

Africa Trends

Volume 1, Number 6
November - December 2012

A Bimonthly Newsletter on Africa



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE
STUDIES & ANALYSES

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Editor's Note

This edition of *Africa Trends* analyses significant developments that have taken place in Nigeria and Somalia in the concluding months of 2012. Sneha Bhura examines the implications of Nigeria's anti-terrorism law in tackling the country's Boko Haram threat, while Saurabh Mishra provides a study of Somalia's transition process and the challenges that lie ahead for the country and its people. In the Book Review section, Babjee Pothuraju reviews *Poverty, Hunger, and Democracy in Africa: Potential and Limitations of Democracy in Cementing Multiethnic Societies* by David Bigman, an insightful study of the common problems facing most African countries today and constructing a collaborative strategy to overcome looming crises.

The last two months of 2012 witnessed dramatic events in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Mali. In the DRC, members of the M23 rebel group seized control of the eastern city of Goma following prolonged fighting with UN-backed government forces. The group later agreed to withdraw from the city on the condition that the government meets their demands for national reforms and negotiations. At the time this issue was published, reports confirmed that the rebels had withdrawn from the city; however, peace talks mediated by Uganda between the government and M23 had failed. The South African Development Community (SADC) decided to contribute troops to the international force in the DRC, while Namibia and Angola announced they would not be sending soldiers to intervene in eastern DRC.

The crisis in Mali further deepened following the arrest of interim Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra on December 11 by soldiers. According to reports, the soldiers were acting under the order of Captain Amadou Sanogo, who led the junta that overthrew the Malian government in early 2012. The planned African-led military intervention force was unanimously authorised by the UNSC for a one-year mandate. The operation, however, was not expected to begin until September 2013. In other developments, Ghana's election commission confirmed that President Johan Mahama had won the presidential polls held in early December. The opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) remained opposed to the results, despite ECOWAS and international observers confirming the elections to be "free and fair".

China continues to strengthen its presence across Africa. Liberia signed an economic and technical cooperation agreement with China worth US\$15 million, while China's investment in Tanzania has hit US\$1 billion for a one-year period. The Chinese ambassador to Zambia has confirmed that China's investments in the country had crossed US\$2 billion, with Chinese firms creating more than 50,000 local job opportunities. Meanwhile, Rwanda is also benefitting from projects under the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), with China granting the country interest-free loans amounting to US\$19 million.

In other economic developments, the Ethiopian prime minister announced that India remained among the country's most favoured economic partners, with a proposal to raise Indian investments to US\$10 billion by 2015.

We hope you find this issue useful and look forward to your feedback.

Country Watch

CAN NIGERIA'S ANTI-TERRORISM LAW ADDRESS THE BOKO HARAM THREAT?

The Act does not seem to factor in the possibility of brutal crackdowns leading to an atmosphere of further militarisation and hostility.

SNEHA BHURA

The Boko Haram insurgency has the Nigerian government gasping for solutions. The militant sect which wants to see the creation of a pure Islamic state governed by *Sharia* law, has till date claimed the lives of three to ten thousand people in calculated bombings, targeted assassinations, and arbitrary shootings in north and north eastern Nigeria. Even though there are constitutional guarantees for dealing with terrorist threats, a co-ordinated response to the escalating Boko Haram violence has, however, been missing.

Interestingly, there is - on paper - a concrete legal response to tackle the brutal reign of terror perpetrated by the group, even in the midst of serious allegations of extra-judicial government high-handedness. In May 2011, the Nigerian National Assembly cleared the "Terrorism Prevention Act of 2011" and this was signed into law by President Goodluck Jonathan on June 3, 2011. The Act was in conformity with international standards, including UN guidelines. It addressed the issues of prevention, prohibition, and combating terrorism, as well as the financing of terrorism. It "also provides for the effective implementation of the 'Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism' as well as the 'Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of

Terrorism,' and prescribes penalties for the violation of its provisions". These penalties can range from a 20-year jail term to death sentences depending on the severity of cases. The Act also facilitates help from foreign governments by way of mutual assistance, information sharing, and extradition with regard to terrorism-related offences. But the law grants tremendous powers to law enforcement agencies to haul suspected terrorists with hardly any judicial oversight, and consequently, the law has been severely criticised by various national and international human rights groups. Thus, even though the law is yet to come into force - as per recent statements of the Inspector General who denied the existence of any such law for cracking down on Boko Haram operatives - the resurgence of Boko Haram activities in recent months and its use of suicide bombings to create further panic have compelled the federal government to amend this rather recent piece of legislation. The changes seek to: broaden the definition of a terrorist; introduce military trials for Boko Haram militants; transfer of complete authority to the office of the National

... the gradual politicisation of Boko Haram activities, along with evidence that political parties are covertly supporting the group to serve their vested interests, would mean that the green signal for the amendments may take longer than expected.

Security Advisory as the lead agency for dealing with the terrorist groups; along with allowing death penalty for terror suspects if found guilty as charged. Presently, the Terrorism (Prevention) Act 2011 (Amendment) Bill, 2012 as enshrined in the Report of the Conference Committee on the Terrorism Act 2011(Amendment) Bill 2012 has not received the approval of the Senate in the

Nigerian National Assembly. But the gradual politicisation of Boko Haram activities, along with evidence that political parties are covertly supporting the group to serve their vested interests, would mean that the green signal for the amendments may take longer than expected.

An anti-terrorism law is indeed a commendable step in a country like Nigeria, peopled as it is with numerous ethnic groups. A legislation of this scale was indeed long over due and its significance cannot be over estimated. Some important and forward-looking provisions include: the facilitation of the ratification and enforcement of international and regional conventions, and treaties on terrorism which Nigeria has signed over the past couple of years. Also, the act enables closer collaboration with other nations to learn from their expertise in counter-terrorism. But a closer look at the draft of the law reveals some glaring inadequacies that belie Nigeria's claims to be a federal republic that is ready to follow the example set by advanced liberal democracies. The spirit of the Act is quite evidently more reactive than proactive as it denies the terrorist that most fundamental of rights i.e. to defend himself until proven guilty. The right to counsel and a fair hearing are the cornerstones of modern criminal jurisprudence which are not given much space in the Act, as it exists today. The line between where the right of the suspect ends and that of law enforcement begins is quite blurred. The law enforcement agencies have arbitrary powers for the investigation and prosecution of terrorists. In fact, a November 2012 Amnesty International November 2012 Report entitled "*Nigeria: Trapped in a Cycle of Violence*," blames the Nigerian security forces for exacerbating the Boko Haram crisis in the north of the country because of their tendency towards brutal force in the crackdown of suspected terrorists. The report documents the various human rights violations committed by the security forces including the burning of homes and detention without trial, torture, enforced disappearance, and extra-judicial executions. But, most unfortunately, the Act does not address the root socio-economic causes responsible for the proliferation of Boko Haram activities. The proposed amendments do not address these concerns either. They are more focussed on giving the government more sweeping powers for tackling the scourge of terrorism sweeping the country. The Act does not seem to factor in the possibility of brutal crackdowns leading to an atmosphere of further militarisation and hostility.

Instead a more effective approach for the government would be to work towards reducing the vulnerability of Nigerians living in the north by investing in a better transport system, border patrolling, and critical infrastructure. Security agencies need to position helicopters, cruisers, hi-tech security cameras, close circuit TVs in public buildings in all strategic locations. Intelligence gathering tools and training of personnel in forensic science, data storage and retrieval and general information management related to counter-terrorism need to be upgraded for more timely and efficient delivery. The problem of terrorism in Nigeria is more deep-seated than a constitutional law can ever reflect. The state of primary education in Nigeria is quite abysmal and overhauling of the education curriculum should be taken up as a priority concern. A more sustainable approach is required for tackling the socio-economic challenges plaguing north-north eastern Nigeria, as a mere anti-terrorism law cannot be the cure for all ills.

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The system of a Central Police Command in Nigeria has lent itself to becoming fierce, corrupt, and undisciplined. Many informed voices are clamouring to usher in a system of state police as the only feasible option for resolving intra-conflicts. However the Parry Osayande-led Presidential Committee on the Reorganisation of the Nigeria Police has vehemently denounced the creation of a state police

by deeming it costly and irrelevant for Nigeria. It has also recommended the scrapping of the Ministry of Police Affairs as it has “unjustifiably domiciled” the budget allocations of the police. Instead, the report called for the police to be empowered to determine its own projects by drawing up its own budget and be held accountable for the allocated funds. And therefore, as per the assessment of the report, police-related matters should be promptly delegated to the control of the Nigeria Police Council, which was established through the 1999 constitution. This much-awaited report on police reforms was released in August 2012 and has remained at the centre of an intense debate. Concrete, unanimous solutions still appear distant. The dangerous trend of drafting in army personnel for internal security operations has to be reversed by investing in comprehensive police reforms which must include improved training, salary, and equipment. But it is worth pondering over, if the recent plans for introduction of police reform can at all have any lasting impact in the absence of fundamental socio-economic change. The dialectics of police reform, if resolved, can only make a localised and thus, a temporary difference. For really alienating the support base of terrorist groups and diverting them to alternative avenues of employment, the government has to relax its highly centralised political-economic stranglehold of the country and re-distribute its oil money in creating enablers for growth and development; this will be the only acceptable solution.

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Commentary

THE END OF THE SOMALI 'TRANSITION' AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

There is a collective international effort to bring about stability, but its history with its neighbours and divisions within may haunt Somalia's future.

