

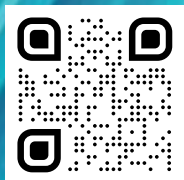


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APRIL 2023

SOUTH SUDAN

18TH APRIL 25, 2023

WHAT KIIR, RUTO AND GUELLEH WILL BRING TO THE TABLE AS IGAD DISPATCHES THREE HEADS OF STATE A VOLATILE SUDAN

Three heads of state, led by President Salva Kiir, are set to play a key role in finding a lasting solution to the ongoing violence in Sudan. Kiir, a peacekeeper in Sudan, now finds himself on the table of the mediator's role, alongside his counterparts from Kenya – William Ruto, who is also battling civil unrest backed by opposition back in Nairobi; and Djibouti's Omar Guelleh. Compared to Ruto, who took office last August, Kiir and Guelleh, who came into office in 2011 and 1999, are expected to draw from the wealth of their diplomatic experiences to try and find a solution for the warring parties and the population caught in the fighting that has so far claimed over 100 lives.

A fierce battle erupted on Saturday between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces, with the latter calling for the establishment of a civilian government amidst ongoing peace negotiations that were brokered in Juba in 2019. The three heads of state are part of the high-level delegation dispatched by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to try and find a temporary solution to the crisis that has so far claimed over 100 lives and left scores of others injured.

There are a significant number of South Sudanese living and working in Sudan. Juba is also a signatory to Sudan's Peace Agreement. On Sunday, IGAD held a crisis (virtual) meeting that resolved to have Kiir, William Ruto (Kenya), and Djibouti President Omar Guelleh lead the delegation, whose primary goal is to facilitate dialogue and reconciliation between warring groups. Forces loyal to Sudan's Supreme Council leaders, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan (National Army), and his deputy, General Mohamed Hamdan Degalo (who has earned sympathy from Rapid Support Forces (RSF)), continued to engage each other for the third day in a row, Monday.

The US has since called for the immediate cessation of hostilities and a return to the negotiation table. With the international airport in Khartoum closed it is unclear when any peace initiative will be launched. Flights to Khartoum have been halted in all countries neighbouring Sudan. The IGAD's decision to send the delegation demonstrates its commitment to resolving regional conflicts and promoting peace and stability. The planned visit is expected to send a strong message to the international community that the authority is committed to resolving the conflict and ensuring regional stability.

The international community is keeping a close eye on the situation and hopes that the delegation's efforts will bear fruit. The three presidents will use their diplomatic skills to facilitate dialogue to try and find common ground between the opposing groups. Their presence in Sudan is expected to send a strong message to the international community, which is already concerned with the ongoing situation in Sudan. The IGAD, which is charged with encouraging and maintaining development in its member states, has agreed to have three presidents, one from each section of the IGAD states.

President Guelleh is an experienced public figure. The fact that he comes from the Horn of Africa state is also another advantage that Guelleh, one of the longest-serving presidents in Africa, will be banking on to try and persuade the warring sides to drop the weapons. He once served as IGAD chairman. Djibouti is also a guarantor of the Revitalized Peace Agreement (R-ARCSS) with the Republic of South Sudan. President Kiir, on the other hand, played a major role in guaranteeing Sudanese peace since he was the guarantor of the Juba Peace Agreement signed in 2019 between al-Burhan and Degalo. He brokered a deal, but now Kiir is set to get off his feet and work towards guaranteeing that very peace to the Sudanese civil population. Kiir on Saturday called for the cessation of hostilities to give dialogue a chance. Kiir has the best understanding of the backgrounds and cultural differences in Sudan.

President Kiir is set to represent the Nile Valley states of IGAD, just as he was crucial to the attainment of calm in neighbouring Ethiopia. The Great Lakes states are set to be represented by the president of Kenya, William Ruto, who too has great diplomatic skills and is perched on the back of the Kenyan post-election violence of 2007/2008. He has been on the front lines, meeting with the president of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, in an effort to join hands in delivering stability in the DRC. Of late, Ruto has called on the opposition, which is organizing demonstrations in Kenya, to participate in a roundtable discussion to address the political issues. This is quite a wealth of experience from these three heads of state, who have pledged to work around the clock to bring calm and stability to embattled Sudan.

SOURCE:

<https://cityreviewss.com/what-kiir-ruto-and-guelleh-will-bring-to-the-table-as-igad-dispatches-three-heads-of-state-a-volatile-sudan/>

20TH APRIL 2023

KIIR URGES SUDANESE RIVALS TO PROTECT OIL PIPELINE

South Sudan President Salva Kiir has urged rival leaders in Sudan to protect oil pipelines that transport crude oil to international markets. Presidential Affairs Minister Barnaba Marial Benjamin announced on Thursday that President Kiir had a follow-up discussion with rival leaders in the Sudanese conflict. He asked them to accept a ceasefire agreement and to instruct fighters under their control to protect oil pipelines. "Kiir has been talking to the Sudanese in the conflict about the need for a ceasefire agreement which they accepted on Tuesday. Sadly, and as you all know, the fighting continues in Khartoum and other parts of the country even after the two leaders have assured His Excellency the President of their acceptance of the ceasefire proposal. Today, he made another follow-up and talked to the two leaders, and asked for a ceasefire. They again accepted but we do not know whether they will keep their word.

