in the region.

News Track

Japan to host ministerial meeting to discuss natural resources cooperation with African nations; Iran calls for broader strategic relations with African countries; China pledges to remain Africa's "all-weather friend and partner"

Japanese Trade Minister Toshimitsu Motegi has announced that ministers from about a dozen African countries have been invited to participate in a one-day ministerial meeting to discuss cooperation in the area of natural resources. Among the countries invited are Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. The meeting will be co-chaired by Motegi and the South African Mineral Resources minister. The meeting agenda includes ways to promote private investment in African countries, cooperation on personnel training, and sustainable development of resources.

The results of the discussions are scheduled to be followed up at the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to be held in Yokohama on June 1-3, 2013. The summit is held every five years and jointly organised by Japan, the United Nations, the World Bank, and other international institutions. Japan's potential for cooperation with African countries lies not only in exploration of resources, but also in development of infrastructure such as railways and power supply for mining development.¹

Iran's Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Sadeq Khalilian has said that Iran is seeking broader ties with African nations in the cultural, economic, social and political spheres. Khalilian said that Iran along with African members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and the United Nations can "stand against" colonial powers that had caused underdevelopment of African countries in the past.² He was speaking following a three-nation West African visit by President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad that was aimed at expanding Iranian ties in the region, and supporting sustainable development, security and welfare in the continent. Ahmedinejad visited Benin, Niger, and Ghana.³

Chinese President Xi Jinping has said that his country will continue to invest in China-Africa cooperation for mutual benefit, and will be Africa's "all-weather friend and partner". Xi was speaking during a visit to the Republic of Congo, part of a four-nation tour following his assumption of the presidency this year. China has emphasised its interest in enhancing mutual trust with African nations and consolidating the political foundations of the China-Africa

¹ "Japan to host ministerial meeting with African nations on natural resources", *Kyodo News Service*, March 5, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newswire)

² "Iran is to broaden strategic relations with African states", *Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)*, April 17, 2013 at http://www.irna.ir/en/News/80618701/Economic/Iran_is_to_broaden_strategic_relations_with_African_states

³ "Abdollahian: President's Africa tour aims at expansion of relations", *Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)*, April 14, 2013 at http://www.irna.ir/en/News/80613546/Politic/Abdollahian_President%E2%80%99s_Africa_tour_aims_at_expansion_of_relations; Also see "President Ahmadinejad underlines expansion of Iran-Benin ties", *Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA)*, April 15, 2013 at http://www.irna.ir/en/News/80614004/Politic/President_Ahmadinejad_underlines_expansion_of_Iran-Benin_ties

relationship. The country views people-to-people ties and exchanges as fundamental to building a new type of strategic partnership between the two sides.⁴

Northern Africa

Egypt

India, Egypt to strengthen bilateral ties; President Morsi visits Sudan in efforts to rebuild ties

Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi's visit to India on March 18-20, 2013 resulted in agreements aimed at enhancing bilateral ties between the two countries. The two sides agreed to strengthen bilateral energy and defence ties, and improve opportunities to promote investments. Among other targets, both countries will aim for bilateral trade amounting to US\$8 billion by March 2016; bilateral trade presently stands at US\$5 billion. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has offered India's support in the democratic transition process in Egypt, and has encouraged the increasing interactions between the Indian Election Commission, and its Egyptian counterpart. Bilateral defence ties and enhanced cooperation will remain on the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the Joint Defence Committee scheduled to take place in New Delhi in April.⁵

Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi completed a two-day visit to Sudan beginning April 4 in a bid to restore ties following a period of deteriorating relations between the two countries under former president Hosni Mubarak. The latter had accused Sudan of protecting those involved in a 1995 assassination attempt on him in Addis Ababa. Morsi has met Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir despite an International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrant against him for his role in war crimes committed during the Darfur conflict. Egypt has agreed with the African Union, which has dismissed the warrant on account of the immunity al-Bashir enjoys as head of state; both also see the warrant as endangering Sudan's future. The two leaders discussed the inauguration of two land routes linking Sudan and Egypt, new bilateral agricultural and industrial projects, and joint naval navigation partnership. Both countries have also agreed on keeping intact a 1959 agreement allocating the bulk of Nile River water to Sudan and Egypt; nine other countries, including Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda have called for a new agreement.⁶ Egypt is also exploring the possibility of setting up a tripartite agreement with Sudan and Libya.⁷

Mauritania

Mauritania closes border with Mali

Reports on March 20 indicated that Mauritania closed its border with Mali in order to prevent

⁴ "China will be Africa's all-weather friend and partner: Chinese president", *Xinhua News Agency*, March 30, 2013 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-03/30/c_124522273.htm

⁵ "India, Egypt agree to bolster energy, defence ties", *Deccan Chronicle*, March 21, 2013 at <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/130321/news-current-affairs/article/india-egypt-agree-bolster-energy-defence-ties>

⁶ Mohamed Osman, "Egypt's president in Sudan to improve ties", *Yahoo! News*, April 4, 2013 at <http://news.yahoo.com/egypts-president-sudan-improve-ties-205950264.html>

⁷ "Sudan, Egypt agree to build strategic ties", *Sudanese Media Centre*, (in Arabic), April 5, 2013

infiltration by Islamist and other groups active in Mali and the surrounding regions. The border will remain open to Malian refugees. The number of refugees streaming into Mauritania has increased in the past three months since the start of the French military intervention in northern Mali.⁸

Sudan

Sudan to support additional term for Turkey UNSC membership; Sudanese president visits South Sudan

Undersecretary in the Sudanese Foreign Ministry, Rahamtalla Osman, has said that Sudan would support another term for Turkish membership in the UN Security Council. Osman was speaking during a visit to Ankara and following talks with his Turkish counterpart. According to him, Sudan's support is based on its view that Turkey is among the few countries that holds an "objective opinion" of events in Africa and whose advice Sudan values. Osman also pointed to Turkey's effective use of soft power in mediating regional conflicts, which could prove beneficial in normalising Sudan's ties with South Sudan. (Turkey maintains good relations with both countries). Sudan is also hopeful that Turkey, as a country with no "ulterior motives" in its relations with Sudan, could mediate sour relations between the US and Sudan.⁹

Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir and his South Sudanese counterpart Salva Kiir have agreed to form a high-level joint committee to focus on unresolved issues between the two countries. The discussions took place during a one-day visit by al-Bashir to the South Sudanese capital, Juba. Al-Bashir has said that the two countries are inextricably interdependent, and leaders on both sides must work to promote the interests of citizens. Sudan has called for opening of the country's common border to promote border trade and free movement of people. The visit is seen as a significant step towards normalisation of strained ties between the two countries.¹⁰

South Sudan

Insecurity prevails in South Sudan despite independence; South Sudan army requests UN force in Abyei to monitor Sudanese military activities; Five Indian peacekeepers killed in South Sudan ambush

A report by the Sudd Institute, an independent research organisation in South Sudan, has highlighted the fear and violence that prevails in the country, even close to two years following independence, and has drawn parallels to violent periods of the North-South civil war. Populations in South Sudan continue to face recurrent violence, including from localised ethnic conflicts, communal violence involving militia attacks and cattle raiding, and urban crime against East

⁸ "Mauritania closes border with Mali to check Islamist infiltration", *Radio France Internationale*, (in French), March 20, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

⁹ "Sudan to support Turkish membership on Security Council for another term", *Today's Zaman*, March 8, 2013 at <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-309157-sudan-to-support-turkish-membership-on-security-council-for-another-term.html>

¹⁰ "Sudanese president orders "resumption" of border trade with South Sudan", *Sudan Tribune*, April 13, 2013 at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article46204>

African labourers and business owners. The report also points to rebellions in the country's army, still bearing its wartime name, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), as a factor in compounding insecurity in some areas. Other unresolved issues that have heightened instability include lack of proper border demarcation, extreme rural poverty, lack of trained police force, and circulation of arms and other weapons.¹¹