SAURABH MISHRA

August 20, 2012 marked the end of the extended term of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia, a devastated country where anarchy has been a way of life since the fierce civil war began in 1991. With the election of a new parliament¹, speaker and a new president, the Transitional Federal Government expired. A new provisional constitution has been adopted which will be subjected to a referendum as and when the situation allows. No major power or the international organisation involved in Somalia to promote peace, stability, or otherwise wished to extend the 'transition' further. Although the conditions were not conducive for a fully democratically elected government, the international community involved therein has settled for one that is 'more democratic' than the earlier one. Currently, the new government appears to be better than the erstwhile Transitional Federal Government that was alleged to have indulged in rampant corruption and nepotism, and thus losing legitimacy.

The United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the United States, the Gulf States, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) are the important international forces present in Somalia. Ethiopia and Kenya are involved because of their own internal compulsions, contingencies, and regional ambitions. Turkey has also made a visible entry into Somalia while China plans to harvest the natural resources of the country.

The multinational military operations coordinated among AMISOM, Somali, Ethiopian, and Kenyan forces against Al-Shabab² (the extremist Islamist group that controls large parts of Southern and Central Somalia) have been stepped up after the end of the 'transition'. The country is at a critical juncture as the gains made against the extremists have not yet been fully consolidated and secured. Any mistake or miscalculation may reverse the process. Both the leadership and the people are ambivalent regarding the direction that politics may take in the future. Events in the country are unfolding at a tremendous pace post-transition, with Al-Shabab being pushed out from its strongholds, one after another. The September 28 capture of the Kismayo port city³, the last important stronghold of Al-Shabab in Southern Somalia, has proved to be a turning point. The city fell in an operation conducted primarily by the Kenyans in coordination with AMISOM

¹ Note: There were no general elections for the Somali parliament and government. The parliament and the constituent assembly were elected by the tribal elders from among those recommended by a committee. Later, the members of the parliament elected a speaker and the president. The president has appointed a prime minister to run the government.

² Al-Shabab is said to have links with Al-Qaeda

forces. Smaller towns and rural areas are also being cleared of Al-Shabab control.

Due to the retreat of Al-Shabab and the gradual advance of the Somali and international forces to take control of the smaller towns in Somalia, the hope for peace and positivity is at the highest since the civil war began. The UN and the world community have realised that it is time to make a final push to root out Al-Shabab and take Somalia out from the threat of other extremist groups like the Al-Qaeda. One 'transition' has ended and the other, fragile, but great transition, from anarchy to stability, has just begun. The new government in Somalia has to deal with several challenges to sustain it.

One 'transition' has ended and the other, fragile, but great transition, from anarchy to stability, has just begun. The new government in Somalia has to deal with several challenges to sustain it.

Nationalism: Somali nationalism has many problems both from within and outside. Many scholars doubt whether Somalia is a nation at all. However, the Kenyan and Ethiopian roles in South and Central Somalia should also be seen in the light of Somali nationalism and 'Greater Somalia'. These two countries are independently intervening in Somalia, explicitly to defend their own boundaries and people. Kenya sent thousands of its troops into Somalia to secure its tourism industry, livestock imports, and export of Qat⁴. In fact, according to some reports, Kenya wanted to create an autonomous peaceful buffer state of Jubaland to secure its planned port of Lamu from Somali gangs and pirates.⁵ Kenya has a long standing issue with the translation of Somali nationalism into 'Greater Somalia' which includes parts of Kenya and Ethiopia. There are groups in the north eastern province of Kenya which may wish to unite with Somalia. The Ogadeen region in eastern Ethiopia has a history of insurgency and demands of union with Somalia. Ethiopia, viewed by the Somalis as an aggressor throughout history, has also cited the protection of its people and territory from the Somali terrorists as the reason for intervention. The majority of people in both these regions of Kenya and Ethiopia are Somali in ethnicity and therefore the issue of 'Greater Somalia' may emerge and become a bone of contention in the region once the Somali state stabilises.

Territorial Integration: Though the Somali government is demanding to be treated as a 'viable state'⁶, the territorial ambiguities of Somalia remain. Somaliland and Puntland are formidable challenges to be dealt with. Somaliland is a self-proclaimed independent state unrecognised by the international community, while Puntland is an autonomous and relatively peaceful region with an independent administration. Though Puntland does not claim independence from Somalia, the terms and degree of its autonomy will have to be negotiated for its integration within Somalia.

³ "Kenya urges world to help consolidate gains made in Somalia", *Hiiraan Online*, October 20, 2012, at http://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2012/oct/26452/kenya_urges_world_to_help_consolidate_gains_made_in_somalia.aspx

⁴ Qat is an evergreen plant that is used as stimulant. People in the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula chew qat leaves as part of their age old customs or otherwise.

⁵ "More but not merrier", *The Economist*, November 28, 2011, at <http://www.economist.com/blogs/baobab/2011/11/ethiopia-kenya-and-somalia>

⁶ "What Next for United States in Somalia?", *UNPOS*, December 6, 2012, at <http://unposomalia.tumblr.com/>

Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a, a Sufi militia fighting against Al-Shabab, controls parts of central Somalia and there are several other patches of autonomous or pseudo states in southern Somalia. Due to the lack of any central authority, these regional and local administrations have become very important and act like independent states. The integration of these regions is going to be a big challenge.

Challenge to sovereignty and autonomy: Somalia may emerge as a new 'banana republic'. The UN, the US, the European Union, Gulf states, Turkey, and others have invested so much in Somalia that they may exercise a powerful influence on the country's political and economic future.⁷ In fact, the country cannot run without the financial and military assistance of external powers.

Peace and reconciliation: The hard task before the new government would be the reconciliation of the Somali population that has borne the brunt of a long civil war, famine, a shattered economy, and displacement. It "is still facing one of the largest humanitarian crises in the world, with 1.1 million people who have been internally displaced and more than one million that live outside the country as refugees."⁸ Therefore, state-building, establishing institutions for the delivery of the basic state services will require huge effort and investment which will definitely take some time.

Political culture: Somalia is known for its culture of violence and guns in the politics between different tribal clans of Somalia. This may prove to be the greatest drag in the whole process of integration, peace and development, as has been the case many times before. It can only be hoped

There is always a fear of Somalia again descending into chaos once the external forces leave its soil or they stop their financial and military assistance - as the Somalis neither have the resources nor capacity to face these challenges alone.

that the long time distress of the people and trauma of the civil war and famine has forced the Somali political elites to realise the value of peace and democracy. Only an umbrella concept of a Somali nation, protected by a democratic state can provide a united and sustainable Somalia. This is very critical as the primary loyalty of the people in Somalia is towards their clans, rather than anything else. The state would require a huge and sincere effort to direct the loyalty of Somali people to a central authority in any form.

There is always a fear of Somalia again descending into chaos once the external forces leave its soil or they stop their financial and military assistance - as the Somalis neither have the resources nor capacity to face these challenges alone. Therefore, the international community has taken several steps to meet these challenges and the Grand Stabilisation Plan for South Central Somalia introduced by the IGAD includes: promoting political reconciliation, establishing local administration, developing integrated national security capacities, establishing rule of law and delivering the necessary assistance to communities in need. The IGAD joint committee which signed an MOU with the Somalia Federal Government to work closely with its institutions has been expanded to include Somalia as well.⁹

⁷ "Will president Mohamud be able to tame Somalia?", *BBC News*, September 11, 2012, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-19556377>

⁸ "UN launches \$1.3 billion appeal for humanitarian needs in Somalia", *UN News Centre*, December 4, 2012, at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43674&Cr=somalia&Cr1=#.UO6VCqw3kzM>

⁹ The IGAD Joint Committee earlier consisted of Ethiopia and Kenya.

Somalia is so vulnerable a region that it requires continuous vigilance by the international community. Though the country has a great strategic location, it has never been given much importance until the threat of Islamist terrorism and piracy in the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea. The international community intervened in Somalia to prevent the spilling over of the problems in the form of humanitarian crises, piracy, and terrorism. Now, due to the collective efforts of the international community on the seas and Somali land area, the piracy has come down significantly. With improving security conditions in Somalia, the regional and extra-regional powers have also increased their diplomatic exchanges with it. The new Somali president, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, has visited many regional and extra-regional countries to gather support and assistance for the crucial fight against terrorism and for meeting future challenges. There is a collective international effort to bring about stability, but its history with its neighbours and the divisions within may haunt Somalia's future. However, the factors that will remain crucial for making a 'viable Somalia' will be the plans for its reconstruction, and policies for developing a sustainable economy because these will have the onus of keeping Somalia in the radar of the international community.

Book Review

David Bigman, Poverty, Hunger, and Democracy in Africa: Potential and Limitations of Democracy in Cementing Multiethnic Societies

Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, ISBN: 978-0-230-20528-4, 325 pp.

BABJEE POTHURAJU*

Poverty and hunger are the most visible features in many African states. Despite its natural resources, Africa is the world's poorest continent with nearly a third of its population not able to satisfy their hunger. The main reason for this precarious condition is that agriculture in many African countries is affected by climate change with alternating floods and recurring droughts. *Poverty, Hunger, and Democracy in Africa* by David Bigman examines the plight of Africa and looks to find a collaborative strategy to overcome the looming crisis. The author has tried

... "to draw a vision of the African continent in the coming decade that takes into account not only the very positive trends in the economies of many African countries, but also the far-reaching changes in social conditions that make Africa an urban continent, and the promising, but still very tentative, changes in the regimes of many African countries as they make a transition to democracy". (p. xv)

The volume is divided into five parts and sub-divided into various chapters. The first part, *Introduction and Background*, gives an overview of the problem of poverty and hunger in Africa. The rise in food prices in 2007 was considered to be beneficial for small farmers since it would augment their incomes. At the same time, developments in the commodity markets seemed to be "temporary bumps on the road of African countries to a much more promising future" by accelerating their growth, improving their standard of living and reducing their poverty. However, the full and unprecedented dimensions of the commodity boom and subsequent bust became evident only in 2008. This crisis was followed by a spiral of crises in world markets that had a deep impact on African economies and people. As a result, the continent witnessed major changes in its economic, social and political conditions.

