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JUNE 2025

SUDAN

UN SECURITY COUNCIL WILL HOLD AN OPEN BRIEFING FOLLOWED BY CLOSED CONSULTATIONS ON

FRIDAY 27TH JUNE 2025

BRIEFING AND CONSULTATIONS

Tomorrow morning (27 June), the Security Council will hold an open briefing, followed by closed consultations, on Sudan.

The meeting is being held pursuant to resolution 2715 of 1 December 2023, which requested the Secretary-General to provide a briefing every 120 days on the “UN’s efforts to support Sudan on its path towards peace and stability”.

Assistant Secretary-General for Africa in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations (DPPA-DPO) Martha Ama Akyaa Pobee and a civil society representative are expected to brief in the open chamber.

The chair of the 1591 Sudan Sanctions Committee, Ambassador Joonkook Hwang (the Republic of Korea), is expected to brief the Council on the committee’s work.

Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan Ramtane Lamamra will brief in the closed consultations.

Pobee is likely to provide an overview of the deteriorating security situation in Sudan.

In June, the conflict witnessed shifting front lines and intensified fighting across several regions. Fierce battles continued in the Kordofan region, as both the Sudanese Armed

Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) sought to consolidate territorial gains, exchanging heavy drone and artillery fire on multiple fronts and inflicting significant harm on civilians.

The situation in El Fasher and other parts of North Darfur state continues to be highly volatile. El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur, has been under siege by the RSF since May 2024.

In a 20 June statement, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk noted that, on 15 June, the RSF launched a renewed assault on the city following months of increased fighter mobilisation across Darfur, including the recruitment of children. He added that the operation aimed at capturing El Fasher, which involved a ground offensive, mirrored the RSF’s April attack on the nearby Zamzam camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs), which resulted in hundreds of civilian deaths, widespread sexual violence, and a humanitarian catastrophe. (For more information, see our 18 May and 12 June [What’s in Blue](#) stories.)

Pobee may also address the regional dimensions of Sudan’s conflict.

On 10 June, the SAF accused forces aligned with General Khalifa Haftar, the commander of the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA), of supporting RSF attacks on its positions along the tri-border area of Egypt, Libya, and Sudan—an allegation that the LNA has denied.

After the SAF's withdrawal from the tri-border zone on 11 June, the RSF claimed control over this strategic area, enabling it to secure a supply line from Libya and advance towards the Nile Valley and Northern State, both of which are considered SAF strongholds.

The conflict has also spilled into Abyei and South Sudan, escalating local tensions, displacing civilians, and worsening insecurity.

Meanwhile, media reports indicate that the SAF has relocated warplanes to Eritrea amid increasing RSF drone strikes. (For more information, see our 18 March [What's in Blue](#) story.)

In a 24 June press statement, Council members condemned the 20 June attack by "suspected Sudanese armed elements" on UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) peacekeepers patrolling near the Central African Republic (CAR)-Sudan border.

The incident resulted in the death of a Zambian peacekeeper.

In their statement, Council members expressed concern about the impact of the crisis in Sudan, particularly in border areas, including RSF incursions into the CAR's territory and its coordination with local armed groups.

Tomorrow, the briefers and several Council members are expected to condemn the ongoing violence across Sudan and reiterate their calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities.

They may also discuss the destabilising impact of the conflict in Sudan on the region, including the influx of refugees to neighbouring countries.

Speakers are likely to stress the urgent need to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure, including healthcare facilities, as well as medical and humanitarian personnel, while condemning the deliberate targeting of these individuals and facilities.

Some members may also highlight broader protection concerns, including widespread conflict-related sexual violence, and emphasise the imperative of ensuring accountability for such acts.

Some may highlight the 21 June attack on the Al-Mujlad hospital in West Kordofan, which reportedly killed more than 40 people, including six children and five healthcare workers. At the time of writing, it was unclear who was responsible for the attack.

In a separate development, the US has accused the Sudanese government of using chemical weapons in 2024, in violation of the country's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and announced on 22 May the imposition of sanctions on Sudan. The Sudanese government has denied these allegations.

Tomorrow's meeting is also expected to take stock of recent political developments in Sudan.

On 19 May, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the SAF's leader, appointed Kamil Eltayeb Idris as Prime Minister. In a 20 May statement, UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed hope that the appointment would serve as a first step towards inclusive consultations and the formation of a broad-based technocratic government.

After assuming office, Idris dissolved the existing cabinet and, on 19 June, announced plans to appoint a 22-member non-partisan technocratic government. On 24 June, he named the ministers of defence and interior.

However, the dissolution of the previous cabinet has sparked divisions among groups allied with the SAF, such as the Justice and Equality Movement, who argue that the move violates the 2020 Juba Peace Agreement, which provided for the allocation of cabinet positions and other political appointments to its signatories under a power-sharing framework.

During the closed consultations, Lamamra is expected to provide an update on ongoing regional and international initiatives to resolve the crisis in Sudan, including his engagement with Sudanese parties, consultations with key regional and international interlocutors, and efforts to coordinate various peace initiatives.