The South Sudanese army has claimed that Sudan has deployed forces around the Abyei. The oil-rich area is contested by both countries. The SPLA has requested the UN Interim Force in Abyei (UNISFA) to monitor Sudanese deployments, on grounds that the Sudan Armed Forces, along with members of other rebel groups aim to reoccupy the disputed area. An SPLA spokesperson has said that any occupation of Abyei by Sudanese forces would be a violation of the agreement signed between Khartoum and Juba earlier this year in Addis Ababa that included items on cooperation, security and other post-secession issues.¹²

Later reports indicated that following ongoing negotiations between the two governments, both sides had agreed to withdraw their forces from negotiated safe demilitarised buffer zones.¹³ They also signed an implementation matrix for the nine cooperation agreements negotiated between the two countries in September 2012. This will allow implementation of agreements in areas including security cooperation, and economic cooperation, particularly relating to export of oil from South Sudan through Port Sudan, movement of citizens between the two countries, trade, and banking cooperation.¹⁴

A rebel ambush led to the death of five Indian Army personnel serving in South Sudan. Another five soldiers were injured. The forces were part of the 2,200-strong Indian contingent in the UN Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) based in Pibor county in Jonglei state. Pibor has been the centre of violence and ethnic strife since South Sudan's independence in July 2011. India has suffered many personnel losses in the past as a result of its participation in UN peacekeeping missions around the world.¹⁵

¹¹ "Fear lingers in South Sudan despite independence - paper", *The Citizen*, February 28, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

¹² "South Sudan army asks UN force to monitor Sudan's military activities in Abyei", *Miraya FM*, Juba, March 3, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines); Also see "Sudan, South Sudan reach agreement on Abyei, implementation of cooperation deal", *Xinhua News Agency*, January 6, 2013 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-01/06/c_124189463.htm

¹³ "Sudan army starts withdrawing troops from border areas", *The Citizen*, March 12, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

¹⁴ "Sudan, South Sudan sign matrix for implementation of agreements", *Republic of Sudan Radio*, (in Arabic), March 12, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

¹⁵ "Five Indian Army personnel killed in South Sudan ambush by rebels - PTI", *Press Trust of India*, April 9, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines); Also see Aman Sethi, "Five Indian soldiers killed as rebels ambush convoy in South Sudan", *The Hindu*, April 9, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/five-indian-soldiers-killed-as-rebels-ambush-convoy-in-south-sudan/article4598622.ece>

Tunisia

Turkey launches cooperation projects in Tunisia

A visit by Turkish Deputy Prime Minister, Bekir Bozdag, to Tunisia marked the start of new projects in the country under the Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TÝKA). The projects involve enhancement of the security structure, and development of municipality services in the country. Under the initiative, Turkey will provide vehicles and equipment support, and training to Tunisian security and municipality organisations to improve performance. Weak security organisations and public service sector are among several challenges that Tunisia is facing in its restructuring process following the 2011 revolution.¹⁶

Western Africa

Cote d'Ivoire

President Ouattara sees Chinese support as "vital" for African development

Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara has said that China's support will be vital if African states are to achieve their development ambitions. The remarks came following Ouattara's meeting, alongside other African leaders, with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit on March 28. Ouattara also said that China-Africa relations are bound to grow stronger since China seems to understand the challenges facing African countries today. Cote d'Ivoire is aiming to become an emerging economy by 2020, with hopes of benefitting from the experience of BRICS countries.¹⁷

Mali

Nigeria deploys troops to Mali support mission, Chad urges ECOWAS members to expedite Afisma deployments; Afisma integrated into new UN peacekeeping force; Mali presidential elections to be held in July; MNLA urges ICC probe into rights abuses by Malian army; Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission launched to address security and governance issues

Nigeria has deployed 162 personnel in the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (Afisma), thus completing deployment of the 1,200 troops it had promised for the mission. The troops will take part in peacekeeping and enforcement in northern Mali.¹⁸ Meanwhile, Chad has urged West African countries to expedite deployment of their troops to Mali. Chadian president Idris Déby was speaking at the 42nd summit of heads of state and governments of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that took place in the last week of February. Chad

¹⁶ "Deputy PM visits Tunisia to mark inauguration of TÝKA projects", *Today's Zaman*, March 17, 2013 at <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-309984-deputy-pm-visits-tunisia-to-mark-inauguration-of-tika-projects.html>

¹⁷ "Cote d'Ivoire president says Africa needs Chinese "support" to develop", *Xinhua News Agency*, March 29, 2013 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/africa/2013-03/29/c_132271910.htm

¹⁸ "Troops Deployment to Mali Completed", *ThisDay Live*, February 28, 2013 at <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/troops-deployment-to-mali-completed/140795/>

has contributed over 2,000 soldiers so far to the northern Mali military operation, the largest African contingent alongside French forces. Chad is not a member of the ECOWAS. Later reports suggested that the Chadian contingent in Mali had officially integrated into Afisma.¹⁹ Reports also indicate that ECOWAS wants the Afisma to evolve into a UN mission that could allow neighbouring (and non-ECOWAS member) countries such as Mauritania to participate in the mission. A UN mission would also allow for allocation of more resources, and better coordination of ground activities.²⁰

ECOWAS officials announced in late March that the Afisma, which has been operating under ECOWAS, had been moved to an African Union (AU) mandate with former Burundian President Pierre Buyoya appointed head of the mission. The transition of mandates took place following the widening participation of non-member countries in the Afisma.²¹ The announcement was followed, a month later, by the creation of a 12,600-strong UN peacekeeping force approved by the Security Council. The force, named MINUSMA, will begin operations in Mali on July 1, and will be supported by French troops. Most of Afisma's personnel are expected to become part of the new force. MINUSMA will be the UN's third largest peacekeeping force, behind missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan.²²

The Malian government has announced that it plans to hold the first round of presidential elections on July 7. Legislative elections are scheduled to be held on July 21, along with a second run-off round of the presidential polls if required. The winning candidate will need to secure more than 50 per cent of votes in the first round; otherwise, a second run-off will take place between the leading contenders. Dioncounda Traore was appointed interim president after an agreement with the military junta that orchestrated the March 2012 coup. The coup leaders, however, have continued to interfere in state affairs, urging calls particularly from foreign governments that a credible and legitimate civilian government is set up through free and fair elections.²³

Members of the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) have announced that they have requested an International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor to open an investigation into claims of human rights abuses by the Malian army during the northern Mali crisis, drawing parallels with the Rwandan genocide. An MNLA counsel has pointed to articles published in pro-government media that identified MNLA members by name and incited people to target them. The MNLA claims to have precise information on acts of reprisals by government forces against members of the Peul, Tuareg, Arab, and Songhai ethnic groups, and others suspected of

¹⁹ "Donors urged to fulfill funding pledges to ensure Mali military mission success", *Radio France Internationale*, (in French), February 27, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

²⁰ "Chad formally joins international force in Mali", *Radio France Internationale*, (in French), March 10, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

²¹ "AU takes over Mali mission from West African regional bloc - Nigerian paper", *Daily Trust*, March 21, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

²² "U.N. Security Council approves creation of Mali peacekeeping force", *Reuters*, April 25, 2013 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/25/us-mali-crisis-un-idUSBRE93O0R420130425>

²³ "Mali says to hold presidential election on July 7", *Reuters*, February 14, 2013 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/14/us-mali-rebels-election-idUSBRE91D1HG20130214>

supporting the MNLA and other rebel groups in the north, and that the government in Bamako did little to prevent it.²⁴