Historically, when Africa witnessed continued stagnation and deepening poverty during the 1980s, it was believed that the African countries were not able to implement disciplined fiscal and effective monetary policies. As a result, the emphasis was on effective government institutions, more or less along the lines of the same institutions in Western countries. Nevertheless, Bigman argues, one key ingredient that was missing in the basic approach to the design of these reforms was a deeper familiarity and interaction with the local population in order to understand their social order, their legal systems and their systems of governance. The author says that tribal societies are fundamentally different from those in the Western world, and even the concept of the nation-state was foreign to them.

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In the second part, *Coping with Escalating Food Insecurity*, the author talks about the recurring droughts and food shortages. Bigman mentions that with the success of the Green Revolution in Asia, there was no shortage of food in the world, and yet thousands of people in Africa were exposed to recurring famine and hunger. According to the projections of the IPCC, food security in Africa is likely to be “severely compromised” by climate change, with production expected to be halved by 2020 (p. 46). This is because, the success of high-yielding crop varieties in the Green Revolution in East and South Asia was state-driven, market-mediated, and a small-farmer based strategy was used to attain self sufficiency in food grains, mainly motivated by national and geo-political factors. These characteristics have largely been absent in Africa. The author believes that although the technology is available, and has been gradually adapted to different and heterogeneous agro-climatic conditions in Africa, important institutional reforms are needed to make up and complement them. Moreover, farm households are highly unequal in terms of their assets and living conditions. Their ability to access knowledge, acquire modern inputs, and obtain credit is also vastly different. Understanding these constraints is as important as understanding the production technologies themselves. Yet, reforms and decentralisation, farmer empowerment, and public-private partnerships are on the rise in Africa, signalling better prospects for a market-oriented, small-farmer strategy.

The author attempts to ... draw a vision of the African continent ... that takes into account not only the very positive trends in [African] economies ... but also the far-reaching changes in social conditions that make Africa an urban continent...

The third part, *Africa's Poverty Traps and Obstacles to Growth*, highlights the plight of sub-Saharan Africa. The author argues that the optimism about Africa in the 1960s, when incomes exceeded those in Asia and food imports were rare, turned to helplessness and desperation in the following decades of stagnation, loss of foreign markets and disappointing international assistance that left Africa lagging behind the rest of the world. Only in the first decade of the 21st century, has its growth picked up; but the prospects of revival and hope have been upset by the food crisis and the global recession that followed. According to the author, the surge in food and energy prices in 2007-08 was had a drastic impact not only on the day-to-day lives of many poor in the world, it also served as a reminder about how far the world was digressed from achieving the first and most pressing Millennium Development Goal, which was halving the number of poor by 2015. The food crisis also raised concerns about the capacity of Africa to feed its people and escape the cycle of poverty.

...the book evaluates alternative policy options for African countries to overcome looming crises and sustain growth ... and is a valuable contribution towards a better understanding ... towards eradication of poverty and hunger in Africa

The author reveals that poverty and hunger are steadily increasing in Africa with roughly three-quarters of the poor living in rural areas, where agriculture is the dominant activity. Though the root causes for poverty vary from one country to another, in many cases it is a combination of many contributing factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The intrinsic factors include economic, political upheaval, mismanagement, and civil wars whereas the extrinsic factors are associated with natural disasters, debts, trade barriers, and unfair trade. The poor infrastructure also undermines the health of its population and fragments the already thin markets, thus also preventing local trade between the African countries. As a result, the majority of the population within the poor countries, as well as many of the African nations, does not share the benefits of globalisation despite making a contribution to global growth.

In the fourth part, *Civil Conflicts, Wars and Democracy*, the author argues that more than half a

century after African countries gained independence from colonial rule, many of them still engaged in internal wars of independence to achieve personal freedom, get rid of autocratic leaders, and form stable structure of a state. After the wars are over, land mines and unexploded ammunition, make it extremely dangerous for people to move about, and the consequent fear of cultivating the land prevents tens of thousands from taking the first steps towards a sustainable future. As a consequence, many countries remain failed states, despite their rich resources, and the vast majority of their populations are extremely poor. The other contributing factors in many cases that led to poverty are the lack of accountability, corruption and lack of human care in some African states. In this case, the power is being abused and usually concentrated in the hands of few people who are sometimes not democratically elected, but rule on the basis of tribal or ethnic selection. In most cases, they do not deal with problems until they become bigger and difficult to manage.

In the final part on *The Fourth Wave of Democratisation*, the author examines the potential and limitations of democracy for cementing multi-ethnic societies and explains how the Western-style democracy relates to the social traditions, rules, order and institutions of the African people when most African countries are making a transition to democracy. While discussing this process and its potential impact on the leadership of African countries, the author weighs the possibilities of using the process of democratisation as a lever for improving the system of governance, reducing corruption, and increasing the effectiveness of governmental institutions. African states must care for their people and this requires welfare policies relating to education, medical care, and training of people on how to manage and develop their agricultural lands and animal husbandry. Democratic participation of the people is critical and their voices must be heard. There should also be involvement of rural people in social, political and economic decision-making. At the same time, the success of the democratic system will depend on the extent to which it is attuned with their tribal system, their allegiance to their heritage, and their respect for tribal elders.

In conclusion, the time period dealt with in the book has clearly been difficult both for the African continent's economy and society; it has been a transitional period not only for African regimes but also for their social structure and economies. Consequently, the book evaluates alternative policy options for the African countries to overcome the looming crises and sustain their growth. Bigman's study is a valuable contribution towards a better understanding of the obstacles, challenges, and possible solutions for the eradication of poverty and hunger in Africa. This book offers a comprehensive agenda for undertaking institutional and policy reforms that will bring Africa closer to meeting the Millennium Development Goals. This book is an indispensable reading for scholars interested in African studies and development economics.

News Track

Sri Lanka seeks to strengthen ties with African nations; China-Africa conference urges Chinese firms in Africa to abide by local laws, regulations

Sri Lanka's External Affairs Minister Professor G.L. Peiris has said that Sri Lanka is hoping to strengthen its ties with the countries on African continent and island nations, particularly Madagascar and Seychelles. Peiris was responding to concerns voiced in the Sri Lankan Parliament that the country's economy would suffer if its ties with India and Western countries broke down. Peiris assured that the government would take advantage of Sri Lanka's ocean resources to generate income. He also said that Sri Lanka's ties with India remain strong, while recalling that six senior Indian officials visited the country in the past six months.¹

A press communiqué issued following the Third Roundtable Conference on China-Africa Cooperation held on November 28 in the southern Chinese province of Hainan, urged Chinese companies operating in Africa to fulfil corporate social responsibilities. Chinese firms were encouraged to promote social benefits along with business growth so as to bring about greater benefits to the local population. The event was attended by more than 400 diplomatic envoys, entrepreneurs, and officials from China and African countries, and focused on the theme "Deepen Cooperation for a Better Future". China has ranked as Africa's largest trading partner for three consecutive years, with trade expected to total close to US\$ 200 billion in 2012.²

Northern Africa

Egypt

Egypt banks to start new project to reign in falling currency reserves; Egypt's controversial draft constitution become law; Egypt President annuls controversial decree; New Pope for Egypt's Coptic Christians

Egypt's central bank will start auctions on foreign currency to maintain currency reserves which are rapidly declining to a critical level. Fears of an intensifying economic crisis are looming large as President Mohamed Mursi struggles to maintain political calm. The central bank has already spent over US\$20 billion of foreign reserves in order to back up the pound since 2011 revolution which chased away tourists and foreign investors.³

¹ "GL stresses need to forge ties with Africa", *The Island*, November 16, 2012 at http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=66235

² "Chinese firms urged to fulfill social responsibility in Africa", *Xinhua News Agency*, November 29, 2012 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-11/29/c_132005680.htm

³ "Egypt reserves plunge as economic crisis bites," *Reuters*, December 2, 2012 at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/29/us-egypt-currency-idUSBRE8BS09620121229>

A two-round referendum approved Egypt's new constitution by 63.8 per cent voters as declared by Egypt's top election committee on December 25. According to the Supreme Election Committee, the final official turnout was pegged at 32.9 per cent of the total number of eligible voters. Parliamentary elections are poised to take place in the next two months.⁴

President Mohammed Morsi has offered to make concessions in order to pacify his opponents by conceding to annul a decree announced on November 22. The decree, if executed, would have robbed the judiciary of the right to demand any kind of accountability from the president. The decree sparked major protests in Egypt when it was announced. However, the decision to annul the decree refused to mollify angry protestors as the president stopped short of disbanding the referendum on a controversial draft constitution.⁵

Bishop Tawadros became the new pope for Egypt's Coptic Christians, the largest Christian minority community in the Middle East. Tawadros was selected in a ceremony in Cairo's St Mark's Cathedral. He succeeded the late Pope Shenouda III. With Islamic leaders gaining ground, his ascension comes at a time highly crucial for the Coptics who have been subject to an increasing number of attacks.⁶

Libya

New Libyan government ready to cooperate on Lockerbie case; Libya's Ex-PM on trial

The new Libyan government has agreed to cooperate on the Lockerbie bombing case by preparing to release all files related to the incident; the process is expected to take at least a year, according to Libya's ambassador to the UK. The announcement coincides with the 24th anniversary of the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 which claimed the lives of 270 people. The only person convicted in the case, Libyan agent Abdelbaset al-Megrahi, died in 2012. The Scottish government hopes to pursue the rest of the suspects with the cooperation of the new Libyan government.⁷