On 2 June, the Personal Envoy held consultations in Moscow with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin, reportedly focusing on the need for coordinated international efforts to secure a ceasefire and advance an inclusive inter-Sudanese dialogue. He also spoke with Idris on 4 June—their first interaction since the prime minister’s appointment.

As mediation efforts have yet to yield a breakthrough, Council members may wish to hear Lamamra’s assessment of recent political developments, prospects for de-escalation, and potential next steps, including the status of anticipated technical-level proximity talks. This may include strategies to enhance cooperation among stakeholders—particularly regional and sub-regional organisations—and to address the underlying challenges impeding the peace process. (For more information

on recent mediation efforts, see our 18 May [What’s in Blue](#) story.)

On 3 June, US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau and US Senior Advisor for Africa Massad Boulos convened a meeting on the conflict in Sudan with the Quad ambassadors to the US (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates).

According to a press release issued after the meeting, Landau acknowledged that the conflict in Sudan poses a threat to shared regional interests and underscored the importance of the Quad working collectively to persuade the warring parties to cease hostilities and pursue a negotiated settlement.

Tomorrow, Lamamra is also expected to brief members on the fourth consultative meeting on enhancing coordination among the various peace initiatives on Sudan, hosted and chaired by the European Union (EU) in Brussels today (26 June).

Several regional and international interlocutors attended the meeting, including Lamamra, the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the League of Arab States (LAS), as well as representatives from Bahrain, Egypt, Mauritania, the UK, the US, and Saudi Arabia.

Sudan’s civilian space remains fragmented, as evidenced by recent exchanges between different coalitions over Lamamra’s mediation efforts.

Media reports suggest that a group of Sudanese politicians, activists, and diplomats sent a letter to Guterres on 13 June, accusing Lamamra of failing to establish a viable peace process and of aligning closely with the SAF’s narrative, and therefore calling for his replacement.

By contrast, a different group of Sudanese political and civil society actors has reportedly expressed support for Lamamra and cautioned against efforts to undermine the mediation process.

Tomorrow, some Council members may

reiterate their call on member states to refrain from external interference in Sudan, which they believe is exacerbating conflict and instability, and to instead support mediation efforts for a durable peace. They may call for strict compliance with the 1591 Sudan sanctions regime.

The appointment of the Panel of Experts assisting the committee, whose mandate was most recently extended through resolution 2772 of 17 February, remains stalled due to holds placed by some Council members. Some members may call for the urgent resolution of this impasse to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of the sanctions regime.

Source: [SUDAN WATCH: June 2025](#)

ETHIOPIA

ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES RECEIVES BEST AIRLINE IN AFRICA AWARD

ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES SAYS IT HAS BEEN NAMED 'BEST AIRLINE IN AFRICA' BY SKYTRAX AT THE 2025 WORLD AIRLINE AWARDS.

JUNE 18TH 2025

This marks the 8th consecutive year the airline has earned this coveted title. The announcement was made during a prestigious ceremony held at the Paris Air Show at Le Bourget Airport, where global airlines were recognized for excellence in service, innovation, and customer satisfaction. In addition to the top regional honor, Ethiopian Airlines also secured several other awards, including:

- Best Airline in Africa,
- Best Economy Class in Africa,
- Best Business Class in Africa,
- Best Business Class Onboard Catering in Africa.

These prestigious accolades underscore Ethiopian Airlines' unwavering commitment to delivering world-class service and its strategic investments in fleet modernization, innovation, and sustainability. They also reflect the airline's consistent focus on enhancing the customer experience and operational excellence across its expansive network of over 140 international destinations.

Mr. Mesfin Tasew, Group Chief Executive Officer of Ethiopian Airlines, expressed pride

in the achievement, stating, "We are truly honored to be recognized once again as the Best Airline in Africa by SKYTRAX. These achievements are a testament to the hard work, dedication, and passion of the entire Ethiopian Airlines family. It also reflects the trust and loyalty of our valued customers across the world. We remain committed to exceeding expectations through world-class service and connectivity that bridges Africa with the rest of the world."

As Africa's flag carrier, Ethiopian continues to play a key role in advancing the continent's air transport industry. With an expanding network, state-of-the-art aircraft, and a focus on sustainability and digital innovation, the airline is setting new benchmarks for global excellence.

Dubbed the "Oscars of the Aviation Industry", The World Airline Awards is a much-anticipated event in the industry. The World Airline Awards was introduced in 1999 to provide a customer satisfaction study. To determine the award winners, travelers across the world vote in the largest airline passenger satisfaction survey.

Source: [Ethiopian Airlines receives best airline in Africa award – New Business Ethiopia](#)

ETHIOPIA AMBASSADOR MEETS PRESIDENT TRUMP

AMBASSADOR OF ETHIOPIA TO THE UNITED STATES, BINALF ANDUALEM, HAS MET PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP AT THE HOUSE, SAYS THE EMBASSY.