In response to recommendations from the international community, Malian interim president Dioukou Traore inaugurated a Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission on April 25. The commission is comprised of 33 members, representing various ethnic groups of Mali, traditional and community leaders, professional bodies (journalists, lawyers), former government officials, the Malian military, youth and women organisations, and the Malian diaspora. The commission is seen as an essential tool to address long-standing issues of security and governance, particularly in northern Mali. Traore has asked that the commission's work be "inclusive and impartial"; however, dialogue could only take place with those who will agree to lay down their arms, and renounce independence or the imposition of Sharia law. The MNLA has refused to disarm before negotiations are held with the Malian government, and will thus remain a key obstacle to reconciliation.²⁵

Nigeria

Turkish firm plans to create more than 40,000 jobs in Nigeria; Nigerian leadership role enhanced through Mali crisis, says minister; Pakistan, Nigeria to boost bilateral trade; Nigerian oil exports threatened by global oil oversupply; Boko Haram rejects amnesty deal from Nigerian government

A Turkish quarry firm, Zeberced Limited, has announced that the company plans to create an industrial free zone over 250 hectares of land in Abuja. The company plans to create around 178 factories in the zone, which in turn will create over 40,000 local jobs. The company's managing director, Adil Kurt, has said that one of the company's goals is to understand the potential for investing in Nigeria and increasing Turkish investment in the country. Kurt urged the Nigerian Ministry of Mines and Steel to address the problem of unlicensed quarries in the country, in order that business in this sector is not affected.²⁶

Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Olugbenga Ashiru, has disclosed that the military junta that toppled the Malian government last year, triggering a larger crisis in the country, had approached the Nigerian government for support and endorsement. The Nigerian government turned down the request "in the interest of democracy and unity" in Africa. Ashiru was speaking before Nigeria's House of Representatives joint committees on Defence, Army, Foreign Affairs and National Security, on the deployment of Nigerian soldiers to the Mali support mission. Ashiru said that the Malian crisis happened at a time when the African continent was encouraging democracy to

²⁴ "Tuareg rebels urges ICC to probe into rights abuse committed by Malian army", *Radio France Internationale*, (in French), March 5, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

²⁵ "Mali Launches Dialogue and Reconciliation Commission", *inamibia.co.na*, April 25, 2013 at <http://www.inamibia.co.na/news/africa/item/40932-mali-launches-dialogue-and-reconciliation-commission.html>; Also see "Ex-defence minister Sokona to head Mali's dialogue, reconciliation commission", *AfriqueJet*, March 31, 2013 at <http://www.afriquejet.com/news/4637-ex-defence-minister-sokona-to-head-mali-s-dialogue-reconciliation-commission.html>, and "Mali's dialogue, reconciliation commission to begin work "in two weeks"", *Radio France Internationale*, (in French), April 12, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

²⁶ "Mining: Turkey Firm Plans 40,000 Jobs for Nigerians", *Daily Trust*, March 1, 2013 at <http://dailytrust.com.ng/index.php/news-news/51681-mining-turkey-firm-plans-40-000-jobs-for-nigerians>

take root in that country. He also said that the crisis had reinforced Nigeria's role as a leader on the continent, and that many countries were looking up to Nigeria to lead the international campaign in Mali. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs has urged the Nigerian military to anticipate the possibility of backflow of arms and ammunition as a result of the conflict. The committee is expected to announce a bill that aims to stem the flow of illegal arms into Nigeria.²⁷

The Nigerian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Dauda Danladi Mni, has said that both countries aim to enhance bilateral trade to US\$1 billion by the end of 2013. Mni was addressing the business community at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) in late March. Trade with Nigeria could prove beneficial for Pakistan, by serving as a window to other business opportunities in the larger West African region. Nigeria is exploring import opportunities in the area of agricultural machinery, pharmaceuticals, garments, and electro-medical apparatus. Other investment opportunities for Pakistan are in areas including oil and gas, minerals and mining, agriculture and livestock, poultry, and fisheries. The two sides are also working towards liberal visa policies to enhance trade and economic relations.²⁸

Nigerian oil traders have reported that decreasing patronage from buyers and lower demand from the United States in particular, are posing serious threats to Nigeria's oil exports. Refineries on the US east coast that are major buyers of Nigerian crude oil shut down last year and cancelled orders from Nigeria. Discovery of oil and gas in shale-rock formations in the US have also caused Nigerian oil imports there to fall to one third of the amount purchased last year. With the world's largest fuel consumer now meeting an increasing part of its demand from its shale deposits, even Canadian exporters to the US have begun selling to Europe. It is an indication of how global oil flows are being transformed by the US energy revolution. Asian buyers of Nigerian crude demand price cuts to cover the cost of shipping over such a large distance. The Nigerian federal and state budgets are heavily dependent on oil revenues to fund projects and cost of governance.²⁹

The Nigeria-based militant group Boko Haram has rejected an offer of amnesty for its members. The Nigerian government extended the deal on condition that the group meets an immediate ceasefire, give up arms, and participates in dialogue. The purported head of the group rejected the offer in an audio recording, saying the militants had done nothing that requires an amnesty, and that it is the Nigerian government that should be pardoned by the group. The offer was a result of a committee constituted by President Goodluck Jonathan following calls by religious, traditional, and political leaders in northern Nigeria for some kind of amnesty for Boko Haram. Governors of the northern states have urged the group to accept the deal and end violence that has killed around 3,000 people since 2009.³⁰

²⁷ "FG: Malian Rebels Sought Nigeria's Endorsement", *ThisDay Live*, March 1, 2013 at <http://www.thisdaylive.com/articles/fg-malian-rebels-sought-nigeria-s-endorsement/140929>

²⁸ "Pakistan, Nigeria to enhance bilateral trade by 1bn dollars", *Associated Press of Pakistan News Agency*, March 29, 2013 (BBC Monitoring Global Newline)

²⁹ "Global oversupply of oil threatens Nigerian exports", *Daily Trust*, April 8, 2013 at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304080130.html>; Also see "Nigeria's oil revenue fell by N761bn in 2012 -CBN", *Daily Trust*, April 26, 2013 at <http://www.dailytrust.com.ng/index.php/news-news/53124-nigeria-s-oil-revenue-fell-by-n761bn-in-2012-cbn>

³⁰ "Nigeria's Boko Haram Rejects Amnesty Deal", *Voice of America (VOA)*, April 11, 2013 at <http://www.voanews.com/content/nigerias-boko-haram-rejects-amnesty-deal/1639310.html>; Also see "Please accept amnesty - Northern Governors beg Boko Haram", *Daily Post*, April 26, 2013 at <http://dailypost.com.ng/2013/04/26/please-accept-amnesty-northern-governors-beg-boko-haram/>

Eastern Africa

Burundi

Iran wishes to step up collaboration with Burundi

In a meeting with the Burundian President Pierre Nkurunziza, Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad expressed his wish for better ties between the two countries. The Iranian president described the visit by his Burundian counterpart as a big step toward the development of friendly ties between the two nations. He added that the two countries can closely cooperate in the fields of agriculture, industry, trade, education, health, culture and politics. He did not forget to note Iran and Burundi can cooperate for the establishment of a just world order. The president of Burundi stated that his country was determined to expand the level of its 'constructive ties' with Iran.³¹

Comoros

Plot against Comoros Government foiled

The Comorian authorities have arrested several people of plotting a suspected coup against the government. Not many details about the plot were given by the authorities. The Interior Minister of Comoros confirmed the existence of a scheme to challenge the country's leadership but the authorities fell short of calling it a coup. Some unrest has grown and simmered in Comoros recently which has experienced around twenty coup or coup attempts since independence in 1975.³²

Djibouti

Djibouti has a new Prime Minister; Chinese political delegation visits Djibouti

Former defence minister Abdoukader Kamil Mohamed has taken office as Djibouti's new prime minister after a cabinet reshuffle by President Guelleh. He has replaced Mr. Dileita Mohamed who had served as prime minister since 2001. Guelleh's move has been described as an attempt by the president to surround himself with a group of loyalists. Some people have charged that the reshuffle did not represent real change as it is just the same people holding different offices.³³

A Communist Party of China (CPC) delegation officially visited Djibouti for two days. Ai Ping, deputy head of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, and his entourage of five members were welcomed at the airport by Djibouti's Youth Minister Badoul Hassan Badoul. The visit by the CPC delegation is to reinforce friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries. The delegation visited the Doraleh Port and the site for the future Ghoubet port.