Libya's former Prime Minister, al-Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi, is to undergo trial on charges of "acts that led to the unjust killing of Libyans". He has been charged with channelling close to US\$16 million through Tunisia to support ousted leader Muammar Gaddafi. Al-Mahmoudi had fled to Tunisia during the 2012 uprising against Gaddafi, but was later extradited. Two other co-defendants of his were working in a company controlled by Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi.⁸

⁴ "Egypt approves disputed draft constitution," *Al Jazeera*, December 25, 2012 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/201212251825337958.html>

⁵ "Egypt crisis: Morsi offers concession in decree annulment," *BBC News*, December 9, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-20655412>

⁶ "Bishop Tawadros new pope of Egypt's Coptic Christians," *BBC News*, November 4, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-20192922>

⁷ "Lockerbie bombing: Libyan government set to release files," *BBC News*, December 21, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-20806873>

⁸ "Ex Libya ex-PM al-Baghdadi al-Mahmoudi on trial in Tripoli," *BBC News*, December 10, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20668492>

Tunisia

Tunisia's former leader's wealth to go up for auction

The dubious riches of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the first leader to step down in 2011 marking the beginning of the Arab Spring revolutions, will be put up for auction, with proceeds from the sale to be used to reign in the struggling economy. Bidders can look forward to high-end electronic products, along with Ben Ali's personal items, including jewellery and top-of-the-range luxury cars which are said to number around 40.⁹

Algeria

France acknowledges brutal colonisation of Algeria

On the eve of the 50th anniversary of Algerian independence, the country finally received an acknowledgement of the scale of violence perpetrated by the French as a result of its colonisation of the country. Algeria gained independence in 1962 following a seven-year bloody civil war. French President Francois Hollande, however, said he was not prepared to apologize as demanded by the Algerians. He said "establishing the truth is an obligation that ties Algerians and French. That's why it is necessary that historians have access to the archives."¹⁰

Morocco

Moroccan police crackdown on terrorist cell linked to al Qaeda

Morocco's interior ministry has said that the police have captured nine suspects belonging to a terrorist cell and confiscated various items including black flags representing the al-Qaeda group. The suspected terrorist cell was allegedly planning to establish a training camp in the Rif mountains in the north of the country. Officials stated that the suspects were nabbed after the arrests near Rabat of two "militant Salafists".¹¹

South Sudan

South Sudan expels UN Human Rights investigator

UN investigator Sandra Beidas who was working on the human rights situation in South Sudan has been expelled by the country on charges of publishing "unethical" reports. The ouster can be linked to an August report which implicated the army in serious human rights violations including abductions, torture, killings and rape. A government spokesperson said that the investigator had been "reporting on human rights issues that she could not verify and has been publishing without

⁹ "Tunisia's Ben Ali riches to go on sale," Al Jazeera, December 23, 2012 at <http://www.aljazeera.com/video/africa/2012/12/2012122324350718876.html>

¹⁰ "President Hollande accepts French injustice in Algeria," December 20, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-20795750>

¹¹ "Morocco 'dismantles terrorist cell'," BBC News, November 1, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20172518>

justifications". United Nations officials slammed the move as violating South Sudan's legal obligations.¹²

Western Sahara

Swedish Opposition party wants to recognise SADR; UN special envoy halts talks between Morocco and Polisario Front

The opposition party in the Swedish parliament voted in the affirmative that the Swedish government "recognises the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) as soon as possible." SADR is Western Sahara's government in exile; if the vote goes through unanimously across all party lines, Sweden will be first country in the EU to accept and legitimise SADR. The intention behind granting recognition by Sweden is still not clear as the EU has so far been more supportive of Morocco. SADR has been recognised by more than 80 countries around the world.¹³

UN Special envoy for Western Sahara, Christopher Ross, has declared that he would cease the continuous round of informal talks between Morocco and the Polisario Front that have taken place since August 2009, as it is not heading towards any reconciliation. Ross was speaking at a UN Security Council meeting on the Morocco-Western Sahara conflict and said that he will take up shuttle diplomacy to work on the impasse. The Polisario Front independence movement controls a small part of the interior of the Western Sahara desert and demands a self-determination referendum for Saharawi-people.¹⁴

Western Africa

Ghana

Incumbent Mahama declared winner of presidential elections

Ghana's electoral commission announced on December 10 that the incumbent John Mahama had won the presidential elections. Observers from the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) and a local organisation, declared the election "free and fair". However, the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) has accused the governing National Democratic Congress of Ghana (NDC) party of conspiring with staff of the electoral commission to fix the December 7 poll; an NPP statement claimed the party had evidence to prove that its candidate Nana Akufo-Addo had won the election. Former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, who headed the ECOWAS observer team to Ghana, has said that there were "hiccups" but not any that would alter the results significantly.¹⁵

¹² "South Sudan expels UN Human Rights investigator," *BBC News*, November 4, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20200042>

¹³ "Swedish parliament wants government to recognize Western Sahara," *Newstime Africa*, December 5, 2012 at <http://www.newstimeafrica.com/archives/29989>

¹⁴ "UN envoy ends Polisario Front-Morocco talks," *AFP*, November 29, 2012 at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j4uFU02LcX_tQMIsFF3HO_GTxWxQ?docId=CNG.ace288598d38f8e94805dc5d9fc7699c.81

¹⁵ "Ghana election: John Mahama declared winner", *BBC News Africa*, December 10, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20661599>

Liberia

China signs US\$ 15m economic agreement with Liberia

China has signed an Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement to the amount of US\$ 15million with Liberia. The project includes a ministerial complex project, expansion of the Monrovia Vocational Training Center, and the annex at the National Legislature. The Chinese ambassador to Liberia stated following the signing that the agreement was an indication of Liberia's continuing reconstruction, and China's support to the country in economic and social development.¹⁶

Mali

Malian government doubtful of armed groups' desire for peace; Algeria voices concern on humanitarian impacts of Mali military intervention, proposes peace plan; Malian prime minister forced to resign, AU condemns Mali events

An official of the transitional Malian government has said that the government is ready to reach out to armed groups that are willing to negotiate on the crisis in northern Mali. However, it is not convinced about their desire to achieve peace in the region. The group Ansar Dine had previously stated that it wanted to end the conflict and, according to reports, sent its envoys to Algeria and Burkina Faso. The key contention between the government and the group has been its demand to enforce Sharia law in the areas it controls in northern Mali.¹⁷

Meanwhile, neighbouring Algeria has said that it is opposed to the bombing of regions in northern Mali in the event of a military intervention there, according to reports in the Algerian daily El-Khabar. It has also voiced concern about the humanitarian challenges an intervention might pose, given that the main cities in northern Mali (Gao, Kidal, and Timbuktu) are populated largely by a nomadic population. Algeria has opposed a military plan proposed by experts at a recent meeting in Bamako, which involves air strikes as an initial stage of the operation, followed by the moving in of ground troops. Algeria has supported the idea of separating groups such as Ansar Dine and the Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) that may be willing to negotiate with the government on a political process towards resolving the conflict, from other terrorist groups.¹⁸

Separately, Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara has urged the UN Security Council to act swiftly on authorising the proposed military intervention. If such a resolution is passed in December, the intervention is likely to take place in early 2013.¹⁹

¹⁶ "Liberia, China sign 15 mln USD economic agreement", Xinhua News Agency, November 24, 2012 at http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-11/24/c_131996735.htm

¹⁷ "Official says Mali reaches out to armed groups, doubts their desire for peace", Al Jazeera, (in Arabic), November 4, 2012 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "Cote d'Ivoire president wants intervention in Mali early 2013", Europe 1 Radio, (in French), December 5, 2012 (BBC Monitoring Global Newslines)

Algeria has also, in an unofficial capacity, put forward a peace plan that includes withdrawal of armed groups from the main towns in northern Mali, and the deployment of African peacekeeping forces in towns and on international borders, while the Malian government continued negotiations with the MNLA and other groups. The plan was drafted following consultations between tribal elders from northern Mali and representatives of the presidency and security services.²⁰

According to Malian state media reporting on December 11, Prime Minister Cheick Modibo Diarra was arrested by soldiers acting under orders from Captain Amadou Sanogo, who headed the junta that overthrew the Malian government earlier this year. Following the arrest, Diarra appeared on state TV and announced his resignation along with the interim government. Tensions had been mounting for several weeks between the transitional civilian government and the officers who led the March coup. President Diacounda Traore has appointed Diango Cissoko as the new prime minister. The Africa Union (AU) has condemned the events surrounding Diarra's resignation,²¹ while the UN secretary-general has called for an end to military interference in the country's political affairs.²²

The UN Security Council unanimously authorised, on December 20, an African-led military intervention force (to be known as the African-led International Support Mission in Mali or Afisma) with an initial one-year mandate. The resolution outlines a multi-stage process for political reconciliation, improved military training, and restoring Mali's territorial sovereignty. The UN has said it expects some political progress to be made before elections can be held in April 2013. According to the resolution, Afisma should use "necessary measures" to assist in recovering northern Mali from "terrorist, extremist and armed groups". The Malian foreign minister has welcomed the resolution as an "historic step". Though ECOWAS has readied 3,300 troops to go into Mali, an operation is not expected to begin before September 2013, according to reports.²³

Eastern Africa

Comoros

Comoros enters IOR-ARC as member, US joins as dialogue partner

Comoros has become the 20th member of the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) at the launch of the association's 12th ministerial meeting in New Delhi. Comorian Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Paul Adam is one of eight ministers attending the ministerial meeting of this grouping of states bordering the Indian Ocean. The IOR-ARC was launched with only seven members in Mauritius in March 1997. It has since grown to a membership