This is the challenge," said Benjamin President Kiir emphasized to the two leaders the need to protect the pipeline that exports oil from South Sudan to the international markets through Sudan. South Sudan relies on Sudan to export its crude oil, which travels through a pipeline to the Red Sea via Khartoum where fighting erupted on Saturday. For his part, Petroleum Minister Puot Kang Chol has urged the warring parties in Sudan to fulfil their moral responsibility and obligation of providing protection of critical infrastructure in their country under international law. The minister also assured the public that all facilities such as pipelines, pump stations, processing facilities, surface facilities, and export marine terminals in Sudan are well protected and safe from any damage.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article273213/>

12TH APRIL 2023

SOUTH SUDAN HOLDOUT GROUPS FORM ALLIANCE TO TOPPLE JUBA REGIME

South Sudan hold groups have formed an alliance of all armed and non-opposition groups in preparation for major offensives against the Juba regime, raising concerns about their commitment to peace. The alliance, operating under South Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance (SSFDA), claimed President Salva Kiir and First Vice President Riek Machar were not ready to implement the peace agreement because they are using the 2018 accord as a strategy to

remain in power to enrich themselves and members of their families. Gen. Simon Gatwec Dual, leader of Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO) Kitgwang faction, said Kiir and Machar share the same agenda. "Our people should not be fooled that the regime in Juba is for peace.

The regime of Salva Kiir and Riek Machar is a regime of people interested in power. Riek wants power and Kiir does not give it. This is the situation and so they have decided to hold the country, hostage. So, as the leaders of various movements, we have decided to rescue our people by forming the alliance to coordinate our efforts to remove them", he explained.

The new alliance, according to a statement issued Wednesday, consists of SPLM/A-IO Kitgwang Declaration, National Salvation Front (NAS), South Sudan United Front/Army (SSUNF/A), United South Sudan Revolutionary Movement/Army (USSRM/A), South Sudan Rescue Front (SSRF), United Revolutionary Democratic Movement (UDRM/K) and South Sudan United Movement/Army Forces (SSUM/FA). "We, the SSFDA parties to this MoU [Memorandum of Understanding] recognize the need for a united opposition against the brutal regime of General Salva Kiir and his partners in crime," partly reads the statement extended to *Sudan Tribune*. It added, "Knowing the protracted suffering imposed on our citizens by illegitimate and unilateral extension of the government without due democratic process.

We, the SSFDA parties may appreciate the role of the unified political and military action to change the regime in Juba by committing the country to a democratic process through free and fair elections". The holdout groups are a collection of armed and non-political organizations which declined to sign the 2018 revitalized peace agreement, claiming it did not address specifically the root causes of the conflict in the country. The peace agreement was brokered by Sudan and Uganda as guarantors. Several armed and non-dissident groups like NAS, SSUF, the Real SPLM, South Sudan People's Patriotic Movement, South Sudan United Front Progressive, SPLM-IO Kitgwang Simon Gatwech, and SPLM-IO led by Gen. Johnson Olony operate independently cause havoc, despite the presence of UN peacekeeping troops.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article272875/>

SUDAN

23RD APRIL 2023

427 DEAD, THOUSANDS INJURED DUE TO CONFLICT IN SUDAN: OCHA

At least 427 people have died across the country, with over 3,700 injured as result of the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Sudan said on Friday. The clashes, which started in April 15, have shown no sign of letting up in Sudan's capital despite repeated calls for ceasefire from the international community. OCHA said an aid worker from the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was killed two days ago after the "vehicle he was traveling in with his family south of El Obeid, North Kordofan, was caught in a crossfire bet This, it stated, brings to five the total number of aid workers killed since April 15. ween warring parties".

The UN humanitarian agency, citing the IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, also cited an increased in displacement due to fighting and dwindling basic commodities have also been reported across the states of Khartoum, El Gezira, Sennar, White Nile, River Nile and El Gedaref. Reports estimated that between 7,500 and 8,000 people have been displaced from El Obeid and are currently seeking refuge, following fierce SAF-RSF clashes. In North Darfur's capital of El Fasher, an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 displaced people, most of whom were women and children, arrived in Chad on Friday. South Sudan's IOM representative in Juba Peter Van der Auweraert said that at least 2,000 people arrived in the capital today, according multiple media reports. He, however, said they expect more vulnerable people to come at a later stage, as many of the people who made it to Juba "had the means to make it here". Meanwhile following the suspension of humanitarian operations in Sudan due to various aid workers being killed as well as the near-impossible ground situation hindering their activity, local civil society actors have since provided aid. "Neighbourhood committees in multiple locations have established emergency rooms to provide basic healthcare, given the closure of many hospitals," noted OCHA in its report.