³¹ "Iran calls for enhanced ties with Burundi", *Press TV*, April 10, 2013 at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/04/10/297490/iran-calls-for-enhanced-burundi-ties/>

³² "Comoros says foils plot against government, makes arrests", *Reuters*, April 22, 2013 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/22/us-comoros-unrest-idUSBRE93L0QI20130422>

³³ "Djibouti gets new Prime Minister in 'cosmetic' cabinet reshuffle", *Middle East Online*, April 1, 2013 at <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=57849>

The Chinese Import/Export Bank would be funding about US\$55 million for the construction of the latter.³⁴

Eritrea

Eritrea denies entry for the UN Special Rapporteur to assess human rights; Eritrea supports Egypt's position on Nile water dispute

The authorities in Asmara have refused the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Eritrea entry into the country. Beedwantee Keetharuth, speaking at the 53rd session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), said that the Eritrean government is not cooperating as per the requirements of the Human Rights Council. It is to be noted that the Eritrean government immediately rejected the rapporteur's appointment in July 2012. The Eritrean government maintained that the appointment was politically motivated.³⁵

The Government of Eritrea has supported Egypt's stance over the colonial-era treaty for sharing the water of the Nile River. The treaty grants Egypt the largest share to utilise the Nile's water. Mohamed Morsi, the Egyptian prime minister, has welcomed the Eritrean message and has wished meeting his Eritrean counterpart. It is to be noted that although Ethiopia is the source of 85 per cent of the Nile's water, Egypt and Sudan use around 90 per cent of the resources. Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania signed a new agreement in April 2010 to overturn the colonial-era treaty seeking a more reasonable and equitable utilisation of the river. Burundi joined the group in March 2011. South Sudan has not yet signed the Framework Agreement but has also rejected the 1959 treaty between Sudan and Egypt. However, Egypt and Sudan have dismissed the deal saying the new agreement is insignificant as it does not include all Nile basin countries. Egypt has in the past warned against construction of further dams along the Blue or White Niles.³⁶

Ethiopia

Ethiopia focuses on Indian tourists; Ethiopia denies reports of immediate pullout from Somalia

Ethiopia is trying to woo Indian tourists who travel abroad by setting up a special tourism office in India. 'Come, visit Ethiopia' is the slogan for the campaign. Ethiopia has 20 National Parks, four wildlife sanctuaries, eight wildlife reserves and 18 controlled hunting areas. UNESCO has declared nine historical sites in the country as World Heritage. Ethiopia is looking at India as a good market for tourism as more than 13 million people travel out of India annually. With one already opened in New Delhi, the Ethiopian government plans to set up several tourism promotional centres in other major Indian cities.³⁷

³⁴ "Delegation of Communist Party of China visits Djibouti", *Global Times*, April 24, 2013 at <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/777203.shtml#.UX-sFUoXbLQ>

³⁵ "UN Special Rapporteur blocked from entering Eritrea", *Sudan Tribune*, April 14, 2013 at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article46220>

³⁶ "Eritrea supports Egypt's position over Nile water dispute", *Sudan Tribune*, April 18, 2013 at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article46276>

³⁷ "Ethiopia targets 250,000 Indian tourists", *East African Business Week*, April 15, 2013 at <http://www.busiweek.com/opportunities/4966-ethiopia-targets-250000-indian-tourists>

The Ethiopian prime minister stated that his country would withdraw its troops from Somalia soon. Ethiopia had pledged to stay in the war torn country until its government could ratify a new constitution and its military was able to fight the Islamist threat on its own.³⁸ But, the Ethiopian foreign ministry clarified that there wasn't any plan to withdraw all troops from Somalia immediately. The Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn had alleged in his parliament that the African Union force in Somalia has not kept the promise to replace Ethiopian troops in parts of Somalia under AU control. Eloi Yao, the AMISOM spokesman, told that the peacekeeping force has not received any formal document in this regard.³⁹

Kenya

World Bank assures continued finances to Kenya; ICC drops case against Muthaura

The World Bank has decided to continue supporting Kenya financially even after a new government in office. Allaying fears of financial sanctions by the bank or even related financiers, Johannes Zutt, Kenya's World Bank Director, said that politics would not in any way interfere with its relations with Kenya. He was clarifying on speculations that international donors were to pull back if President-elect Uhuru Kenyatta takes over in Kenya. Kenya is now the centre of focus by many international investors especially after having what he termed as the most peaceful elections ever. Finance Minister Njeru Githae of Kenya has told that he had not received any cancellation of pledged funding by any international donor.⁴⁰

Following the ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda's withdrawal of the charges, the International Criminal Court (ICC) officially dropped all charges against former Kenyan Head of Public Service Francis Muthaura. Admitting that he was bribed, an important witness rescinded his testimony against Muthaura. President-elect Uhuru Kenyatta, his deputy William Ruto, and radio presenter Joshua Arap Sang are others charged with crimes against humanity in the ICC. In the same meeting, Trial Chamber V heard arguments regarding Kenyatta's request to have the charges against him re-evaluated. ICC prosecutors maintained that they would go ahead with their case against Kenyatta. In another development at the meeting, the witness expected to testify against Ruto withdrew his testimony, saying he was bribed for the trial. Sang and Ruto's trials are scheduled to begin on May 28 while Kenyatta's trial has been scheduled for July 9.⁴¹

Malawi

Malawian President goes to international court on border issue with Tanzania; Malawi may replicate Zimbabwean land reforms and empowerment policies

President Joyce Banda of Malawi claimed that the intervention by the African Forum of former

³⁸ "Ethiopia says preparing to pull troops out of Somalia", *Reuters*, April 23, 2013 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/23/us-somalia-ethiopia-troops-idUSBRE93M19C20130423>

³⁹ "Ethiopia denies planning immediate pullout from Somalia", *Shabelle News*, April 25, 2013 at <http://shabelle.net/ethiopia-denies-planning-immediate-pullout-from-somalia/>

⁴⁰ "No change in relations with Kenya - WB", *Capital FM*, March 14, 2013 at <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/business/2013/03/no-change-in-relations-with-kenya-wb/>

⁴¹ "International Criminal Court officially drops Muthaura case, Ruto witness withdraws", *Sabahi*, March 19, 2013 at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/03/19/newsbrief-03

Heads of States on the border issue with Tanzania has been jeopardised and her country would urgently take the issue to the UN's International Court of Justice (ICJ). She alleged that documents submitted by Malawi were given to Tanzania prior to their submission. Deposits of oil and gas are expected underneath Lake Malawi which may help the Malawi government diversify its economy. The issue reignited in July 2012 when Malawi granted oil exploration licenses to UK and South African companies. Malawi claims the entire Lake Malawi under an 1890 agreement, while Tanzania insists that some part of the lake falls within its borders.⁴²

Admiring the Zimbabwean land reforms and economic empowerment initiatives while visiting the country, the Malawian President Joyce Banda said that her country would replicate the same. She said that experts would be sent to Zimbabwe soon to study the two programmes. She felt that the newly-resettled farmers in Zimbabwe have managed to produce significantly despite western economic sanctions. Land reform in Zimbabwe saw the majority of its citizens, who were earlier settled on marginal infertile land, receiving vast land tracts that were occupied by about 4000 white farmers. President Joyce found the empowerment of the rural communities essential for eradication of poverty.⁴³