²⁰ "Algeria proposes peace plan to end crisis in northern Mali", El-Khabar, (in Arabic), November 6, 2012 (BBC Monitoring Global Newswire)

²¹ "AU Condemns Diarra's Resignation, New Premier Named", Misna News Agency, December 12, 2012 at <http://www.misna.org/en/other/au-condemns-diarras-resignation-new-premier-named-12-12-2012-813.html>

²² "West African bloc denounces military interference in Malian politics", ONUCI FM, (in French), December 12, 2012 (BBC Monitoring Global Newswire)

²³ "UN backs Mali intervention force to oust rebels", BBC News Africa, December 20, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20801094>

of 20. The United States has also joined the grouping as its sixth dialogue partner. The other five dialogue partners are China, Japan, Egypt, France and Britain.²⁴

Ethiopia

Ethiopian PM expects US\$ 10 billion investment from India by 2015; Trade Pact between Ethiopia and Kenya

Meeting with an Indian business leaders' delegation to Ethiopia, the Ethiopian prime minister said that India was among the most favoured economic partners of his country. He proposed to raise investments from India to US\$ 10 billion by 2015. FICCI President R.V. Kanoria, who led the delegation, added that political and economic stability, zero tolerance for corruption, and proactive economic reforms in Ethiopia have made the country an attractive manufacturing base to enter Africa. However, constraints of logistics, delay in land allocation, and other bureaucratic impediments acted as obstacles to the flow on investment.²⁵

A marketing campaign driven by the new Ethiopian Prime Minister, Ato Hailemariam Desalegn, could further strengthen trade ties between Kenya and Ethiopia. Just a few months after taking over as prime minister following the death of Meles Zenawi, Desalegn went on a tour of Kenya where he held extensive talks with President Mwai Kibaki and members of Kenya's business community. During these meetings, a raft of agreements and trade pacts were finalised.²⁶

Eritrea

Israel sets up base in Eritrea to watch Iran

Israel has set up a military base in Eritrea to monitor Iran in the Red Sea. Israel has deployed its intelligence units, docks, and small naval units at the selected bases in Dahlak Island and Massawa port of Eritrea. Amongst other objectives is the tracking down of Iranian arms smuggling across Eritrea, much of which is allegedly bound to militants in the Middle East who are hostile to Israel. It is alleged that ships loaded with rockets and other weaponry travel through Eritrea to Sudan and Egypt, from where the cargo is then transferred via land routes to the Hamas-controlled Gaza strip or shipped to militants in Syria and Lebanon.²⁷

Kenya

Malawi will re-open its diplomatic mission in Nairobi; Kenya-South Africa business association established; Kenyan committee says 13 ambassadors hold office illegally

After discussions between President Mwai Kibaki and his Malawian counterpart Joyce Banda, it was revealed that Malawi plans to re-open its High Commission in Nairobi as part of its initiative

²⁴ "Comoros becomes 20th IOR-ARC member, US dialogue partner", *Seychelles Nation Online*, November 3, 2012, at <http://www.nation.sc/index.php?art=29360>

²⁵ "Ethiopian PM targets \$10 billion investment from India", *The Sheba Post*, November 23, 2012, at <http://shebapost.com/content/ethiopian-pm-targets-10-bn-investment-india>

²⁶ "Addis and Nairobi Sign Trade Pacts", *All Africa*, November 27, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201211271341.html>

²⁷ "U.S. report: Israel sets up base in Eritrea to monitor Iran", *Sudan Tribune*, December 17, 2012, at <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article44906>

to strengthen relations with Kenya. The Malawian High Commission in Nairobi was closed ten years ago. The two leaders who met on the sidelines of the 16th Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Heads of State Summit agreed to re-invigorate the Kenya-Malawi Joint Permanent Commission that used to meet every two years, but has not met for the past ten years.²⁸

The long-standing business relationship between South Africa and Kenya has been formalised with the launch of the South Africa-Kenya Business Association. The launch was presided over by Kenya's Trade Permanent Secretary and the South African High Commissioner to the country. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers chairman and Haco Tiger Brands regional head, Polycarp Igathe, and the regional head of the Kenyan DSTV television station were instrumental in the setting up of this lobby.²⁹

A parliamentary committee in Kenya has reported that 13 ambassadors and high commissioners in Kenyan foreign missions are serving "illegally" after the lapse of their tenure. The committee further blamed President Kibaki for failing to post officers to serve in key missions countries following the expiry of their terms and resignations.³⁰ The government has played down the report. Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary, Thuita Mwangi, dismissed the claims saying the argument on expired contracts was illogical as Kenyan diplomats do not work under contracts. He argued that the envoys were presidential appointees and only leave office when they are recalled, die or resign.³¹

Madagascar

Deposed president Ravalomanana not to contest elections

The office of the Tanzanian president said that the deposed Madagascar president Marc Ravalomanana would not seek office in next year's presidential election. The Indian Ocean Island has been mired in political uncertainty since 2009 when the then opposition leader Andry Rajoelina ousted Ravalomanana from power. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) had earlier said that both Ravalomanana and Rajoelina should be persuaded not to run in the election.³² The SADC has reiterated that Ravalomanana, who now lives in exile, should be allowed to return to Madagascar but that neither he nor Rajoelina should be permitted to stand in elections scheduled for May 2013.³³

²⁸ "Malawi to re-open embassy in Kenya", *Capital FM*, November 24, 2012, at <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2012/11/malawi-to-re-open-embassy-in-kenya/>

²⁹ "Kenya-South Africa business lobby launched", *The Star*, December 3, 2012, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-98036/kenya-south-africa-business-lobby-launched>

³⁰ "13 ambassadors hold office illegally", *The Star*, December 18, 2012, at <http://www.the-star.co.ke/news/article-99848/13-ambassadors-hold-office-illegally>

³¹ "No crisis in Kenyan embassies-Thuita", *The Star*, December 18, 2012, at <http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2012/12/no-crisis-in-kenyan-embassies-thuita/>

³² "Ex-Madagascar leader Ravalomanana will not run in vote: Tanzania", *Reuters*, December 12, 2012, at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/12/us-madagascar-crisis-idUSBRE8BB0V320121212>

³³ "Regional leaders propose Madagascar election bans", *All Africa*, December 11, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212110963.html?viewall=1>

Malawi

Nyasa border dispute submitted to the Forum of African Heads of State and Governments, churches to also intervene

Tanzania and Malawi submitted letters of application to the Forum of Former African Heads of State and Governments, requesting the forum to mediate the Lake Nyasa border dispute, after the two countries failed to reach a consensus. The forum is expected to work on the dispute within four months from the day of submission. Countries involved in the dispute - Tanzania, Malawi, and Zanzibar - will not be involved in the mediation process.³⁴ The Malawi Council of Churches (MCC) and its counterpart the Christian Council of Tanzania (CCT) have also agreed that to intervene in the ongoing border dispute.³⁵

Mozambique

Finland to end financial support to Mozambique; Mozambique invites Brazilians to invest; Mozambique signs energy memorandum with Norway; Chinese vice Foreign Minister visits Mozambique

Finland is to end its financial support for the forestry sector in Mozambique because of “undue use of funds”. It will also reduce its direct support to the Mozambican state budget due to disappointing results in poverty reduction and governance. Finland provides about US\$ 8.9 million a year in direct budget support to Mozambique currently.³⁶

Mozambique’s Investment Promotion Centre (CPI) invited a group of Brazilian businessmen to invest in the country. The group consisted of 12 business people, representing 60 Brazilian companies. They participated in a Maputo seminar with their Mozambican counterparts, during the Brazil-Mozambique week held from November 10 to 17.³⁷

Mozambique and Norway signed a memorandum of understanding covering energy cooperation between the two countries. The memorandum covers no new projects, but stresses the determination of the two governments to continue their fruitful relations in this area. With the help of Norway Mozambique has expanded access to electricity for its people from just seven per cent in 2004 to 38 per cent in 2012. The country is Mozambique’s largest partner in the energy sector.³⁸

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister, Zhai Jun, visited Mozambique from November 21 to 23. During his visit, the two sides exchanged views on Sino-Mozambican relations, the Forum on China-

³⁴ “Tanzania, Malawi submit border dispute letters”, *Daily News Online*, December 22, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/12906-tanzania-malawi-submit-border-dispute-letters>

³⁵ “Churches to intervene on Nyasa row”, *Daily News Online*, December 25, 2012, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/13010-churches-to-intervene-on-nyasa-row>

³⁶ “Finland reduces aid to Mozambique”, *All Africa*, November 9, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201211100039.html>

³⁷ “Brazilians invited to invest”, *All Africa*, November 12, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201211121228.html>

³⁸ “Memorandum on Energy signed with Norway”, *All Africa*, November 30, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212010002.html>

Africa Cooperation as well as regional and international issues of common concern. Several documents of cooperation between the two governments in the fields of agriculture and human resources training were also signed.³⁹

Rwanda

Britain freezes budget support to Rwanda; US rejects sanctions and aid cut to Rwanda; Rwanda and China sign interest free agreements worth US\$ 19 million

The United Kingdom has decided to freeze its budget support to Rwanda. The decision is based on a highly controversial report which accuses Rwanda of backing the M23 rebels opposed to the government in Kinshasa. The biggest portion of British aid is channeled through the government's general budget. The frozen aid totaling £ 21 million was due for disbursement in December 2012.⁴⁰

The US has rejected fresh calls to cut aid to Rwanda and place a sanctions regime against it. US Assistant Secretary of State, Johnnie Carson, told a subcommittee of the US House of Representatives that further punitive actions, including squeezing aid to Rwanda are unnecessary. But, some US allies, including the UK, EU and several Scandinavian countries want to impose sanctions on Rwanda because of its reported support to the M23 rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo.⁴¹