On its social media page, the Embassy of Ethiopia in Washington stated that Binalf Andualem, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ethiopia to the United States, held "his first meeting with President Donald J. Trump at the White House."

"He received a formal diplomatic welcome, which reflects the longstanding relationship between Ethiopia and the United States. This meeting marks the beginning of many future discussions."

The United States and Ethiopia commemorated 120 years of diplomatic relations in 2023 and share mutual interests in promoting peace, stability, and economic development. Accepting the frequent recommendations of the US dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF), Ethiopia introduced economic and political reforms in 2018 to transition the country toward a private sector-led economy and citizen-empowered liberal democracy.

"The potential for a strong partnership in areas such as peace, security, and economic cooperation between the two countries is limitless. Ethiopia and the United States

have enjoyed a robust relationship that spans over 120 years. During this occasion, the Ambassador also had the opportunity to meet with Secretary of State Marco Rubio," the Embassy posted.

Ethiopia and the United States have strong economic ties, with roughly \$1.8 billion in two-way trade in goods in 2022, according to the information on the US State Department website. U.S. exports to Ethiopia are dominated by aircraft, aircraft engines, and parts; and Ethiopian exports to the United States feature coffee, garments, and leather and leather products. Ethiopia lost African Growth and Opportunity Act eligibility in January 2022 due to human rights concerns. Major U.S. companies active in the country include Boeing, Corteva, General Electric, Coca Cola, and several U.S.-branded hotels.

Source: [Ethiopia Ambassador meets President Trump – New Business Ethiopia](#)

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, CHANGE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP HELD IN ADDIS

JUNE 28TH 2025

As the state-owned universities such as the Addis Ababa University become autonomous from government interventions, the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences conducted a workshop Educational Leadership and Change Management in Addis Ababa.

The dynamic two-day workshop this week convened university presidents, vice presidents, and academic leaders from 16 of Ethiopia's leading universities of research and applied sciences, aiming to strengthen leadership capabilities and advance transformative initiatives across the nation's higher education sector.

The workshop was led by Dr. Ricardo Lozano, a distinguished Fulbright Specialist and professor of educational leadership at Texas A&M International University, alongside Professor Nasser Bogale, Fulbright Scholar and professor at Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology in Pennsylvania. Through

interactive sessions, participants acquired practical tools and strategies for driving effective institutional change, exchanged best practices, and fostered greater collaboration among Ethiopia's higher education leaders.

This initiative marks a significant milestone in the U.S. Embassy's ongoing commitment to supporting higher education in Ethiopia, particularly as universities transition toward autonomous governance. Both the U.S. Embassy and the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences remain dedicated to empowering Ethiopia's academic leaders to champion innovation and drive positive transformation throughout the country's educational landscape.

Distinguished keynote speakers included Ryan Bradeen, Acting Counsellor for Public Diplomacy at the U.S. Embassy; H.E. Kora Tushune, State Minister at the Ministry of Education; and Dr. Berhanemeskel Tena, President of Kotebe University of Education, each of whom underscored the importance of strong leadership and international collaboration in shaping the future of Ethiopian higher education.

Source: [Educational leadership, change management workshop held in Addis – New Business Ethiopia](#)

UGANDA

STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

JUNE 5TH 2025

KAMPALA, Uganda— Ugandan President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni delivered the State of the Nation Address on June 5, 2025, at the Kololo Ceremonial Grounds, outlining significant economic advancements, robust security measures, and ambitious development plans aimed at propelling the nation towards modernity and prosperity.

Museveni highlighted Uganda's economic resilience, reporting that the economy is projected to reach Shs. 224.9 trillion (USD 60.4 billion) by the end of June 2025, marking nearly a 15-fold increase in dollar terms since the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government assumed power in January 1986. The economy grew by 6.7% in the first quarter of the current financial year, with a projected growth rate of 6.3% for the full financial year and 7.0% for fiscal year 2025/26. Faster growth is anticipated once commercial oil and gas production commences next year.

Uganda was recently ranked seventh globally among the fastest-growing economies by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The president noted that the share of Ugandans living below the national poverty line has fallen to 16% from 20% four years ago, surpassing the 2025 national target of 18.5%. Other key socio-economic indicators show improvement, including an increase in life expectancy to 63 years from 45 years in 1986, and a rise in the literacy rate from 43% in 1986 to 80% today. The Ugandan shilling remains the most stable currency in Africa, having appreciated by 6.1% over the past 12 months, with inflation under control and projected at 3.6% for FY 2024/25, ranking as Africa's second lowest in the past decade.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows are projected at USD 3.8 billion, and tourism receipts reached USD 1.473 billion in calendar year 2024, a significant recovery from the 2020 COVID-19 shutdown.