Mauritius

India, Mauritius MoU on election management; Mauritian consulate in Faisalabad

Mauritius and India have agreed to cooperate in the field of election management and administration. The MoU signed in this regards aims at promotion of exchanges of knowledge and experience, information, materials, expertise and training of personnel, production and distribution of materials pertaining to electoral systems, voting technology etc. The MoU has been described as a landmark mechanism for strengthening and deepening mutual collaboration between the elections commissions of the two countries. It will facilitate sharing of best practices, skills and experiences between the two institutions for mutual benefit.⁴⁴

Mauritius High Commissioner Mohammad Rashad Daureeawo in Pakistan said that given the huge trade potential and joint venture opportunities available between Mauritius and Pakistan, Mauritius would open its consulate in Faisalabad to facilitate local businessmen and exporters. Mauritian consulates are already working in Lahore and Karachi. He expressed that Mauritius was the gateway to the African Continent and the Pakistani entrepreneurs could have joint ventures in Mauritius Exclusive Economic Zones. Pakistan exported goods worth US\$37 million to Mauritius while imports were of US\$3.5 million in 2011. The Mauritius-Pakistan Joint Working Group had started negotiations for an FTA that needed to be sped up for signing the agreement.⁴⁵

⁴² "Malawian president seeks clarity on border dispute from International Court", *AllAfrica.com*, April 3, 2013 at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304031160.html>

⁴³ "Malawi to copy Zim's land reform, empowerment policies", *The Herald Online*, April 25, 2013 at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75827:malawi-to-copy-zims-land-reform-empowerment-policies&catid=38:local-news&Itemid=131#.UYACMEoXbLQ

⁴⁴ "India, Mauritius ink pact on election management", *The Hindu*, April 12, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-mauritius-ink-pact-on-election-management/article4609997.ece>

⁴⁵ "Mauritius to open consulate in Faisalabad, says IH", *The News International*, April 27, 2013 at <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-2-173858-Mauritius-to-open-consulate-in-Faisalabad,-says-IHC>

Mozambique

Mozambique at bottom of development index with Niger and the DRC; Mozambique Government will talk to former rebels

Niger, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Mozambique are at the bottom of the new HDI figures launched by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) for 187 countries and territories measured. The programme, this time, combines measures of life expectancy, literacy, school enrolment and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. Norway has repeated its top position ahead of Australia and the US.⁴⁶

Amid threats of violence the Mozambique Government has announced its intent to meet a delegation from the ex-rebel group Renamo. The interior minister, Alberto Mondlane, would receive a Renamo delegation following the attacks between the former civil war foes in the central province of Sofal. Tensions between Renamo and the Frelimo-led government reignited in 2013 after the group's leader Afonso Dhlakama started training former guerilla fighters in Gorongosa Mountains. A renegotiation of the terms of 1992 peace accord is being demanded by the former rebels. Recently, Renamo has attacked a police command post in the town of Muxungue after the police arrested its 15 leaders. The Renamo leader has said that he is open to a ceasefire as long as the government forces remain away from his camp in the Gorongosa Mountains and releases the arrested.⁴⁷ Fear of a civil war again in the neighbouring Mozambique has unsettled Zimbabwe's eastern border districts, sending shockwaves across a country struggling to stand up against its own problems.⁴⁸

Rwanda

Committee points more flaws in the UN report on DRC; Five year cooperation pact between Rwanda and Sudan; Pact between Rwanda and Lithuania

A 160 pages report by a special committee of Members of Parliament from both the chambers of the Rwandan Parliament has reaffirmed governmental rebuttal submitted to the UN sanctions committee. The report on Congo conflict casts further doubt on allegations in the UN Group of Experts (GoE) controversial report that Kigali backs the M23 rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The report establishes that individual selfish interests were responsible for the hatred against Rwanda. It describes the role played by the UN, international NGOs and human rights activists in DRC in perpetrating hatred against Kinyarwanda-speaking Congolese, Rwanda and its leadership. The report ultimately questions the credibility of the UN Group of Experts which was headed by Steven Hege.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ "Niger, DRC and Mozambique at Bottom of Development Index", *UN News Centre*, March 14, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44372&Cr=development&Cr1=#.UWhQ9ErLunw>

⁴⁷ "Mozambique Government to hold talks with rebels", *AllAfrica.com*, April 11, 2013 at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304120724.html>

⁴⁸ "Renamo resurgence unsettles Zim", *Financial Gazette*, April 11, 2013 at <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/national-report/16653-renamo-resurgence-unsettles-zim.html>

⁴⁹ "More flaws in UN dossier on DR Congo - New report", *The New Times*, March 7, 2013 at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15289&a=64631>

Rwanda and the Republic of Sudan on Tuesday signed a five-year bilateral cooperation agreement and another air service agreement to expand air transport services between the two countries. Rwanda has stationed more than 3,200 peacekeepers in Sudan's Darfur region. These agreements are an opportunity to flourish trade and transport between the two countries. The air service agreement is a part of Rwandan government's plan to expand airlines to different cities, including Khartoum and Juba in South Sudan. The Republic of Sudan also officially opened its embassy in Kigali.⁵⁰

Rwanda and Lithuania signed for strengthening mutual understanding and cooperation between them. The pact formulates a framework for establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries based on the principles of the United Nations Charter, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and, the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963. Lithuania has one of the fastest growing economies in the European Union. It is also a member of NATO and the Council of Europe. The country ranks as a "Very High Human Development" country in the United Nations Human Development Index lists.⁵¹

Somalia

Partial lifting of arms embargo on Somalia allows small weapons; UN Secretary General appoints new envoy to Somalia

After the United Nations partially lifted an arms embargo to strengthen security forces fighting al Qaeda-linked militants, the Somali government is to get its first shipment of small weapons. President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia is aware of the difficulty in managing of the fresh inflow of arms in his country. The U.N. Security Council resolution has allowed sales of weapons like automatic assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades to Somalia. While most of the members of the Security Council are wary about lifting the ban completely, the US has supported the recent move. The Security Council had imposed the arms embargo on Somalia in 1992 to cripple fighting warlords in a civil war.⁵²

Nicholas Kay, a diplomat from the United Kingdom, has been appointed as the UN Secretary General's new Special Representative for Somalia. He replaces Augustine Mahiga of Tanzania who will complete his assignment on June 3, 2013. The Secretary-General paid tribute to Mahiga's "exemplary leadership" in helping to steer the conclusion of Somalia's political transition. Mahiga's contributions have formed the bases on which the Federal Government of Somalia can now further engage on peace building, security and development. Mr. Kay has an experience as the Africa Director at the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sudan.⁵³

⁵⁰ "Rwanda and Sudan sign cooperation pact", *The New Times*, March 21, 2013 at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15303&a=65140>

⁵¹ "Rwanda and Lithuania sign cooperation pact", *The New Times*, March 29, 2013 at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15311&a=65438>

⁵² "Somalia to get small arms after U.N. lifts embargo", *Shabelle News*, March 29, 2013 at <http://shabelle.net/somalia-to-get-small-arms-after-u-n-lifts-embargo/>

⁵³ Ban appoints British diplomat as new UN envoy for Somalia", *Shabelle News*, April 30, 2013 at <http://shabelle.net/ban-appoints-british-diplomat-as-new-un-envoy-for-somalia/>

Uganda

M23 want to revive Kampala talks; Uganda, US suspends Kony search; US not to cut aid to Uganda; World Bank assistance to Ugandan budget stopped

The M23 rebel group has appealed to President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda to revive the Kampala peace talks under the auspices of the International Conference for Great Lakes Region (ICGR) and East African Community, headed by Uganda. Delegations of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the M23 have taken a break from the talks to consult their respective leaders. The political leader of M23 appealed to the President to reinstate the talks soon. Recognising that the Congolese people are tired of war, he appreciated Museveni for promoting peace. Regarding Museveni's position as better to understand Congo's problems he urged the United Nations to respect his decision. He also regretted the decision of the UN Security Council to create and send a joint force in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.⁵⁴