Three interest-free agreements worth US\$ 19 million have been signed between the Government of Rwanda and the People's Republic of China. The loans come in addition to two grants with the same value of US\$ 16 million. China has granted Rwanda a significant number of turn-key projects through the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), especially in the areas of Health, Agriculture, Education and Infrastructure.⁴²

Seychelles

Chinese embassy to finance community projects at district levels; Pakistan Navy wants greater ties with Seychelles

The Chinese embassy in the Seychelles has agreed to finance several community projects at Bel Ombre. The agreement to fund the projects includes road resurfacing, and building pavements and bus shelters. The agreement was signed in the presence of Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Paul Adam, who is responsible for the Bel Ombre constituency and a representative of the China Shenyang Corporation.⁴³

³⁹ "Vice Foreign Minister Zhai Jun visits Mozambique", *Forum on China-Africa Cooperation*, November 30, 2012, at <http://www.focac.org/eng/zxxx/t993969.htm>

⁴⁰ "Govt disappointed by Britain aid freeze", *The New Times*, December 1, 2012, at <http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=15193&a=61316>

⁴¹ "U.S. rejects sanctions against Rwanda", *The Independent*, December 18, 2012, at <http://www.independent.co.ug/rwanda-ed/rwanda/7075-us-rejects-sanctions-against-rwanda>

⁴² "Rwanda, China sign \$19M development agreements", *News of Rwanda*, December 21, 2012, at <http://newsofrwanda.com/irembo/16127/rwanda-china-sign-19m-development-agreements/>

⁴³ "Chinese embassy to fund district projects", *Seychelles Nation Online*, November 26, 2012, at <http://www.nation.sc/index.php?art=29640>

Senior officers of the Pakistani Navy met with the Seychelles' Minister for Home Affairs and Transport, with discussions centred on the anti-piracy efforts in the region and the work of naval coalitions, in view of the upcoming transfer of leadership, where the Pakistani navy will be taking over from the Turkish navy as the Command of Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) – an international naval task force that was set up in response to pirate attacks off the Somali coast.⁴⁴

Uganda

Museveni meets Russian president Putin in Moscow

President Yoweri Museveni met with Russian president Vladimir Putin in Moscow and discussed the prospects of strengthening bilateral cooperation in oil, gas and electric power. Russia has several interests in Uganda ranging from supplying combat aircraft to oil and gas projects. Uganda signed its first contract to buy six Sukhoi Su-30MK2 fighters from Russia early this year for an undisclosed sum. On the other hand, Russia's largest independent crude producer LUKOIL has expressed interest in oil and gas exploration, production, and refining in Uganda. Foreign interest in Uganda's oil sector continues to grow ever since crude oil deposits were discovered in 2006. Current reserves are estimated at about 3.5 billion barrels.⁴⁵

Tanzania

China has hit US\$ 1 billion expenditure mark in Tanzania; Tanzania not to send troops to DRC; Zanzibar wants international support for complete autonomy

The investment of Chinese companies in Tanzania has hit the US\$ 1 billion mark over a period of one year. China has now moved from 6th to 2nd position as the main foreign investor in Tanzania. According to the Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, increased Chinese investments have stimulated strengthening of the friendship between the two countries as well as maintaining a sound momentum of development.⁴⁶

The Tanzanian government has confirmed that it is not sending troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to fight against M23 rebels, but will contribute a battalion to the International Neutral Force, which will be used to protect and monitor the DRC borders. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Bernard Membe, clarified the matter in Dar es Salaam following media reports that created an impression that Tanzania was going to war with the M23 in Eastern Congo.⁴⁷

Zanzibar's First Vice-President has said that Zanzibaris are looking to the international community to support them in the campaign for the islands' full autonomy. Addressing a public rally organized

⁴⁴ "Naval forces of Pakistan extend offer for greater ties", *Seychelles Nation Online*, November 26, 2012, at <http://www.nation.sc/index.php?art=29641>

⁴⁵ "Museveni meets Russian president Vladimir Putin", *New Vision*, December 11, 2012, at <http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/638047-museveni-meets-russian-president-vladimir-putin.html>

⁴⁶ "China spends \$1b in Tanzania", *East African Business Week*, November 19, 2012, at <http://www.busiweek.com/news/tanzania/3975-china-spends-1b-in-tanzania>

⁴⁷ "We aren't going to DRC to fight M23", *Daily News Online*, November 24, 2012, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/11949-we-aren-t-going-to-drc-to-fight-m23>

by the Civic United Front (CUF), Seif Sharif Hamad said that Zanzibaris have the right to determine its future and that of the coming generations. He added that the majority has spoken to the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) that they need the current union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika reviewed.⁴⁸

Zambia

Zambia-China trade and cooperation boom

Chinese investments into Zambia have crossed US\$2 billion. The Chinese ambassador to Zambia has said that Chinese firms have created more than 50,000 job opportunities and the trade volume between China and Zambia reached US\$3.4 billion in 2011 with Zambia enjoying a trade surplus of US\$2.17 billion. The surplus was nearly equivalent to Zambia's current foreign exchange reserves.⁴⁹

Zimbabwe

EU softens stance on Zimbabwean diamonds; SADC liberation movements want sanctions on Zimbabwe lifted; US may modify ZIDERA

The European Union has lauded the Kimberly Process Certification Scheme for withdrawing monitors and allowing unhindered exports of diamonds from Zimbabwe. The stance might lead to accelerated removal of illegal sanctions on the country. Diplomats accredited to Zimbabwe have been allowed access to Chiadzwa diamond fields although some of them have persisted with reports of human rights abuses. Zimbabwe has become a major player in diamond mining and has a potential to produce over 160 million carats a year, which translates to about 25 percent of global output.⁵⁰

Describing the sanctions on Zimbabwe by the West as inhuman and barbaric, the liberation movements from the Southern African Development Community have called for their unconditional lifting of the sanctions. The African National Congress and some other liberation movements including Chama cha Mapinduzi of Tanzania, Frelimo (Mozambique), MPLA (Angola) and Swapo (Namibia) also gave solidarity messages for the Zanu-PF during the 13th Zanu-PF Annual People's Conference.⁵¹

The American ambassador to Zimbabwe has said that Washington will have a re-look into the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in light of reforms that have been introduced in the country. Bruce Wharton said it could take about six months before ZIDERA

⁴⁸ "Zanzibar courts international support over union", *Daily News Online*, December 25, 2012, at <http://www.dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/13000-z-bar-courts-international-support-over-union>

⁴⁹ "Zambia-China trade booms", *Times of Zambia*, December 7, 2012, at <http://www.times.co.zm/?p=22326>

⁵⁰ "EU thaws on Zim diamonds", *The Herald Online*, December 5, 2012, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59141:eu-thaws-on-zim-diamonds&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130#.UNqdaqz_ItA

⁵¹ "Sadc liberation movements want sanctions lifted", *The Herald Online*, December 10, 2012, at http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=59541:sadc-liberation-movements-want-sanctions-lifted&catid=38:local-news&Itemid=131#.UNqj0az_ItA

could be lifted or modified. The Act, which among other things prohibits US financial institutions from extending lines of credit to Zimbabwe, was passed in 2001 for the sake of democracy and promotion of economic recovery in the country.⁵²

Central Africa

Central and West African countries consider combining their currencies

According to the governor of the Bank of Central African States, the central banks of West and Central Africa are considering combining their currencies to boost trade and help fight money laundering. The franc zone covers 14 African countries including Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad among others.⁵³

Angola

Angola will not send its soldiers to DRC; Angola calls for concerted efforts to fight piracy; Angola and Spain sign cooperation agreement

Angola has said that it would not send soldiers to eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and that it would only back peaceful resolution of the conflict. President Joseph Kabila of the DRC had earlier sent an envoy to Luanda to seek unspecified backing from Angola. Angola's President also wrote to his Republic of Congo counterpart asking him to offer diplomatic support to the DRC.⁵⁴

In the light of piracy becoming increasingly pervasive in the Gulf of Guinea Commission, Angola's Foreign Affairs Minister called on the member states of the Commission to make a concerted effort to fight piracy. The Minister also suggested a broader strategy to fight piracy that takes into account political and socio-economic factors.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Angola and Spain signed a cooperation agreement in the areas of merchant navy, ports and air transport. The agreement, according to Spain's development minister was an "important point in bilateral relations".⁵⁶

⁵² "US to relook into ZIDERA", *The Financial Gazette*, December 12, 2012, at <http://www.financialgazette.co.zw/national-report/15349-us-to-relook-into-zidera-.html>

⁵³ "West, Central African Banks mull unifying Francs to boost trade", *Bloomberg.com*, December 18, 2012 at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-18/west-central-african-banks-mull-unifying-francs-to-boost-trade.html>

⁵⁴ "Angola calls for peaceful resolution of DRC conflict", *Africa Review*, November 27, 2012 at <http://www.africareview.com/News/Angola-calls-for-peaceful-resolution-of-DRC-conflict/-/979180/1630272/-/4qneyj/-/index.html>

⁵⁵ "Security: Gulf of Guinea Commission country members urged to fight piracy", *AfriqueJet.com*, November 29, 2012 at http://www.afriquejet.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2473:security-gulf-of-guinea-commission-country-members-urged-to-fight-piracy&catid=2:news&Itemid=111

⁵⁶ "Angola and Spain sign deal on merchant navy, ports and air transport", *Macauhub*, December 14, 2012 at <http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/2012/12/14/angola-and-spain-sign-deal-on-merchant-navy-ports-and-air-transport/>