It further added, "Several committees are also supporting the coordination of civilian evacuations from areas that have been hardest-hit by the conflict." Armed clashes between SAF and RSF erupted on April 15 in heavily populated parts of the capital, Khartoum and spread to other cities, including Darfur region. The clashes follow weeks of rising tensions between the two forces over security force reform during negotiations for a new transitional government and was preceded by the SAF and RSF jointly overthrowing Sudan's transitional government in October 2021.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article273293/>

22ND APRIL 2023

HEMETTI APPEARS IN KHARTOUM WITH HIS TROOPS DEFYING BURHAN

Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, also known as “Hemetti,” the Commander of the Rapid Support Forces, along with his brother, who is the deputy commander Abdel Rahim Daglo, separately appeared in the Sudanese capital on Saturday to demonstrate their presence among their fighters. In an interview with Al-Arabiya TV, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the Commander in Chief of the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), stated that nobody knows where Hemetti is, and even his forces are unaware of his location. Al-Burhan further revealed that he was at the SAF General Command in Khartoum overseeing military operations against the rebellious RSF leader.

The Sudanese army took control of the RSF premises in the capital in order to disturb their command and prevent them from coordinating their military operation. Abdel Rahim speaks surrounded with RSF fighters in Khartoum on April 22, 2023 After al-Burhan’s statements, Abel Rahim Daglo appeared in an area identified in the Eastern Nile town, challenging al-Burhan to leave his command room in the basement of the army command and fight with his soldiers on the streets. The RSF’s second commander appeared in a military uniform and was holding a gun. On the same day, the Saudi-funded Al-Arabiya released another interview with Hemetti, reaffirming that he was in Khartoum with his troops visiting the wounded and killed soldiers before adding that “What al-Burhan said is bullshit, and I will not reply to him.” A few hours later, a militiaman released another video on social media of a convoy of RSF vehicles firing bullets in the air before stopping at a position they control.

When he approached one of the vehicles, appeared Hemetti in military uniform sitting inside the vehicle with a gun in his left hand. The RSF commander greeted the fighter and asked him to delete the video. However, it is not clear why he posted it, compromising the security of their leader. The Sudanese army has stated that it plans to launch ground operations to clear the capital of the paramilitary forces.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article273276/>

20TH APRIL 2023

BURHAN SAYS NO TRUCE WITH HEMETTI AS LONG AS HIS FORCES ARE IN SUDANESE CAPITAL

The head of the Transitional Sovereign Council and Sudanese army Commander-in-Chief, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, stated on Thursday that he would not agree to a truce with the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) Commander as long as their forces are present in residential areas and interfering with the functioning of public facilities in Khartoum. International pressure is mounting on the Sudanese army to accept a ceasefire to allow civilians to receive supplies, and for the sick and wounded to be transported to hospitals or out of combat zones.

During an interview with Al Jazeera TV on the eve of Eid al-Fitr, Burhan explained that the Sudanese army cannot accept a truce that does not serve its intended purpose of providing services and transporting the injured and sick to hospitals. He stated that the RSF had seized five hospitals in the capital to treat their wounded members and taken control of various public facilities and police stations, using them as headquarters for their forces. He said that the Rapid Support Forces, who are deployed in the streets of the neighbourhoods, established checkpoints for civilians, verifying their identities and extorting them and confiscating their belongings, as well as dealing with people based on their ethnic and regional backgrounds. “If we want there to be a genuine truce, let’s open the corridors and leave civilians free movement. How do you talk about a truce when you set up checkpoints, search civilians, and occupy public service buildings and state facilities? You can’t talk about a truce under these circumstances, it’s colonialism, not a truce,” he questioned. However, he said that dialogue with the RSF is attainable only if its forces withdraw from Khartoum. He emphasized that the army does not intend to engage in combat in residential neighbourhoods.

Concerning the conditions of dialogue with his rival, he said negotiations will not be with RSF leaders, but with “parties that want dialogue from within the RSF,” ad he said. He said that the Sudanese army maintains control over all parts of the country, and the presence of Hemetti’s forces is limited to the Sudanese capital. The confrontations between the national army and the paramilitary forces have entered their sixth day, and the battles have escalated around the General Command, areas close to Khartoum Airport, and the outskirts of Omdurman. Regarding Hemetti’s continuation as the deputy head of the Sovereign Council, Al-Burhan stated that measures would be taken in due course against Hemetti, without further details. During the interview, the commander in chief of the army accused the RSF leader of attempting to seize the Sudanese state and use the framework agreement to their advantage. He also accused the militia leadership of seeking to govern Sudan by force, and he vowed not to allow it. He reiterated that the state cannot be handed over to an individual that acts solely for his interest. Al-Burhan recounted, “One day, I informed Hemetti that if we are the cause of Sudan’s problems, we should step down together, but he refused, telling me you could leave alone but I would stay”.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article273234/>

22ND APRIL 2023

WAR CONTINUES IN KHARTOUM STREETS DESPITE EID TRUCE

Despite the announcement of a three-day truce for Eid al-Fitr, fighting between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) intensified in Khartoum on Saturday morning. On Friday, the army deployed ground troops to the capital in preparation for a potential street war against support forces who were stationed in government facilities after losing their military bases. Both warring parties announced a three-day truce on Friday, but no agreement was reached on how to monitor its implementation. On Saturday morning, explosions and clashes were reported in the areas surrounding the General Command of the army and the presidential palace in Khartoum. The fighting then spread to the neighbourhoods of Hillat Hamad, Khojaly, and Arkaweet, after previously being limited to the heart of the capital. According to reports from eyewitnesses, there was continued indiscriminate artillery shelling in the neighbourhoods of Ombada and Karari on Saturday morning. In Ombada Mansoura, six people were killed due to shelling from the Corps of Engineers. Moreover, warplanes were spotted flying over the Sudanese capital on the eighth day of armed clashes between the Sudanese army and the Rapid Support Forces.