The hunt operation by Uganda and the United States for warlord Joseph Kony in the Central African Republic (CAR) has been suspended. The decision follows the orders from the African Union because the rebel forces holding power in the CAR are not recognized. The African Union was operating in Central Africa under the Bozize government. However, Uganda has made it clear that it would not remove its forces from the Republic warning the rebel group of retaliatory strike in case of an attack on the Ugandan Army.⁵⁵

Following investigations into alleged corruption in the Office of the Prime Minister where over US\$20 million was reportedly misappropriated; several donors have suspended aid to Uganda. But, the US has declared that it will not cut aid to Uganda over the allegations. The US was convinced that its funding to Uganda was properly utilized as it was outside direct budget support to the Government. The US provides over US\$430 m to Uganda annually to deal with critical health issues. However, the US ambassador to Uganda added a caveat that corruption was affecting Uganda's efforts to attract foreign investment and achieve its development goal.⁵⁶

The World Bank extends almost half of the entire budget support funding given to Uganda by donors and is the largest multilateral lender to the country. The Joint Budget Support Framework (JBSF) for Uganda will now retain funding only to projects. Some of the funds for the last round have been withheld because of graft scandals. These funds would only be released only after meeting certain conditions by Uganda. The JBSF has requested a detailed follow up on all the 62 individuals named for graft in the Attorney General's report on the Office of the Prime Minister and the PRDP.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ "M23 appeals to Museveni over Kampala talks", *New Vision*, April 2, 2013 at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/641244-m23-appeals-to-museveni-over-kampala-talks.html>

⁵⁵ "Uganda, US suspend Kony search", *New Vision*, April 3, 2013 at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/641284-uganda-us-suspend-kony-search.html>

⁵⁶ "US to maintain aid to Uganda", *New Vision*, April 11, 2013 at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/641552-us-to-maintain-aid-to-uganda.html>

⁵⁷ "World Bank stops supporting Uganda's budget", *New Vision*, April 25, 2013 at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/642023-world-bank-stops-supporting-uganda-s-budget.html>

Tanzania

China, Tanzania sign comprehensive cooperative partnership agreement during Xi Jinping's visit; First Uranium mining licence in Tanzania

The Chinese president Xi Jinping and his Tanzanian counterpart Jakya Mrisho Kikwete have signed an agreement to build a comprehensive cooperative partnership on the basis of mutual benefit and win-win conditions. According to the Chinese president, the two countries have maintained an all-weather friendship. He said that both the countries face the task of national development and the two sides should trust, support and help each other achieve the common goal. He added that a Chinese culture centre would be established in Tanzania. The two leaders witnessed the signing of several other cooperation deals. China currently is Tanzania's largest trading partner and second largest source of investment. The bilateral trade between the two countries has reached US\$2.47 billion.⁵⁸

Mantra Tanzania, a subsidiary of Australia-based Mantra Resources, has been given the first Tanzanian licence to mine Uranium by the Tanzanian Ministry of Energy and Minerals. ARMZ and its subsidiaries expect to produce 14,000 tons of uranium annually from the Mkuju River, which has measured resources of 36,000 tonnes of uranium and inferred resources of a further 10,000 tonnes. Mkuju River is expected to bring Tanzania up to US\$450 million in foreign direct investments, US\$250 million in foreign currency and create jobs. The site has already received the approval of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation for the mining as it has been excised from the Selous Game Reserve, a world heritage site.⁵⁹

Zambia

Zambia and Angola to cooperate in defence and security; Tata's Jaguar Land Rover to set its bases in Zambia

A bilateral accord in defence and security cooperation has been signed by the governments of Zambia and Angola. The accord reinforcing ties between the two countries focuses on the training of manpower. The document will regulate the defence cooperation that does not define specific area. It is expected that the signing of the cooperation accord would enable sharing of more information on defence and security. The leaders of the two countries regretted that sometimes they are perceived as not friendly.⁶⁰

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) owned by India's Tata motors will open its bases in Zambia. General Manager Sean Renton said that the firm would open its dealership in Lusaka. The company plans to boost its brands across the region as Zambia's economy has over the years registered

⁵⁸ "China, Tanzania agree to forge comprehensive cooperative partnership", *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)*, March 25, 2013 at <http://www.focac.org/eng/zxxx/t1024548.htm>

⁵⁹ "Tanzania grants first Uranium mining licence", *Sabahi*, April 10, 2013 at http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/newsbriefs/2013/04/10/newsbrief-04

⁶⁰ "Angola and Zambia sign military cooperation accord", *ANGOP*, April 19, 2013 at http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/politica/2013/3/16/Angola-and-Zambia-sign-military-cooperation-accord,f61f44b7-8346-41e0-8b58-c2d680414d1a.html

growth with positive promise to develop not only to benefit its people but also for the region at large.⁶¹

Zimbabwe

Government of Zimbabwe held responsible for torture; Tourism is the fastest growing industry in Zimbabwe; UK agrees to engage with Zimbabwe; Two Zimbabwean banks dropped from US sanctions list

In a landmark ruling that sets a new precedent against impunity in Africa, the leading human rights court in Africa has ruled that the Zimbabwean government was responsible for the torture of human rights lawyer Gabriel Shumba. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has now given the government 90 days to act on the decision. Shumba was arrested by the police and CIO officials in Zimbabwe in 2003, and severely tortured during his detention. The Commission also found that Zimbabwe was in violation of Articles 1 and 4 of the African Charter by failing to protect its citizens from extra judicial killings. It recommended that the Government of Zimbabwe should undertake law reforms for compensation in cases of wrongful killings.⁶²

Tourism has become the fastest growing industry in Zimbabwe. The Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (Retosa) said that the tourism industry in the country remains resilient and tourist-friendly. The recent constitutional referendum on March 16, 2013 has influenced the business positively. Zimbabwe offers a large variety of tourist experiences: It has one of the largest concentrations of wildlife in Southern Africa, boasts the famous Victoria Falls shared with Zambia, the Great Zimbabwe Ruins, amazing wildlife and culture. Zimbabwe is now becoming an international hub for tourism investment due to a balance between rural and urban tourism investment opportunities and being a progressive country in wildlife management.⁶³

After meeting between representatives of the inclusive Government and countries calling themselves "Friends of Zimbabwe", UK has agreed to engage with Zimbabwe at bilateral level to resolve the land issue that has been at the centre of the strained relations between the two countries for over a decade. The problem between the two countries emerged from UK's opposition to the land reform programme to correct colonial imbalances in Zimbabwe.⁶⁴

In an effort to re-engage Zimbabwe, the US government dropped sanctions it imposed on Agricultural Development Bank of Zimbabwe and the Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe. Although the banks will not be allowed to transact with the over 160 listed Government

⁶¹ "VW, Jaguar Land Rover bases coming", *AllAfrica.com*, April 23, 2013 <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304240392.html>

⁶² "Zim govt found responsible for torture in landmark ruling", *SW Radio Africa*, March 25, 2013 at <http://www.swradioafrica.com/2013/03/25/zim-govt-found-responsible-for-torture-in-landmark-ruling/>

⁶³ "Robust tourism growth in Zimbabwe", *New Era*, March 28, 2013, at <http://www.newera.com.na/articles/51054/Robust-tourism-growth-in-Zimbabwe>

⁶⁴ "Zim, UK in talks to thaw frosty Ties", *The Herald Online*, March 28, 2013, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=72297:zim-uk-in-talks-to-thaw-frosty-ties&catid=38:local-news&Itemid=131#.UXkY20oXbLQ

leaders and Zanu-PF officials, the US Treasury Department gave the banks a clean chit to transact with anyone in the world not covered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctions. The transactions do not otherwise involve any person whose property and interests in property are blocked. Zimbabwe has lost millions of dollars due to US sanctions on its number of entities.⁶⁵