Domestic revenue collection is projected at Shs. 31.9 trillion for the current financial year ending June 2025, with a target of Shs. 37.2 trillion for the next financial year. The government has injected over Shs. 8.03 trillion into strategic wealth creation initiatives over the last decade, including the capitalization of Uganda Development Bank, the Parish Development Model (PDM), Emyooga, and the Youth Livelihood Programme.

On peace and security, Museveni affirmed that the general situation in the country is calm despite ongoing threats like terrorism, negative political activism, and cross-border crime. He reported enhanced capacity of national security agencies, including the Uganda Police Force, Internal Security Organization, and the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF), to combat crime and ensure citizen safety.

Joint FARDC-UPDF operations against the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo have seen significant achievements, with 223 abductees rescued since November 2024.

The president outlined four anchor sectors critical to increasing the economy tenfold to USD 500 billion by 2040: agro-industrialization, tourism development, mineral development (including oil and gas), and Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI).

In **agro-industrialization**, irrigation efforts have expanded, with 92 solar-powered schemes completed, adding 900 acres of irrigated land and benefiting 111,600 farmers. Dairy production reached 5.4 billion liters in 2024, and milk product exports increased tenfold to USD 285.4 million in 2024. Fish production stands at 658,000 tons annually, with exports increasing to USD 152.8 million.

Coffee production surged to 8.2 million 60kg bags in FY 2023/24, with exports valued at USD 1,144 million. The Parish Development Model, now in its third year, has seen Shs. 3.3 trillion provided, with Shs. 100 million allocated to each parish annually.

For **mineral development**, Uganda has ceased exporting unprocessed minerals to promote value addition.

The country now boasts 10 gold refineries producing 99.9% pure gold, and significant strides have been made in cement and steel production. The Uganda National Mining Company is being capitalized with UGX 500 billion over five years to take up to a 15% equity stake in strategic mining operations.

In the oil and gas sector, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) construction is nearing completion, and the Uganda National Oil Company's bulk petroleum trading initiative has led to reduced fuel pump prices.

Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) are also a key focus. The Kiira Vehicle Plant in Jinja is producing buses, with a secured market in West Africa for 3,700 electric buses.

Dei Biopharma in Matugga has filed over 100

Source: [State of the Nation Address 2025: Key Takeaways - UG Standard - Latest News](#)

patents, including for cancer treatment and various vaccines.

Ugandan scientists at Makerere University developed a PCR kit saving the country USD 37 million annually in imports. The Presidential Initiative on Banana Industrial Development (PIBID) plant has increased production and secured international orders.

Regarding **infrastructure development**, Museveni stated that the stock of tarmac roads has grown to 6,199 kilometers from 1,900 kilometers in 1986, with efforts focused on roads, railways, and electricity to support industrial growth.

Museveni emphasized the NRM's "mass line" philosophy, aimed at guaranteeing the social uplift of all segments of society, not just the elite. He likened the NRM to a "wise builder" for establishing a strong foundation to propel Uganda to modernity, based on the principles of patriotism, Pan-Africanism, socio-economic transformation, and democracy.

While significant progress has been made, challenges remain, such as ensuring that the remaining 33% of households practicing subsistence agriculture join the money economy, and addressing laxity in implementing livestock quarantines.

The government aims to boost domestic revenue collection further to adequately finance its development programs.

UGANDA: MUSEVENI FACES TOUGH QUESTIONS AHEAD OF 2025 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

President Museveni today delivers the 2025 State of the Nation Address at Kololo Ceremonial Grounds, but unlike past speeches, this year's event comes amid a deepening national reckoning over leadership transition, state accountability, and the future of Uganda's democracy.

At the centre of this year's address is a question that most Ugandans have already answered for themselves: who will lead Uganda after Museveni?

The speech will be delivered in fulfilment of Article 101(1) of the Constitution, which mandates the President to address the nation at the start of each session of Parliament.

But far from a formality, this year's address presents a test of Museveni's ability to reassure a restless population and defend his government's record ahead of an increasingly competitive political climate.

In last year's State of the Nation Address, President Museveni struck an optimistic tone, touting economic resilience, oil sector progress, and an improved security outlook.

He praised the Parish Development Model (PDM) and the Emyooga programme as revolutionary tools for transforming the economy from the bottom up.

But 12 months on, many of these promises remain mired in controversy, with questions lingering about transparency, implementation, and impact.

The 2024 address notably sidestepped the growing dissatisfaction in health and education. Underpaid teachers, broken public hospitals, and medicine stock-outs have persisted throughout the year.

With school dropout rates worsening, especially for girls, and the health sector crippled by frequent strikes, citizens will be looking for the President to move beyond platitudes and offer clear, actionable plans.

Economic hardship is expected to dominate this year's speech. Inflation may have slowed from the highs of 2022-2023, but prices remain steep, and salaries stagnant. Bread, soap, rent, and fuel are beyond the reach of many Ugandans.

Public servants, especially civil society actors and mid-level professionals, endure deteriorating work conditions.

Youth unemployment remains alarmingly high, with even university graduates struggling to secure meaningful work. The disconnect between economic indicators and daily life is likely to be a central point of public critique if the President fails to address it.