It becomes evident that the announced truce did not accomplish the intended goals as civilians are fearful of leaving their homes, services remain suspended, and shops are closed. Furthermore, hospitals are closed or out of service due to power cuts and a shortage of medical supplies. The conflict has also spilt over onto the roads linking Khartoum with other states. On Friday, clashes occurred on the Western Road connecting Darfur and North Kordofan to the capital, where the army intercepted RSF fighters on their way to the capital. Additional clashes were reported on the Khartoum-Madani Road, in an effort to stop Sudanese army troops coming from eastern It is worth noting that after the collapse of the Al-Bashir regime in April 2019, al-Burhan tasked the RSF with protecting of strategic areas of Khartoum to prevent any coup attempt against him.

The paramilitary forces remained there until the outbreak of war on April 15. Al-Huda Prison Incident the Sudanese army declared on Friday evening that the RSF fighters had attacked Omdurman prison, taking 28 prisoners with them, while the remaining prisoners managed to escape. Although the paramilitary forces denied involvement in the attack, the family of a young man detained for allegedly killing a police officer during the protests against the coup confirmed that their son had been released from prison, and they have lost contact with him. Among the detainees in Omdurman prison were dozens of individuals arrested for their involvement in tribal conflicts in Darfur. In a statement released on Friday evening, the Central Committee of Sudan Doctors reported that several areas in Khartoum had been subjected to shelling and clashes between the army forces and the militiamen, resulting in significant damage to buildings, facilities, and public property. and central Sudan.

SOURCE:

<https://sudantribune.com/article273246/>

ETHIOPIA

23RD APRIL 2023

‘NOBODY’S TALKING ABOUT IT’: RESEARCHERS SEEK TO HIGHLIGHT SCALE OF ETHIOPIA’S DEADLY CONFLICT

The war in northern Ethiopia had been going on for months. “We didn’t have a concrete view of how many people could have died, no one was publishing it or giving those numbers,” recalls Tim Vanden Bempt, speaking on the phone from Belgium. “Still no one’s talking about it so it certainly helps to get numbers, to get data out . . . It gives a little bit of exposure.” The e-commerce manager – whose wife is from Tigray – became involved with a University of Ghent research group investigating civilian atrocities in Tigray after connecting with academic Jan Nyssen online. They started gathering data – first on specific massacres, and later on broader casualties – from January 2021. Since the war in Tigray began in November 2020, when the Ethiopian government began military operations against the region’s ruling party, the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, the research group has put possible civilian casualties as high as 813,418. This is an estimate, and the reality could be significantly lower, though Vanden Bempt says there is no chance it has been less than 200,000.

These figures include deaths from direct and indirect cases. Of those, the vast majority were deaths due to starvation: between 248,753 and 555,082; while there have likely been between 53,695 and 205,126 deaths from poor or non-existent healthcare, due to the conflict, or the aftermath of injuries from violence. “People were dying of hunger and disease already before the war so we subtract that from our numbers,” clarified Vanden Bempt. Direct killings are likely between 10,642 and 53,210, the researchers say, though Vanden Bempt says his estimates go as high as 100,000, as “we have lots of reports about areas with killings” but those that were not verifiable “are not included in our massacre database yet”.

The data is collected from a range of sources, including directly from hospitals, through monitoring news reports and from estimates released by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, a food security framework that puts together data and information related to global hunger crises. “I’m working in my free time on it . . . Every day I’m busy with that,” Vanden Bempt said. Military casualties could be about 400,000, according to further estimates, though these figures are very hard to confirm given the amount of “propaganda”, said Vanden Bempt. One of the biggest challenges has been the complete severance of communications with people in Tigray for much of the war. Vanden Bempt said his wife struggled to speak to her family.” Of course when you can’t reach your family for a long time you start getting involved in it,” he said. “Every form of communication was shut down the night the attacks started in Tigray until March 2021, if I’m not mistaken, when some communication in [certain areas] restarted.” That June, he said, there was a communications blackout again.

“If there is no communication possible, there are no journalists that are allowed [to] go on the scene to talk to people, it is very easy to overlook the whole conflict.” Though a ceasefire was declared last November, deaths are still continuing in some parts of Tigray, Vanden Bempt said. In the future, he would like to see peace in Tigray, coupled with justice and accountability for what has happened. On whether this the deadliest war of the 21st century, as it has been labelled by some media, he said: “I think that might be very accurate, especially given the short timeframe. We’re talking about a two-year war . . . And still, nobody’s talking about it.” Despite the huge death toll, he said there does not seem to be that much awareness, at least in Europe, of the scale of Ethiopia’s conflict. “If I look around in my immediate surroundings, work, friends, there is not too much knowledge about it . . . It’s not on the news here. Sporadically [it will be] in a small newspaper article but that’s it. I don’t know why it is. People [say] ‘it’s Africa, nobody cares about it’.”