Central Africa

Angola

Angola appeals for help to India to develop its jewel industry; EU to donate 29.6 million Euros to Angola; Japan donates US\$ 2 million for return of Angolan refugees

Angola has appealed to New Delhi for help in the development of its jewel industry and training of the country's human capital. The Angolan ambassador to India also appealed for India to help Angola in diversifying the mining production and exploration as well called for public and private entities of India to invest in the country.⁶⁶

Meanwhile, the European Union decided to donate 29.6 million Euros to Angola to finance activities included in the Social Support Fund under the terms of a new cooperation agreement signed. The funding will be used to build social facilities in the rural areas of Angola, to create business opportunities for the Angolans and to improve the quality of life of the population.⁶⁷

In other developments, the Japanese government granted US\$ 2 million to the International Migration Organisation to support the voluntary return and social integration of around 500,000 Angolan refugees who fled to neighbouring countries like DR Congo, Congo-Brazzaville, Namibia and Zambia during the civil war.⁶⁸

Cameroon

French family kidnapped by Boko Haram freed; Cameroon to receive 13.7 billion francs interest-free loans from China

A French family of seven that was kidnapped by the Nigerian armed group, Boko Haram in the

⁶⁵ "U.S removes two banks from sanctions list, President raps piecemeal moves, Regime change agenda Aborts", *The Herald Online*, April 25, 2013, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75833:us-removes-two-banks-from-sanctions-list-president-raps-piecemeal-moves-regime-change-agenda-aborts&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130#.UX5HTEoXbLQ

⁶⁶ "Angola wants India to help develop jewel industry", *Angola Press*, April 19, 2013 at http://www.portalangop.co.ao/motix/en_us/noticias/economia/2013/3/16/Angola-wants-India-help-develop-jewel-industry,40531152-fd77-469b-8948-63f0084e1883.html

⁶⁷ "European Union funds development projects in Angola", *Macauhub*, April 17, 2013 at <http://www.mcauhub.com.mo/en/2013/04/17/european-union-funds-development-projects-in-angola/>

⁶⁸ "Japan grants \$2m towards Angolan refugee repatriation", *African Review*, March 25, 2013 at <http://www.africareview.com/News/Japan-grant-towards-Angolan-refugee-repatriation-/-/979180/1729962/-/giai48/-/index.html>

month of February were freed and handed over to the Cameroonian authorities. The French President, Francois Hollande announced that no ransom was paid for the family's release.⁶⁹

Cameroon's Head of State, Paul Biya signed two decrees which authorised the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development to sign with the People's Republic of China interest-free loan agreements that totals to 13.7 billion francs CFA to finance projects in the country. The money would be invested in priority areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, renewable energy and human resource training up to 2015.⁷⁰

Central African Republic

Seleka rebels overthrow President in a coup; CAR suspended from African Union; Regional leaders agree to send troops to CAR; French troops open fire, an Indian killed

In a bloody coup that forced the President into exile, formal diplomat turned rebel, Michel Djotodia dissolved the country's institutions and declared transitional rule. The rebel leader whose Seleka coalition took over the capital Bangui said that he would rule by decree until elections are organized in three years. Following the coup, the country was suspended from the African Union and sanctions were imposed on Seleka's leaders while the United Nations Security Council convened emergency talks. Meanwhile, President Francois Bozize fled across the Oubangui River into the Democratic Republic of Congo and later resurfaced in Cameroon. Djotodia in his address promised to press on with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the former rebels which has been the grievance of the Seleka rebellion.⁷¹ In the month of April, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned the violence committed against civilians by the rebels and expressed concern about the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the country.⁷² Meanwhile, at the summit organised by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in Chadian capital, N'Djamena, regional leaders agreed to send soldiers to CAR to assist its transitional government.⁷³

In other developments, when French troops opened fire on vehicles approaching Bangui an Indian was killed. Six other Indians who were injured in the incident were admitted to a French military hospital in neighbouring Chad. India's Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh directed that all efforts

⁶⁹ "French family captured in Cameroon freed", *Aljazeera*, April 19, 2013 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/04/201341981828762423.html>

⁷⁰ "CFAF 13.7 billion interest-free loan from China to Cameroon", *Business in Cameroon*, April 6, 2013 at <http://www.businessincameroon.com/investment/0604-4012-cfaf-13-7-billion-interest-free-loan-from-china-to-cameroon>

⁷¹ "Central Africa's new strongman proclaims 3-year transition", *AFP*, March 25, 2013 at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5izcZBry1di9mj6rCjcpZih-pAxYQ?docId=CNG.de4aa075efeb8f723830d3d8f39389f1.c1>

⁷² "U.N. alarmed at Central African Republic violence", *The Hindu*, April 17, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/un-alarmed-at-central-african-republic-violence/article4624187.ece>

⁷³ "African states to send 2,000 troops to Central African Republic", *Press TV*, April 18, 2013 at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/04/18/299024/2000-african-troops-to-deploy-in-car/>

be made to ensure the safety of about 100 Indians in the country.⁷⁴ The French troops also provided security to Indians working in a cement factory in the capital.⁷⁵

Chad

Chad to withdraw its troops from Mali; Chad faces humanitarian crisis due to influx of refugees

Chad's President, Idriss Deby, announced that the Chadian armed forces will withdraw from the war in Mali just days after a suicide bombing killed three Chadian soldiers. Chad has already pulled out a battalion. However, the president held out the possibility that his country's troops could take part in an eventual UN force in Mali.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, Chad is facing a humanitarian crisis due to an influx of refugees and returnees into its south-eastern regions mainly from neighbouring Sudan and the Central African Republic. Close to 74,000 people have fled into Chad from Darfur following inter-ethnic clashes.⁷⁷

Democratic Republic Of Congo

UN Security Council authorises Intervention Brigade for DRC; Peace talks resume between government and M23 rebels; Congolese government faces no-confidence vote

The UN Security Council authorised the deployment of an intervention brigade within the current UN peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo for an initial period of one year to address imminent threats to peace and security. The force that will be based in North Kivu province and will aim to neutralise armed groups, reduce the threat posed to state authority and civilian security and make space for stabilisation activities.⁷⁸

Meanwhile, the peace talks that were stalled between the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the M-23 movement rebels resumed in the first week of April 2013 in Kampala, Uganda.⁷⁹ Thereafter, in mid-April, the M23 rebels regrouped after a split within the group with members of the losing faction joining the faction led by Gen. Sultani Makenga.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ "Ensure Indians' safety in Central African Republic: Manmohan", *The Hindu*, March 26, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/world/ensure-indians-safety-in-central-african-republic-manmohan/article4548571.ece>

⁷⁵ "French troops guard Indian cement plant in Bangui", *The Hindu*, March 29, 2013 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/french-troops-guard-indian-cement-plant-in-bangui/article4562420.ece>

⁷⁶ "Chad to pull its troops from war-torn Mali", *Aljazeera*, April 15, 2013 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/04/20134159514620616.html>

⁷⁷ "Regional insecurity adding to Chad's humanitarian needs", *IRIN News*, April 12, 2013 at <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97840/Regional-insecurity-adding-to-Chad-s-humanitarian-needs>

⁷⁸ "Security Council approves intervention force to target armed groups in DR Congo", *UN News Centre*, March 28, 2013 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=44523&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.UVqoMqLe4y4>

⁷⁹ "Stalled DR Congo peace talks to resume in Kampala", *Daily Monitor*, April 4, 2013 at <http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Stalled-DR-Congo-peace-talks-to-resume-in-Kampala/-/688334/1739268/-/jnru0kz/-/index.html>

⁸⁰ "DR Congo rebel M23 regroupes after faction fight", *Global Times*, April 18, 2013 at <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/775913.shtml#.UXfxnLXQm9F>