Cameroon

Cameroon and Nigeria willing to expedite boundary issues; India's Jindal Steel and Power to invest US\$500 million in Cameroon

Cameroon and Nigeria expressed their willingness to expedite the process for the land-based boundary areas which remain to be identified. The countries also reviewed their work programme to deploy a Joint Technical Team composed of surveyors and experts to the field as early as February 2013. The land boundary demarcation is the third component of the mandate of the Cameroon-Nigeria mixed Commission with delimitation of the maritime border and withdrawal and transfer of authority in Lake Chad area being the other two.⁵⁷

According to reports, New Delhi-based Jindal Steel and Power will invest around \$500 million in Cameroon to build a power plant, a railway line and an iron ore processing plant. The plant will be located in Kribi and other investment projects by Jindal will follow.⁵⁸

Central African Republic

Rebel forces capture Bria, Ndele among other cities; Chad sends troops to help CAR fight rebels; UN Security Council condemns attacks

In December, rebel groups in the Central African Republic captured Bria which is a key mining hub in a diamond-rich region and threatened to overthrow the government. The rebel forces also wanted to discuss the compliance of a ceasefire and payment for fighters who lay down their arms. The Seleka rebel coalition that comprises factions of three groups accused the Francois Bozize government of not complying with the terms of the peace treaty signed in 2007. Though the government tried to repel the attack on Bria, they were later forced to retreat.⁵⁹ Earlier, the forces captured the northern town of Ndele, which is on a major route linking the Republic to Sudan, Cameroon, and Chad.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, President Bozize asked his Chad counterpart for help when his own army failed to quell the attacks. Chad sent about 20 vehicles of heavily armed soldiers into CAR.⁶¹ Following the attacks, the UN Security Council strongly condemned the attacks and said that the developments threatened the civilian population and the stability of CAR. The Council members further emphasized the necessity of enhanced political dialogue in order to identify ways out of the current crisis and preserve national unity in the Republic. The Council demanded that the

⁵⁷ "At UN-backed meeting, Cameroon and Nigeria agree to expedite boundary demarcation process", *UN News Centre*, UN News Centre, December 14, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43779&Cr=cameroon&Cr1=nigeria#.UOVS8OS7Iq8>

⁵⁸ "Jindal Steel to invest \$500 million in Cameroon projects", *Reuters.com*, December 06, 2012 at <http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/12/06/jindal-steel-cameroon-iron-idINDEE8B50BN20121206>

⁵⁹ "Central African Republic rebels take diamond mine town", *BBC News*, December 18, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20775788>

⁶⁰ "Central African Republic rebels seize Ndele from army", *BBC News*, December 11, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20677641>

⁶¹ "Chad deploys troops to help fight CAR rebels", *BBC News*, December 19, 2012 at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-20777922>

armed groups immediately cease hostilities, withdraw from captured cities and respect the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement.⁶² Meanwhile, the rebels halted their advance towards the capital and expressed their willingness to engage in peace talks. However, the Seleka alliance said that it would continue to remain in the territory, rejecting the appeal from the UNSC.⁶³ Chad agreed to mediate talks between the CAR government and the rebel groups. A meeting of heads of state of the Economic Community of Central African States was held in Chad devoted to the crisis.⁶⁴

Chad

President criticises World Bank for treating Chad 'unfairly'

The Chadian President, Idriss Deby, has publicly criticised the World Bank for failing to help his country's development. The President stated that the World Bank is treating Chad unfairly, perpetuating its ongoing struggle against poverty, and thereby hindering Chad's ability to develop its economy.⁶⁵

Democratic Republic Of Congo

UNSC condemns attacks by M23 rebel group; UN and US issue sanctions against rebel group leader; M23 take over Goma, international community demands immediate withdrawal; Peace talks falter due to tensions; China to launch DRC's first satellite

Meeting in an emergency session in November, the UN Security Council strongly condemned the latest attacks by M23 rebel groups, which displaced more civilians in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The Council expressed deep concern regarding the 'rapidly deteriorating security and humanitarian crises in eastern DRC. The UN mission in the country, MONUSCO was closely following the situation and said that it would not tolerate any action by the M23 that would provoke panic among the civilian population and generate new displacement.⁶⁶ The United Nations and the US ordered sanctions including a travel ban and assets freeze against the head of the M23 rebels, Sultani Makenga who was accused of killing and raping civilians.⁶⁷

⁶² "Security Council concerned over situation in Central African Republic", *UN News Centre*, December 19, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43817#.UOZjzeS7Iq8>

⁶³ "Central African Republic rebels halt advance on capital", *Guardian*, December 20, 2012 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/dec/20/central-african-republic-rebels-halt>

⁶⁴ "CentrAfrica rebels refuse pull-back, Chad offers talks", *AFP*, December 20, 2012 at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jJ02oAt3wefnzHfVgD4d5YDuGsLA?docId=CNG.73374fa84b4873a957743736e2ec0c22.201>

⁶⁵ "Chad's President seeks investors in France, speaks out against World Bank", *Ventures-Africa*, December 07, 2012 at <http://www.ventures-africa.com/2012/12/chads-president-seeks-investors-in-france-speaks-out-against-world-bank/>

⁶⁶ "Security Council condemns fresh attacks by M23 rebels in eastern DR Congo", *UN News Centre*, November 17, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43526&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.ULMZ4eS7Iq8>

⁶⁷ "UN, US sanctions DR Congo rebel over atrocities", *The Times of India*, November 14, 2012 at http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-11-14/rest-of-world/35111385_1_sultani-makenga-atrocities-new-sanctions

Subsequently, the M23 rebels took control of Goma after prolonged fighting with the UN-backed government forces. The Security Council strongly condemned the wave of attacks by the M23 rebel group and demanded its immediate withdrawal from Goma in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The 15-member body also demanded “the cessation of any further advances by the M23 and that its members immediately and permanently disband and lay down their arms”. Meanwhile, the UN Secretary-General welcomed a joint statement issued by DRC’s President, Joseph Kabila and Rwandan President, Paul Kagame calling on the M23 rebel group to immediately cease fire in eastern DRC. He also welcomed the outcome of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Summit attended by several African heads of State which urged the rebel groups to stop violence and threats to depose the DRC government.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, the rebel groups agreed to withdraw from Goma provided President Joseph Kabila’s government met their demands for wide-ranging national reforms and negotiations.⁶⁹

Following a communiqué issued by the ICGLR, the M23 group withdrew from the city and were restricted outside of the 20 kilometre zone around Goma.⁷⁰ Though the government and the rebel group remained committed to negotiations, the peace talks mediated by Uganda faltered amid tensions between both parties.⁷¹ Subsequently, the rebel group demanded that Kinshasa sign a formal ceasefire without which the group alleged that it was difficult to continue with the negotiations.⁷²

According to reports, China’s Great Wall Industry Corp will launch the DRC’s first satellite, CongoSat 1, a communications satellite to be developed before the end of 2015. The satellite will be manufactured by the China Academy of Space Technology.⁷³

Equatorial Guinea

President calls for stronger South-South cooperation

At the 7th Summit for African Caribbean and Pacific Heads of State and Government, the President called for stronger South-South economic global cooperation that would be aimed at providing guidance for strategy and policies which would allow the nations to play an effective role in the

⁶⁸ “UN Chief welcomes African leaders’ call on M23 rebels to stop war in DR Congo”, *UN News Centre*, November 25, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43596&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.ULMQveS7lq8>

⁶⁹ “Congo’s M23 rebels say they will leave Goma”, *The Hindu*, November 28, 2012 at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/congos-m23-rebels-say-they-will-leave-goma/article4143308.ece>

⁷⁰ “Humanitarian situation in eastern DR Cong remains ‘extremely worrying’ – UN official”, *UN News Centre*, December 03, 2012 at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=43661&Cr=democratic&Cr1=congo#.UObAvOS7lq->

⁷¹ “DR Congo rebel peace talks falter amid tensions”, *AFP*, December 10, 2012 at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jyVpuf0yORS4y1bMKOC6KwJu_aAw?docId=CNG.4388fedd5560965753ae3cca5b9ad218.d81

⁷² “DR Congo rebels demand ceasefire”, *AFP*, December 19, 2012 at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5i6NhbTHNVKwSdFbXu2QvPSUKa5wQ?docId=CNG.73374fa84b4873a957743736e2ec0c22.481>

⁷³ “China to launch second African satellite”, *China Daily.com*, November 18, 2012 at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-11/18/content_15938780.htm

international arena. The country also proposed the creation of a mechanism for South-South global economic cooperation to replace the ACP Group's many subsets.⁷⁴

Sao Tome and Principe

Sao Tome and Principe joins group against money laundering; Ferreira da Costa appointed as the new Prime Minister

According to reports, the ECOWAS Council of Ministers approved the admission of Sao Tome and Principe into the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) as a full member.⁷⁵

Following political turmoil in the country, the President of Sao Tome and Principe appointed Dr. Gabriel Arcanjo Ferreira da Costa to succeed Patrice Trovoada as the Prime Minister.⁷⁶

Southern Africa

SADC agrees to send troops for the international force in DRC; South Africa elected to ECOSOC

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) strongly condemned the deteriorating situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo including the invasion and capture of Goma by the anti-government rebels. The Community also demanded the immediate withdrawal of the rebels from Goma and the cessation of hostilities, called for peaceful and durable resolution of the conflict through collective dialogue.⁷⁷ The SADC members recommended that the UN member countries participate in ensuring peace and stability in the area and welcomed the decision of the ICGLR which recommended the participation of the SADC in the international force.⁷⁸