SOURCE:

<https://www.irishtimes.com/world/africa/2023/04/23/nobodys-talking-about-it-researchers-seek-to-highlight-scale-of-ethiopia-deadly-conflict/>

24TH APRIL 2023

OLA “ACKNOWLEDGES” UPCOMING NEGOTIATION WITH ETHIOPIA GOVERNMENT, “STRONGLY OBJECTS” REFERENCE AS “SHENE”

The Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) said in a statement that it “acknowledges the statements” made on Sunday by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed on the start next Tuesday of negotiations in Tanzania and said it “can confirm that the Ethiopian regime has accepted our terms for peace negotiations.” However, the OLA, which has been fighting against government forces in Oromia for the last five years, said that it “strongly objects to the reference of our organization as “Shene,” a term the government often uses to refer to the group, which it had designated as a “terrorist organization” in May 2021. “Our organization’s name is the Oromo Liberation Army, and any other designation is incorrect and an attempt to misrepresent our identity and objectives. We urge the regime to cease disseminating this kind of disinformation,” the group said rejecting the reference by the government as “OLF/Shene.” During a live broadcast speech at an event in Addis Ababa this afternoon which was organized to recognize stakeholders who played roles in ending the two years’ war between the federal government and Tigrayan forces, PM Aboy said that “negotiation that will be held with OLF/Shene will start in Tanzania the day after tomorrow.”

The OLA said that the negotiation includes “the involvement of an independent third-party mediator and a commitment to maintain transparency throughout the process,” and said it is “a crucial and positive step towards establishing a lasting peace in the region.” But both the government and the OLA did not disclose details on the negotiators. The statement from both came amidst growing calls for peace including from lawmakers representing Oromia regional state and the US government to

end the war in the region which destroyed countless lives and caused immeasurable destruction in the region over the last five five years. Over the past few months, both the federal government and the OLA have been signalling to efforts in resolving the war through peace talks.

In March this year, PM Abiy hinted at an ongoing effort to resolve the war and acknowledged that the calls made for peace from the Oromia regional state government was decided at a party level with the formation of a committee. The PM was referring to the call made by the Oromia regional state president Shimelis Abdissa while addressing the 6th regular meeting of *Coffee* Oromia, the regional council, on 17 February. The OLA reciprocated it as “welcome news”, but cautioned that the call lacks clarity. Responding to lawmakers, PM Abiy said the call from the regional government was “a continuation of” the decision by the ruling party. HE also claimed that “more than ten [rounds of] talks were conducted in the past.”

ALTHOUGH OLA DISMISSED THE CLAIM AS “INACCURATE” IT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT “THERE ARE POSITIVE SIGNS THAT PEACE TALKS, WITH APPROPRIATE NEUTRAL INTERNATIONAL THIRD-PARTY MEDIATION, WILL TAKE PLACE.”

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SOURCE:

<https://addisstandard.com/breaking-ola-acknowledges-upcoming-negotiation-with-ethiopia-government-strongly-objects-reference-as-shene/>

KENYA

1ST APRIL 2023

KENYAN OPPOSITION LEADER TO SUE OVER ALLEGED ATTEMPT ON LIFE

Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga has denounced the point-blank firing of a tear gas canister at local journalists during his latest anti-government protest as a primitive act of intolerance, and he vows to go to court over what he called an attempt on his own life. In an interview with The Associated Press on Friday, the 78-year-old longtime candidate for president spoke more about his grievances over last year's election—a loss upheld by Kenya's top court—than the rising prices or other painful economic issues affecting Kenyans at large. Known for his prominent role in the fight for multi-party democracy decades ago, Odinga on Friday warned against attempts by president William Ruto's administration to declare the current protests illegal.

It's a violation of a fundamental right to demonstrate, said Odinga, who vowed to continue the twice-weekly protests in the capital, Nairobi and elsewhere that began last week and have been marked at times by violence. He spoke before traveling to Kisumu, his stronghold in western Kenya, which has also been rocked by the demonstrations. The independent policing Oversight Authority has said it is investigating four incidents of police shooting and killing of protesters since the demonstrations began—Odinga said his party is still compiling a toll—and private property belonging to former president Uhuru Kenyatta's family has been attacked. The Inspector General of Police Japhet Koome said one officer died after Thursday's protests and 20 were seriously injured.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/kenya-opposition-antigovernment-protests-odinga-ruto-4754e2d4cc21a56f-872876f7a7456551>

15TH APRIL 2023

STARVING FOLLOWERS FOUND AT KENYAN PASTOR'S PROPERTY; 4 DIES

Police in coastal Kenya found 15 emaciated parishioners on the property of a church pastor, and four of the people died after the group was rescued and taken to a hospital, authorities said. Police officials said investigators received a tip that dozens of people were starving to death after their pastor told them it was a way to meet Jesus. Most of the followers could not walk or talk when officers found them.