The President is also under pressure to address the worsening security situation in the eastern DR Congo and South Sudan, two countries where the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) are actively engaged in securing interests.

Internally, growing political repression and crackdowns on dissent have alarmed both domestic opposition groups and international observers.

Human rights violations, including enforced disappearances and arbitrary arrests, remain an unresolved concern. The sticky issue of the trial of civilians in military courts is sore thumb in Museveni's government.

With civic space shrinking, opposition parties will be watching to see whether the President makes any concessions toward electoral reform or political dialogue ahead of the 2026 elections.

This year's address also comes against the backdrop of mounting public anxiety over the question of presidential succession--arguably the most critical issue on Ugandans' minds today.

While Museveni has long avoided naming a successor, many now interpret the increasingly assertive role of his son, Gen Muhoozi Kainerugaba, as an implicit signal of dynastic intentions.

Muhoozi's frequent political posturing, erratic social media pronouncements, and growing visibility in state affairs have generated both domestic unease and international concern.

Tensions reached a new height recently when Uganda severed diplomatic ties with Germany, following accusations by the UPDF--under Muhoozi's command--that the German ambassador, Matthias Schauer, was funding rebel activities.

The claim, which was not supported by public evidence, marked a rare and dramatic breakdown with a long-standing European partner, raising questions about military overreach and Uganda's direction in foreign policy.

At 80, Museveni's political longevity itself looms over the occasion. Although he remains firmly in control of state institutions, questions about succession, generational leadership, and internal NRM cohesion are gaining traction.

Younger Ugandans, especially those born after the bush war era, want more than historical lectures--they demand tangible, equitable progress.

Unlike 2024, when Museveni largely stuck to his script of economic transformation, this year's address may be judged more on its realism than its ambition.

Whether he chooses to acknowledge public frustration or doubles down on the NRM's ideological roadmap remains to be seen.

But with Parliament increasingly assertive and public patience thinning, the President will find it harder to rely solely on defiant rhetoric.

The 2025 State of the Nation Address is not just a constitutional ritual--it is a moment of reckoning.

Source: [Uganda: Museveni Faces Tough Questions Ahead of 2025 State of the Nation Address - allAfrica.com](https://allafrica.com/stories/202506010001.html)

RWANDA

RWANDA, CONGO SIGN PEACE DEAL IN US TO END FIGHTING, ATTRACT INVESTMENT

JUNE 28TH 2025

WASHINGTON/PARIS/KINSHASA, June 27 (Reuters) - Rwanda and Democratic Republic of Congo signed a U.S.-brokered peace agreement on Friday, raising hopes for an end to fighting that has killed thousands and displaced hundreds of thousands more this year.

The agreement marks a breakthrough in talks held by U.S. President Donald Trump's administration and aims to attract billions of dollars of Western investment to a region rich in tantalum, gold, cobalt, copper, lithium and other minerals.

At a ceremony with U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Washington, the two African countries' foreign ministers signed the agreement pledging to implement a 2024 deal that would see Rwandan troops withdraw from eastern Congo within 90 days, according to a copy seen by Reuters.

Kinshasa and Kigali will also launch a regional economic integration framework within 90 days, the agreement said.

"They were going at it for many years, and with machetes - it is one of the worst, one of the worst wars that anyone has ever seen. And I just happened to have somebody that was able to get it settled," Trump said on Friday, ahead of the signing of the deal in Washington.

"We're getting, for the United States, a lot of the mineral rights from the Congo as part of it. They're so honored to be here. They never thought they'd be coming."

Rwandan Foreign Minister Olivier Nduhungirehe called the agreement a turning

point. Congo Foreign Minister Therese Kayikwamba Wagner said it must be followed by disengagement.

Trump later met both officials in the Oval Office, where he presented them with letters inviting Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame to Washington to sign a package of agreements that Massad Boulos, Trump's senior adviser for Africa, dubbed the "Washington Accord".

Nduhungirehe told Trump that past deals had not been implemented and urged Trump to stay engaged.

Trump warned of "very severe penalties, financial and otherwise", if the agreement is violated.

Rwanda has sent at least 7,000 soldiers over the border, according to analysts and diplomats, in support of the M23 rebels, who seized eastern Congo's two largest cities and lucrative mining areas in a lightning advance earlier this year.

The gains by M23, the latest cycle in a decades-old conflict with roots in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, sparked fears that a wider war could draw in Congo's neighbours.

ECONOMIC DEALS

Boulos told Reuters in May that Washington wanted the peace agreement and accompanying minerals deals to be signed simultaneously this summer.

Rubio said on Friday that heads of state would be "here in Washington in a few weeks to finalize the complete protocol and agreement."

However, the agreement signed on Friday gives Congo and Rwanda three months to launch a framework "to expand foreign trade and investment derived from regional critical mineral supply chains".

A source familiar with the matter told Reuters on Friday that another agreement on the framework would be signed by the heads of state at a separate White House event at an unspecified time.