South Africa was elected to the ECOSOC by an overwhelming majority vote of the 47-member body. The membership will provide it the opportunity to be located at the centre of the debate on the Global Development Agenda including the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ "Equatorial Guinea urges developing countries to develop intelligent strategies for sustainable development", *Market Watch*, December 13, 2012 at <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/equatorial-guinea-urges-developing-countries-to-develop-intelligent-strategies-for-sustainable-development-2012-12-13>

⁷⁵ "ECOWAS Council of Ministers approves membership of Sao Tome, Comoros in GIABA", *GIABA Press Release*, December 10, 2012 at <http://www.giaba.org/press/release.html>

⁷⁶ "Sao Tome president names new prime minister", *AFP*, December 10, 2012 at <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5im1RojiYnME-Fu5eS6EQsbFMYPsQ?docId=CNG.6aa6b0e1d1388af93931fa346dcbef77.591>

⁷⁷ "Southern Africa: SADC takes action on conflict in eastern DRC", *allAfrica.com*, December 11, 2012 at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212110946.html?viewall=1>

⁷⁸ "DR Congo: SADC Summit pledges continued support for DRC", *AfriqueJet*, December 11, 2012 at http://www.afriquejet.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3123:dr-congo-sadc-summit-pledges-continued-support-for-drc&catid=2:news&Itemid=111

⁷⁹ "South Africa elected to ECOSOC", *South African Government News Agency*, November 12, 2012 at <http://oldsanews.gcis.gov.za/rss/12/12111209251001>

Botswana

Opposition parties in Botswana forms a coalition

Botswana's opposition parties formed a coalition in an effort to give the ruling party, Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), a stiff competition. Moeti Mohwasa, spokesperson for the new coalition, said that the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) is an ongoing political effort of Botswana National Front (BNF), Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD) and the Botswana People's Party (BPP) to mount a strong challenge on the ruling BDP.⁸⁰

Nearly 300 Nigerians deported from Botswana

Nearly 300 Nigerians, living in Botswana, were deported home by Lieutenant General Seretse Khama Ian Khama's administration, after the authorities refused to renew their permits. The returnees complained that since the assumption of General Khama, Nigerians in that country had been subjected to dehumanising conditions and racial abuse. The deportees wanted President Goodluck Jonathan and the National Assembly to quickly look into the bilateral relationship in order to ascertain the true conditions of Nigerians living in that country.⁸¹

Lesotho

Lesotho and Rwanda to share best practices on governance

The government of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Lesotho agreed to sign a MoU through which they will share best practices on governance. The Minister of Local Government, James Musoni, said that both countries are working on the draft which will be signed by the first quarter of 2013. The decision was taken after a weeklong visit by a delegation of fifteen government officials from Lesotho, led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Local Government, Mothetjoa Metsing. Musoni said that formalising the partnership with the Kingdom of Lesotho opens opportunities for both countries and a platform for economic cooperation.⁸²

Namibia

South Africa and Namibia sign three co-operation agreements; China and Namibia discuss cooperation in various sectors; EU provides N\$123 million for Namibian educational development; Germany provides financial support for refugee education in Namibia; Namibia refuses to send troops to DRC

South African President Jacob Zuma hosted his Namibian counterpart Hifikepunye Pohamba at a meeting aimed at strengthening co-operation in various areas. Both the delegations reviewed

⁸⁰ "Botswana opposition forms a coalition", The Southern Times, November 13, 2012, at http://www.southerntimesafrica.com/news_article.php?id=7743&title=Botswana%20opposition%20forms%20a%20coalition&type=95

⁸¹ Tony Edike, "300 Nigerians deported from Botswana", Vanguard, November 18, 2012, at <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2012/11/300-nigerians-deported-from-botswana/>

⁸² Ivan R. Mugisha, "Lesotho, Rwanda to Share Governance Best Practices", The New Times, December 24, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212240219.html>

progress made in bilateral co-operation and partnership. Following the talks between delegations of the two countries, South Africa and Namibia signed three co-operation agreements. Particular focus was paid on key areas such as trade and investment, energy, transport, environment, science and technology, education, tourism, and security issues. Earlier, an agreement to establish a bi-national commission was also signed.⁸³

Chinese ambassador to Namibia, Xin Shunkang, said that China wanted to cooperate with Namibia in many sectors, ranging from trade to minerals extraction – especially uranium. Xin said China would provide technical expertise to Namibia in the uranium sector. Pohamba recalled that China assisted Namibia in establishing institutions such as schools and hospitals. He said China also helped in the establishment of the Namibian Defence Force (NDF). Pohamba added that he was looking forward to the construction of the Outapi-Oshikango and the Ruacana-Omakange roads that would be built with Chinese support.⁸⁴

The European Commission (EU) Head of Delegation to Namibia, Ambassador Raul Fuentes Milani, handed over N\$123 million to the Minister of Education, Dr Abraham Iyambo, for national educational development. The donation is part of the EU Education Sector Policy Support Programme, through which the EU committed over N\$420 million to assist the government in achieving universal primary education and ensuring equality in educational opportunities. Milani said that delivering more and better education is complex, and elements that impact upon access, quality and inclusion in education have to be addressed at all levels, from early childhood development to higher education.⁸⁵

The German Embassy and the UNHCR in Namibia signed an agreement to provide financial support to the Albert Einstein Academic Refugee Initiative. The DAFI scholarships are aimed at ensuring that refugee students, upon completion of their secondary education, are able to study at institutions of higher learning in the country of asylum or in the region. The German Ambassador to Namibia Onno Hückmann, said the Federal Republic of Germany provided over US\$60 million worldwide in support of tertiary education for refugee students since 1992. So far, 32 refugee students from Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and Zimbabwe received DAFI scholarships awarded to them since 2009 in Namibia.⁸⁶

The permanent secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Veiccoh Nghiwete, confirmed that Namibia would not contribute any troops to the SADC Standby Force for the Democratic Republic of Congo, but will assist the mission in other ways. Earlier, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) pledged to send 4000 troops to form a neutral force in eastern Congo, where

⁸³ “SA, Namibia sign co-operation agreements”, Times Live, November 6, 2012, at <http://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2012/11/06/sa-namibia-sign-co-operation-agreements>

⁸⁴ “Namibia looks East!”, New Era, November 15, 2012, at <http://www.newera.com.na/articles/49127/Namibia-looks-East->

⁸⁵ Paulus Paulus, “Namibia: Education Receives EU Funding”, New Era, quoted in All Africa, November 27, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201211270865.html>

⁸⁶ “Namibia: Germany Pledges Support for Refugee Education”, New Era, quoted in All Africa, December 11, 2012, at <http://allafrica.com/stories/201212110842.html>

rebels have waged an eight-month siege. SADC also asked the United Nations (UN) to strengthen the mandate of the UN peacekeeping force in the region.⁸⁷

South Africa

Desmond Tutu awarded UNESCO prize for promoting human rights

South Africa's Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has been awarded the prestigious Unesco/Bilbao Prize for the Promotion of a Culture of Human Rights. Unesco said in a statement that in selecting Desmond Tutu, the jury recognized the outstanding role he played in building the new democratic, non-racial South Africa and his invaluable contribution as chairperson of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which became a model for other post-conflict societies.⁸⁸

Swaziland

IMF warn Swaziland against deepening economic crisis; Kampala Convention on IDPs enters into force

According to new data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Swaziland has the worst-performing economy in sub-Saharan Africa. The IMF projections show that through 2017, Swaziland will be untouched by rising global prosperity and is set to sink further into poverty. Indeed, gross domestic savings as percentage of GDP will be halved from 2012's 10.6 percent to 5.6 percent in 2013. Swaziland's 2012 GDP of \$12.85 billion (R112bn), which was down 3 percent from 2011 when it stood at \$13.23bn, is expected to drop again, to US \$12.72bn, in 2013, for a GDP growth rate of negative 0.09 percent. With a worsening economy and less cash on hand in savings, slackening consumer demand will reduce inflation from 7.8 percent in 2012 to 6.8 percent in 2013.⁸⁹

The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, also known as the Kampala Convention, entered into force on December 6, 2012, thirty days after Swaziland became the 15th nation in Africa to sign and ratify it. The scope of the Convention is articulated around equipping states to prevent forced displacement, and investing in preparedness and response mechanisms to crises caused by conflict natural disasters. The Convention also stresses the importance of looking at interventions that can provide sustainable and durable solutions for those displaced – including the regaining of access to areas of origin, the ability to settle in other areas within their own country, or the integration into areas where they are currently displaced as part of a pre-existing community. Andrea Lari, Director of Programs for Refugees International, which helped shape U.S.-based contributions to the early stages of the drafting of the Convention, said that this historic step is seen as a starting point rather than a final achievement in and of itself.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ "No Nam troops to DRC", The Namibian, December 13, 2012, at <http://www.namibian.com.na/news/full-story/archive/2012/december/article/no-nam-troops-to-drc/>

⁸⁸ "Human rights award for Desmond Tutu", southafrica.info, 13 December 2012, at http://www.southafrica.info/about/people/tutu-131212.htm#.UOxC_HnppcA

⁸⁹ "Swaziland poverty is set to deepen - IMF", iol News, December 9, 2012, at <http://www.iol.co.za/business/business-news/swaziland-poverty-is-set-to-deepen-imf-1.1437879#.UOrmbnnppcA>

⁹⁰ "The Kampala Convention on IDPs Enters Into Force", Think Africa Press, 14 December 2012, at <http://thinkafricapress.com/legal/experts-weekly-kampala-convention-enters-force>

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Commentaries can range between 1,000-1,500 words (excluding footnotes) and book reviews between 600-1,000 words. Guidelines for contributors may be found at: <http://www.idsa.in/africatrends>. Submissions may be emailed to the Editor at idsa.africatrends@gmail.com.

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