The pastor of Good News International Church, Paul Makenzi, surrendered Friday to police in the town of Malindi. Makenzi was arrested and charged last month in the deaths of two children whose parents were members of his church. He pleaded not guilty and was released on bond while proceedings in the case continued. The people who died Friday have not been identified, and their bodies were taken to morgue in Malindi. Residents had complained to local authorities about the pastor, accusing him of fostering growing cultism in the area. Cults are common in Kenya which has a largely religious society. Police received information about a possible mass grave on the pastor's property, but initial searches did not locate one. Investigations are ongoing, according to Malindi sub-county police boss John Kemboi. Kenya deploys first earth observation satellite into space

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/kenya-church-cult-starvation-f0eeaa9b67ddeb18f21d126d7dc8d3d>

15TH APRIL 2023

KENYA DEPLOYS FIRST EARTH OBSERVATION SATELLITE INTO SPACE

Kenya's first earth observation satellite was launched into space Saturday after two aborted attempts earlier in the week. The African country's Taifa-1 was among the satellites on SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket, which lifted off from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. The rocket's launch had to be scrubbed twice previously due to bad weather. Kenya's satellite will fly over the country every four days and gather data for agriculture, land and environment monitoring, according to the Kenya Space Agency. Data from the satellite is expected in the coming months, and the agency has set up a team of analysts.

It said says the information will be distributed free to government agencies and to private companies for a reasonable fee. The satellite was developed and designed by Kenyans but manufactured at Eurosat in Bulgaria at a total cost of 50 million Kenyan shillings (\$371,000). Kenyans were eager to watch the Falcon 9's launch online. Some described having the Taifa-1 enter orbit as a moment of national pride. The country launched an experimental nanosatellite that lifted from International Space Station in 2018. As of the end of 2022, 14 African countries had launched a total of 52 satellites, according to consulting firm Space Hubs Africa.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/kenya-satellite-launch-taifa1-spacex-fdf728fc8b990cbb7dfa9486bd9e1eab>

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

3RD APRIL 2023

AT LEAST 21 KILLED, SEVERAL MISSING IN EASTERN DR CONGO LANDSLIDE

Bodies of eight women, 13 children discovered after the landslide hit a river in the locality of Bolowa on Sunday. At least 21 people have died and several others are missing a day after a landslide in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The bodies of eight women and 13 children were discovered after the landslide hit a river in the locality of Bolowa on Sunday as people were washing clothes and cleaning kitchenware, said Voltaire Batundi, a civil society leader in the wider Masisi territory.

One person survived and has been taken to a health centre, he added. “We think that maybe in the mud there are still other bodies,” he told Reuters news agency by phone. Search efforts have continued on Monday, a spokesperson for the governor of North Kivu province, which includes Masisi, said. Fabrice Muphirwa Kubuya, head of the Osso-Banyungu civil society group, said that “the landslide occurred at around midday in the village of Bulwa”, putting the provisional death toll at 30, as quoted by Anadolu Agency. He added that the mudslide may have been triggered by days of heavy rainfall.

SOURCE:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/3/at-least-21-killed-several-missing-in-eastern-dr-congo-landslide>

14TH APRIL 2023

WITHDRAWAL OF M23 REBELS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INVESTIGATE ATROCITIES AND PROVIDE AID

It is critical that Congolese and UN authorities urgently investigate reports of atrocities committed by members of the March 23 Movement (M23), following reports the armed group has withdrawn from several areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo’s (DRC) North-Kivu province, including the towns of Kishishe, Bambo and Bugina, Amnesty International said today. “Authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the United Nations, must promptly send investigators to the areas vacated by M23 to carry out thorough investigations into credible allegations of mass rapes and summary killings, to ensure those responsible are brought to justice.

This should include all those up in the line of command and any States that may have supported M23,” Amnesty International’s Secretary General Agnes Callamard said. In February, Amnesty International issued *an extended press release* in which witnesses from these towns described how M23 fighters, which UN reports say are backed by neighbouring Rwanda, committed war crimes and possible crimes against humanity. Rape survivors, and others who were attacked, have yet to receive adequate assistance. Agnès Callamard said: “The DRC authorities and humanitarian agencies must urgently step in and provide medical and other assistance to the survivors of rape and other victims of violations and crimes who have been left without help for months. The DRC authorities must ensure civilians in the area are protected.” While M23 rebels may have withdrawn from some areas in North-Kivu province, civilians living in the Beni area, and neighbouring Ituri province, continue to be killed by members of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) and other armed groups. The DRC authorities must take urgent measures to stop the killing of civilians in these areas.”

SOURCE:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/04/m23-fighters-withdraw-from-some-areas-in-north-kivu-region/>

UGANDA

20TH APRIL 2023

UGANDAN PRESIDENT REFUSES TO SIGN ANTI-LGBTQ BILL, SEEKS CHANGES

President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda has refused to sign into law a controversial new bill against homosexuality that prescribes the death penalty in some cases, requesting that it should be amended. Museveni’s decision was announced late Thursday after a meeting of lawmakers in his ruling party, almost all of whom support the bill approved by the lawmakers last month. The meeting resolved to return the bill to the national assembly with proposals for its improvement, a statement said. Museveni condemned homosexuality during the meeting in the capital, Kampala, charging that Europe is lost. So, they also want us to be lost, according to footage released by public broadcaster UBC.