There is an understanding that progress in ongoing talks in Doha - a separate but parallel mediation effort with delegations from the Congolese government and M23 - is essential before the signing of the economic framework, the source said.

The agreement signed on Friday voiced "full support" for the Qatar-hosted talks.

It also says Congo and Rwanda will form a joint security coordination mechanism within 30 days and implement a plan agreed last year to monitor and verify the withdrawal of Rwandan soldiers within three months.

Congolese military operations targeting the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a Congo-based armed group that includes remnants of Rwanda's former army and militias that carried out the 1994 genocide, are meant to conclude over the same

timeframe.

Reuters reported on Thursday that Congolese negotiators had dropped an earlier demand that Rwandan troops immediately leave eastern Congo, paving the way for the signing ceremony on Friday.

Congo, the United Nations and Western powers say Rwanda is supporting M23 by sending troops and arms.

Rwanda has long denied helping M23, saying its forces are acting in self-defence against Congo's army and ethnic Hutu militiamen linked to the 1994 Rwandan genocide, including the FDLR.

"This is the best chance we have at a peace process for the moment despite all the challenges and flaws," said Jason Stearns, a political scientist at Simon Fraser University in Canada who specialises in Africa's Great Lakes region.

Similar formulas have been attempted before, Stearns added, and "it will be up to the U.S., as they are the godfather of this deal, to make sure both sides abide by the terms."

The agreement signed on Friday says Rwanda and Congo will de-risk mineral supply chains and establish value chains "that link both countries, in partnership, as appropriate, with the U.S. and U.S. investors."

The terms carry “a strategic message: securing the east also means securing investments,” said Tresor Kibangula, a political analyst at Congo’s Ebuteli research institute.

“It remains to be seen whether this economic logic will suffice” to end the fighting, he added.

Source: [Rwanda, Congo sign peace deal in US to end fighting, attract investment | Reuters](#)

Reporting by Daphne Psaledakis in Washington, Ange Adihe Kasongo in Kinshasa, Sonia Rolley in Paris, Robbie Corey-Boulet in Dakar and Trevor Hunnicutt and Steve Holland in Washington; Editing by Andrew Heavens, Alison Williams, Paul Simao and Alistair Bell

RWANDA’S ECONOMY EXPAND BY 7.8% IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) FIRST QUARTER OF 2025 WITH STRONG PERFORMANCE IN INDUSTRY AND SERVICES¹ SECTORS BOLSTERS ECONOMIC GROWTH.

JUNE 25TH 2025

The National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) has officially released the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the first quarter (Q1) of 2025, revealing a continued upward trend in the country’s economic performance. Despite moderate inflationary pressures, particularly from rising prices of core goods and fresh food items, Rwanda’s economy demonstrated resilience and robust growth, underscoring the effectiveness of ongoing economic reforms and sectoral development strategies.

According to the Q1 2025 report, Rwanda’s GDP at current market prices was estimated at Frw 5,255 billion, this represents a notable increase from **Frw 4,486 billion** recorded during the same period of Q1 2024. After adjusting for inflation, this translates to a **real GDP growth rate of 7.8%**, indicating that the country’s economy is not only expanding in size but also maintaining **strong and stable**

performance. This growth demonstrates Rwanda’s **continued recovery from the global economic slowdown** triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain disruption caused by the middle east conflicts and reflects **ongoing efforts to strengthen key economic sectors and ensure macroeconomic stability.**

SECTORAL PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

The report attributes this growth to a combination of strong performances in the **industry** and **services** sectors, along with a moderate but stable contribution from **agriculture**. The sectoral distribution of GDP in Q1 2025 was as follows:

- **Services sector:** Contributed 46% of total GDP and grew by 9%, maintaining its role as the dominant driver of economic activity. This reflects ongoing expansion in key service areas including trade, transport, communication, finance, education, and healthcare.
- **Agriculture sector:** Accounted for 24% of GDP and grew by 2%. Although modest in its growth, the sector remained

essential in supporting rural livelihoods and food security, especially in the face of fluctuating weather conditions and commodity price trends.

- **Industry sector:** Contributed 23% to GDP and grew by 9%, supported by increased output in construction, manufacturing, and processing activities. This highlights

Rwanda's progress in diversifying its economic base and advancing its industrialization agenda.

- **Net taxes on products:** Represented the remaining 7% of GDP, reflecting the government's fiscal policies and domestic resource mobilization efforts.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AMID INFLATIONARY PRESSURES

While the report acknowledges slight inflationary pressures during the quarter driven primarily by increases in the prices of fresh food and core goods, these did not significantly deter economic momentum.

Rwanda's continued investment in infrastructure, productivity enhancement, and human capital development has played a vital role in supporting growth despite external and internal economic challenges.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The first quarter GDP performance sets a positive tone for the rest of the year, reinforcing Rwanda's long-term vision for economic transformation and inclusive growth. The data also provides a vital benchmark for

policymakers, investors, and development partners in assessing the effectiveness of current programs and identifying areas for further support and innovation.