In other developments, the Congolese government faced a vote of no-confidence following a motion signed by nearly a third of parliamentarians to censure the Prime Minister Augustin Matata Ponyo. The PM has been accused of interfering with the judiciary and misusing state funds. However, given the size of his coalition in parliament, it is unlikely that Ponyo will lose.⁸¹ Meanwhile, the government managed to forestall a coup against the president with the arrest of the people involved.⁸²

Republic Of Congo

Congo and China enhance partnership

During China's new President Xi Jinping's visit to the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, the two countries agreed to build a "comprehensive cooperative partnership of solidarity and mutual assistance". The two countries also pledged to continue to support each other on issues regarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity with the Congolese president reaffirming his country's commitment to the one-China policy. They also agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in key sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, and energy.⁸³

Southern Africa

Southern African countries work together on conservation of Benguela Marine Ecosystem; SACU reviews its revenue sharing arrangement

Namibia, Angola and South Africa will work together on long-term conservation and sustainable use of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem through the signing of the Benguela Current Convention. The Current that stretches from Port Elizabeth in South Africa to the province of Cabinda in northern Angola produces goods and services estimated to be worth at least US\$ 54.3 billion per year.⁸⁴

The Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU) has reviewed its revenue sharing arrangement with member states having agreed on underpinning principles to guide the review process. According to reports, under the new arrangement, it is the tenet that no member state should be worse off and also agreed that allocations should be developmental in focus and not simply distributive. The new vision for the SACU would now be "to be an economic community with equitable and sustainable development to the welfare of its people for a common future".⁸⁵

⁸¹ "Congo government faces no-confidence vote", *Reuters*, April 12, 2013 at <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/04/12/uk-congo-democratic-government-idUKBRE93B0WZ20130412>

⁸² "DR Congo gov't foils coup against president", *Business Ghana*, March 23, 2013 at http://www.businessghana.com/portal/news/index.php?op=getNews&news_cat_id=&id=180502

⁸³ "China, Republic of Congo issue joint communiqué to boost ties", *Xinhua News Agency*, March 30, 2013 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-03/30/c_132273453.htm

⁸⁴ "Angola, Namibia and South Africa sign world's first large marine ecosystem legal framework", *United Nations Development Programme*, April 30, 2013 at <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/articles/2013/04/30/world-s-first-large-marine-ecosystem-legal-framework-signed-by-angola-namibia-and-south-africa.html>

⁸⁵ "Quantum leap in SACU revenue talks", *Mmegi online*, April 19, 2013 at <http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?sid=4&aid=711&dir=2013/April/Friday19>

Botswana

Jacob Zuma visits Botswana during Sacu Summit; US soldiers help Botswana integrate women into defence force

President Jacob Zuma of South Africa was in Botswana to attend the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) summit on April 12. The purpose of the summit was to discuss on regional trade and industrialisation union. The event appraised progress and outcomes with regard to the five-point programme adopted in March 2011 which included industrialisation, the review of the revenue-sharing agreement, trade facilitation, the development of Sacu institutions, and a unified engagement in trade negotiations. Heads of state from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland also attended the summit.⁸⁶

Botswana received a US Woman's Integration Work Group to help Botswana women integrate as soldiers within the Botswana Defence Force (BDF). The members of the group shared about their successes and challenges women still have in the US Army. Botswana wants to have enlisted females a part of the BDF. The US Army Africa has responded to a request from the BDF chief of defence forces to integrate the women into the BDF which has about 100 female officers.⁸⁷

Lesotho

Lesotho to receive aid from Japan through the WFP to tackle food insecurity; Lesotho and South Africa to ease cross-border movement

Lesotho will receive more than US\$2.3 million through the contribution made by the Government of Japan to the UN World Food Programme. Some 725,000 people are estimated to face food insecurity this year and 125,000 of the most need will receive cash through the Cash for Assets programmes that addresses land and soil degradation. Having faced two consecutive years of poor harvests, the contribution has come to Lesotho at a critical time.⁸⁸

Lesotho and South Africa have agreed to create migration systems to make it easier for people and goods to move across their border. However, there are concerns that that cross-border movement could make the process difficult and worsen corruption.⁸⁹

Namibia

Chamber of Commerce signs agreement with China

Namibia's Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a cooperation agreement with the Tianjin Chamber of Commerce that falls under the China Chamber of International Commerce. The

⁸⁶ "Zuma in Botswana for SACU Summit", *City Press*, April 12, 2013, at <http://www.citypress.co.za/politics/zuma-in-botswana-for-sacu-summit/>

⁸⁷ "Soldiers help integrate women into Botswana Defence Force", *IIP Digital*, April 25, 2013, at <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2013/04/20130425146405.html#axzz2Smt9lCae>

⁸⁸ "Japan donation helps boost food security in Lesotho", *World Food Programme*, April 25, 2013 at <http://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/japan-donation-helps-boost-food-security-lesotho-0>

⁸⁹ "SA, Lesotho to ease border control", *Business Day*, April 22, 2013 at <http://www.bdlive.co.za/africa/africanews/2013/04/22/sa-lesotho-to-ease-border-control>

agreement is aimed to build economic cooperation, act as a platform for people-to-people exchange for both the parties. The two chambers in order to enhance understanding will exchange information on local economic development, important economic events and major policies related to foreign investment and local market access. It was also noted that Namibian exports to China needs to be improved and to that end, both the countries will focus on value-addition for Namibian products.⁹⁰

South Africa

South Africa slams Britain's decision to phase out aid; South Africa criticises US, EU sanctions on Iran; Govt under fire for military intervention in CAR; PetroSA's chairman resigns amidst allegations of financial irregularities

South Africa criticised Britain's decision to phase out aid worth 19 million pounds a year saying that it was "tantamount to redefining" its relationship with Africa's biggest economy and its top investor. Britain is likely to end its aid by 2015 in favour of a "new relationship based on sharing skills and knowledge, not development funding". However, Pretoria criticised the move saying that the "unilateral announcement" will affect the way bilateral relations are conducted.⁹¹

Meanwhile, South Africa lashed out at the United States and European Union for imposing oil sanctions on Iran over its nuclear energy programme without consulting major importers of the Iranian energy supplies. It added that the US 18-month exemption for Iran oil sanctions has not benefited South Africa as the EU refused to grant waivers.⁹²

According to reports, the President, Jacob Zuma came under fire for the presence of South Africa in the CAR where it lost 27 of its soldiers in clashes with the rebels and its continued presence in the country will cost over R400 million in the next two years. However, the Department of Defence noted that there were no immediate plans for further military intervention in the CAR.⁹³

Following an internal investigation into alleged financial irregularities in a procurement deal with Ghana, the chairman of South Africa's state-owned oil firm PetroSA resigned. PetroSA admitted that some improprieties had occurred in the fight to clinch the deal as it plans to expand its oil and gas business in West Africa.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ "NCCI sign economic agreement", *The Namibian*, April 23, 2013 at <http://www.namibian.com.na/news/marketplace/full-story/archive/2013/april/article/ncci-sign-economic-agreement/>

⁹¹ "South Africa slams UK decision to phase out aid", *Yahoo! News*, April 30, 2013 at <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/south-africa-slams-uk-decision-phase-aid-150336548.html#CsFZXW6>

⁹² "South Africa slams US, EU over Iran oil sanctions", *Press TV*, April 19, 2013 at <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/04/19/299083/s-africa-raps-us-eu-over-iran-oil-bans/>

⁹³ "SA forces mass on CAR border", *IOL News*, March 31, 2013 at <http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/sa-forces-mass-on-car-border-1.1493892#.UYnUFqLe4y7>

⁹⁴ "South Africa state-owned oil firm boss resigns amid graft", *Business Standard*, April 30, 2013 at http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/south-africa-state-owned-oil-firm-boss-resigns-amid-graft-113043000038_1.html

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