Museveni also praised lawmakers for approving the bill, which has drawn international condemnation. I congratulate you for that strong stand, he said in the released video. It is good that you rejected the pressure from imperialists. And this is what I told them. Whenever, they come to me I say, you, please shut up. A spokesman for the presidency said Museveni is not opposed to the punishments proposed in the bill but wants lawmakers to look into the issue of rehabilitation. Museveni told the members that he had no objections to the punishment but on the issue of rehabilitation of the persons who have in the past been engaged in homosexuality

but would like to normal lives again, spokesman Sandor Walusimbi said on twitter. It was agreed that the bill goes back to parliament for the issues of rehabilitation to be looked at before he can sign it into law.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/lgbtq-rights-uganda-africa-gay-rights-7ba4b9ecf3e44812a2b1afbd95f2d4b4>

25TH APRIL 2023

UGANDAN OFFICIALS CHASED OUT OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS OVER NON-PAYMENT.

The ministry of Foreign Affairs has accumulated up to Shs 37.06 billion in non-payment of legal contributions and membership subscriptions to different international organizations, parliament's foreign affairs committee has learnt.

Committee chairperson, Norah Bigirwa-Nyendwoha revealed that in the current FY 2022/2023, ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development has provided only Shs 2.49 billion towards the country's subscription payment, leaving a staggering balance of Shs 34.56 billion.

Bigirwa, also the Buliisa District Woman MP said on Monday that continuous failure by the government to meet such statutory obligations taints its diplomatic image and strains international relations.

"First of all, the sector faces the challenge of being categorised as consumptive rather productive, and yet from an objective analysis we have gained huge trade volumes accrued to this country as a result of the tireless efforts of the missions abroad. It is very embarrassing diplomatically if as a nation, you are chased away from meetings and not even allowed to vote as a result of us not being able to pay," she said. Buyaga East County MP, Eric Musana, noted that there are several international treaties and protocols that Uganda signed such as the East African Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the African Union among others, which are bound by statutory obligations failure which puts the country at stake. "There are statutory obligations that Uganda must meet. Our contributions and our payments are at stake. If we do not meet these payments, Uganda will not be seen as a serious country. And we're talking about building the image of Uganda. Remember these are under treaties, they are under protocols that we must honour," said Musana

SOURCE:

<https://observer.ug/news/headlines/77540-ugandan-officials-chased-out-of-international-meetings-over-non-payment>

19TH APRIL 2023

GLOBAL SCIENTISTS URGE UGANDA'S PRESIDENT TO VETO ANTI-LGBTQ BILL

A group of leading global scientists and academics have signed an open letter urging Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni to veto a hardline bill criminalizing homosexuality in the country. The bill outlaws identifying as LGBTQ+, and suggests life sentences for convicted homosexuals as well as the death penalty for "aggravated homosexuality," a sweeping term covering various sexual acts including sex with people with mental or physical disabilities or sex with children. The Anti Homosexuality Bill 2023, which was passed by Ugandan lawmakers in March, is set to be either signed into law or vetoed by the president on Thursday.

Before the bill was passed almost unanimously last month, President Museveni called on scientists to establish whether homosexuality was natural or learned. Museveni has previously called homosexuals "deviations from normal." In their open letter, the group of scientist's state: "We cannot say this enough: homosexuality is a normal and natural variation of human sexuality. The science on this subject is crystal clear and we call on you [Museveni] in the strongest possible terms to veto the bill in the name of science. "We cannot think of one major scientific organization – from the World Health Organization to the World Health Assembly and beyond – which would argue against the idea homosexuality is not normal and natural," the letter continues.

The letter has been signed by 15 leading scientists around the world, from countries including South Africa, the United States, Canada, the UK, Kenya, and Australia. The scientists write that genetics play a role in homosexuality, and that the practice cannot be caught like a "common cold." Nor can homosexuality be indoctrinated, they say: "Exposure to rainbow flags will not make a child gay." "Sexual orientation is not limited to any specific region. It is not confined by borders drawn on a map. It needs no passport to travel. Indeed, there's clear evidence for same sex relationships in Africa dating back hundreds of years," the letter adds. Ugandan authorities did not immediately respond to CNN's request for comment.

SOURCE:

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/04/19/africa/uganda-anti-lgbtq-bill-scientists-open-letter-intl/index.html>

SOMALIA

11TH APRIL 2023

UN CHIEF SAYS SOMALIA IS IN MASSIVE NEED OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT.

The UN launched a \$2.6 billion call for humanitarian assistance to be directed to the African country but Guterres said the appeal was only 15% funded. Visiting United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on Tuesday, April 11, for “massive” international support for Somalia as it battles a desperate humanitarian crisis caused by drought and protracted armed conflict. Guterres told reporters on the sidelines of a discussion with Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud he was on a “visit of solidarity” to the troubled Horn of Africa nation where an estimated five million are facing high levels of food insecurity. “I am also here to ring the alarm on the need for massive international support because of the humanitarian difficulties the country is facing,” he said, adding he wanted to help build Somalia’s security capacity and encourage its development.