NISR'S ROLE

As the nation's official statistics body, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) remains committed to delivering timely, reliable, and comprehensive economic data.

The release of this quarterly GDP report is part of NISR's mandate to inform evidence-based decision-making and promote transparency in economic reporting.

website <https://statistics.gov.rw/statistical-publications/gross-domestic-product/gdp-national-accounts-first-quarter-2025>

KENYA

GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTING TRANSFORMATIVE REFORMS TO REVITALIZE THE TVET SECTOR

JUNE 30TH 2025

The State Department for Post-Training and Skills Development has called for enhanced collaboration between national and county governments in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector to ensure that TVET institutions offer relevant, high-quality training that meets local and national market driven needs and standards.

Director of Technical Education at the State Department Dr. Meshack Opwora explained that effective collaboration between the national and county governments was vital for successful regulatory efforts in the TVET sector, as it ensured alignment with national development goals and regional needs.

He cited key areas of cooperation between the two levels of government including curriculum development, trainer accreditation, quality assurance processes, and infrastructure development.

Dr. Opwora further said the collaboration was critical in developing and enforcing standards, regulations, and guidelines for TVET institutions, programmes and trainers, which he noted included standards in accreditation, registration, and licensing of providers.

"This collaboration should focus on standard development, quality assurance, access, equity, and relevance in training," he added

While noting that Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) was the primary body for regulating and coordinating TVET including accreditation of institutions, programmes, and trainers, Dr. Opwora said county governments played a vital role in supporting and monitoring the quality of training within their jurisdictions.

The Director made the remarks at the Rift Valley National Polytechnic (RVNP) at the close

of a two-day stakeholders' engagement and dissemination forum on the 2023/24 Quality Audit Report compiled by the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA).

The event focused on presenting findings from the audit covering 416 institutions across 30 counties, including national polytechnics, public and private TVETs, and county vocational training centres. It aimed at assessing performance and foster dialogue on improving the quality of technical training in Kenya.

Dr. Opwora pointed out that the national government, through the Ministry of Education's Directorate of Vocational Education and Training and the TVET Authority, set national policies and standards for TVET while County governments were responsible for implementing the policies at the local level, ensuring that institutions adhere to standards and guidelines.

This, he said, included ensuring that institutions have adequate resources, qualified trainers, and effective teaching and learning methodologies.

The collaboration also involves regular consultations and joint technical committees to ensure alignment and effective implementation of policies, he added.

The Director reaffirmed the government's

commitment to strengthening TVET institutions to support the ongoing transition to the new competency-based curriculum (CBC).

The focus on TVET is seen as a crucial step in addressing youth unemployment and equipping learners with relevant, marketable skills. The government's emphasis on technical education marks a shift towards competency-based learning, reinforcing its role in national development under Vision 2030.

The forum brought together key stakeholders, including representatives from the State Department for TVETs, TVETA Board, County Governments, Ministry of Education, National Administration, and heads of institutions.

The Director emphasized that TVET reforms were essential in ensuring that graduates acquired the practical skills needed in Kenya's evolving job market.

Other reforms included aligning TVET curricula with emerging sectors like digital technology, renewable energy and advanced manufacturing, increased funding and stronger industry partnerships (dual training model) which combines classroom learning with practical industry experience.

"Our partnerships with industry players ensure that what students learn in TVET institutions is directly applicable in the job market. We want to produce graduates who are job-ready and innovative," Dr Opwora stated

He affirmed that national and county governments should work together to ensure that TVET opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of location or socio-economic background and that joint efforts are needed to monitor the performance of TVET institutions, assess the quality of training, and evaluate the

impact of TVET programs on the job market.

Nakuru County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Education, ICT, e-Government and Public Communication Ms Zipporah Wambui reaffirmed the devolved unit's commitment to vocational training as a driver of economic transformation.

She cited ongoing infrastructure upgrades, policy reforms, and support initiatives as part of the County's strategy to enhance access, equity, and quality, citing partnerships between Nakuru Vocational Training Colleges and national institutions to boost youth skills.

Ms. Wambui stated that Governor Susan Kihika's administration had committed to making significant investments in tertiary institutions to accommodate the increasing number of students and ensure access to higher education.

Consequently, the county had embarked on the transformation of various vocational training centres with a view to aligning them to current market trends, she said.

She pledged that they would continue focusing on strengthening the ties between vocational training and industry needs, as a way of addressing the critical issue of youth employability in Kenya.

Ms. Wambui emphasized the growing need for students to pursue technical education in light of the rising number of high school graduates saying that the country was facing a shortage of skilled technicians, urging students to explore technical fields that are critical to shaping Kenya's economic future.

She indicated that the County Government was championing a dual Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) programme—an educational approach that combines

theoretical classroom instruction with practical workplace training and called to attention Kenya's growing demand for digital and technical skills, encouraging young people to retrain and stay aligned with the industry needs.