The UN has launched [a \\$2.6 billion call for humanitarian assistance](#) but Guterres said the appeal was only 15% funded. Somalia’s worst drought in decades has driven many to the brink of famine, while the government is also engaged in a major offensive to quell a bloody Islamist insurgency. Five successive failed rainy seasons in parts of Somalia, as well as Kenya and Ethiopia, have led to the worst drought in four decades, wiping out livestock and crops and forcing at least 1.7 million from their homes in search of food and water. While famine thresholds have not been reached in Somalia, the UN says about half its population will need humanitarian assistance this year, with 8.3 million affected by the drought.

SOURCE:

https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/04/11/un-chief-says-somalia-is-in-massive-need-of-international-support_6022529_4.html

12TH APRIL 2023

SOMALI REFUGEES STRUGGLE DURING RAMADAN AS DROUGHT DRIVES FURTHER NEED.

Zainab Mohammed, a Somali refugee mother of five, who fled starvation in her homeland Somalia, to Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya stares at her kitchen at Iftar, the time for breaking fast during Ramadan, hoping somehow, she will get food to feed her children. But there is nothing. They may go to sleep again with hungry stomachs. Zainab is among more than 1 million Somalis

who fled their homes in search of help while an estimated 43,000 people died last year alone as a result of the ongoing drought. “It’s difficult to watch your children starve. We have not taken anything from Sahur, the meal consumed before fasting begins at dawn. This Ramadan makes me sad, but I hope that help will come,” she says. The Islamic holy month, during which the Muslim faithful go without eating or drinking from sunrise to sunset, has been hard for Zainab’s family, who huddle under a shelter made of branches, cardboard boxes, and a torn mosquito net and clothes. Millions of Somali refugees are facing homelessness, hunger, poverty, and an uncertain future this Ramadan.

Living in abject poverty, refugees plead to donors not to forget them during this fasting month. Whilst Muslims around the world mark sundown during Ramadan with a variety of feasts after fasting all day, at Dadaab, that kind of nighttime celebration is unthinkable for most Somalis who are enduring the worst drought following five consecutive below average rainy seasons. Aid agencies are struggling to manage the new arrivals fleeing ongoing insecurity in Somalia and the unrelenting drought who show up at the gates of the camp each day. They started arriving at 200, then 500, then 1,000 people a day. But now, that number has almost tripled. We’ve had almost 40,000 new arrivals come in between January to March 2023. Rising food prices are already affecting how Muslims are breaking their fasts, and with depleting land and energy resources and the effects of climate change, this is likely to get worse in the future.

SOURCE:

<https://www.rescue.org/eu/press-release/somali-refugees-struggle-during-ramadan-drought-drives-further-need>

RWANDA

18TH APRIL 2023

ANGLICAN CONSERVATIVES MEET IN RWANDA AMID RIFT OVER LGBTQ

Hundreds of Anglican conservative leaders from 52 countries are meeting in Rwanda amid a rift over support within the church for same-sex unions. The conference in Kigali, the Rwandan capital, has been convened under the auspices of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, or GAFCON, a group formed in 2008 that advocates orthodoxy in the global Anglican communion. The meeting comes two months after the decision of the Church of England to bless civil marriages of same-sex couples. Clerics from Africa are among those who continue to express concern. “We are here to bring the Bible to be at the centre of everything,” Archbishop Laurent Mbanda of Rwanda told the AP Tuesday.

The decision by the Church of England to bless same-sex unions created “enormous confusion” and could be the “final nail in the coffin in the already divided legacy of the Anglican Church,” Mbanda said. The divisions have widened in recent years as conservative bishops, notably from Africa and Asia, affirmed their opposition to LGBTQ inclusion and demanded “repentance” by the more liberal provinces with inclusive policies. The general secretary of GAFCON, Archbishop Ben Kwashi of Nigeria, said in a statement that the Church of England’s new stance on civil marriages is “troubling for many Anglicans.”

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/rwanda-conservative-anglicans-conference-lgbtq-row-gaf-con-8588b499c5456b53ed2f7816d69f53c3>

24TH APRIL 2023

MIGRANTS MOUNT LEGAL CHALLENGE TO UK-RWANDA DEPORTATION PLAN

Several asylum-seekers and refugee groups began a court challenge on Monday to the British government’s plan to send hundreds of migrants on [a one-way trip to Rwanda](#). The claimants’ attorney, Raza Husain, argued at the Court of Appeal in London that the “high-profile and controversial” policy was unlawful. He said Rwanda was “an authoritarian one-party state” that “imprisons, tortures and murders” opponents. The governments of Britain and Rwanda signed a deal a year ago under which some migrants who arrive in the U.K. [in small boats](#) would be flown to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed. Those granted asylum would

stay in Rwanda rather than return to Britain. Britain’s Conservative government says the plan will smash the business model of people-smuggling gangs and deter migrants from taking risky journeys across the English Channel. More than 45,000 people arrived in Britain by boat in 2022, compared with 8,500 in 2020. Human rights groups argue it’s inhumane and illegal to send people more than 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers) to a country they don’t want to live in.

No one has yet been sent to Rwanda under the deal. In December, Britain’s High Court ruled the Rwanda policy was legal, but a group of asylum-seekers from countries including Iran, Iraq and Syria was granted permission to appeal.

SOURCE:

<https://apnews.com/article/uk-rwanda-migrants-boats-legal-challenge-asylum-migration-ed4228c34f9532d6c-50d0518c9612893>

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