"We shall continue supporting our VTCs through the Sh30, 000 capitation fund

Source: [Government implementing transformative reforms to revitalize the TVET sector – Kenya News Agency](#)

per trainee, infrastructure improvement, equipping and staffing. Together with our partners, we are building a workforce that will propel Nakuru County to an economic giant in future," she stated.

Nakuru County has 24 youth polytechnics spread across the 11 sub counties.

IGAD UNVEILS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY TO FOSTER REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND TRANSFORMATION

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has inaugurated its first cohort of the IGAD Leadership Academy (ILA), aimed at nurturing a new generation of visionary, ethical, and inclusive leaders to drive regional integration and sustainable development.

ILA was established in 2022 to facilitate the mentorship and provisioning of future leaders with the critical skill sets necessary to steer the course of a rapidly developing multi-cultural African society in the 21st century and beyond.

The Academy is rooted in the principle that Africa requires home-based solutions to its unique challenges. It focuses on developing visionary, ethical, and gender-responsive leaders through training, mentorship and peer-learning.

The first cohort comprises 30 youths competitively selected from a pool of 3000 applicants from the eight IGAD member states: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda

The four-day intensive training at the Kenya School of Government, Mombasa campus, is designed to equip emerging leaders with the skills, values, and strategic insights needed to tackle governance challenges and drive transformation. IGAD plans to have three

cohorts by the end of 2025.

IGAD Executive Secretary Dr. Workeneh Gebeyehu said when he unveiled the programme in Mombasa, that they came up with the Academy, not by chance or due to a lack of a leadership school in the region, but to deepen integration and address common challenges facing the bloc that are not confined to the sovereign territory of a single country.

"This integration has missed one key element; – human integration, mind integration, which ultimately means the leadership integration. That's why we came up with this Leadership Academy," Dr. Gebeyehu explained.

He encouraged the selected outstanding youths to exuberate their intellectual capability to the region and help it to surmount challenges.

"One thing which I ask you humbly is to know how to communicate with each other. This is not just a training. This is a call to lead," he said, adding that the future of the region rests in the hands of its young people.

Dr. Gebeyehu further noted that the region, though rich in culture, talent and opportunity it faces challenges that required bold leadership and united action.

“You’re the generation that will redefine what is possible through innovation, courage and collaboration; you can change not only your communities but the entire region,” he stated.

The youths will be taken through a comprehensive curriculum that, according to Dr. Workneh, will take the region to the aspirations of the founding fathers of the nations.

The Executive Director also championed for unity of purpose and intellect to narrow the gap among African states and to be competitive economically, diplomatically amid a complex world.

He thanked the Government of Japan for sponsoring the programme that would transform the region’s youth.

Ms. Yoki Mochizuki, from the Embassy of Japan in Kenya, stated that the Horn of Africa faces significant challenges from ongoing conflicts and post-conflict transition, aiming to establish democratic governance according to the post-conflict peace agreements.

Source: [IGAD unveils Leadership Academy to foster regional integration and transformation – Kenya News Agency](#)

“This instability underscores the critical need to develop individuals who can champion peace and stability. Recognising that regional conflicts are rarely isolated incidents and often involve complex interdependencies between nations. Regional multi-facet approach is essential,” she said.

To achieve a long-lasting peace and stability in the Horn of Africa, she added, it necessitates a long-term perspective encompassing diverse stakeholders, including women who are often disproportionately affected by conflicts.

Ms. Mochizuki affirmed the Government of Japan’s commitment to strengthening peace through the Leadership Programme by cultivating leaders equipped with strategic thinking, communication, decision-making and fostering strong ethical principles, a clear vision and a deep commitment to democratic values.

She said, the selected participants, represented the best across the IGAD member states, and they embodied untapped potential to address leadership gaps in the region.

“Their contributions will be invaluable in advancing peace, economic development, and realistic governance,” she said.

GOVERNMENT REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO INFORMATION ACCESS AS A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT

The Government has reaffirmed its commitment to transparency, accountability and citizen empowerment through the implementation of the Access to Information Act (ATI), 2016.

Speaking during the launch of the inaugural National Report on the Implementation of the Act, Principal Secretary (PS) for Justice, Human Rights and Constitutional Affairs. Judith Ramaita Pareno lauded the initiative as a key milestone in advancing constitutional

rights and democratic governance.

“This Report demonstrates the government's dedication to ensuring every Kenyan can access the information they are entitled to under the law; access to information empowers citizens, promotes accountability, and is a cornerstone of our constitutional democracy,” said Pareno.

The PS noted that citizen engagement is only possible when people are empowered with knowledge and that is why the government remains committed to strengthening legal and institutional frameworks that support access to information.

She also urged stakeholders to support government efforts in building a digitally enabled, transparent, and citizen-responsive Administration.

“An informed citizen is an empowered citizen. Let us work together to ensure every Kenyan can access the information they need to fully participate in governance,” rallied the PS.

The Report, launched by the Commission on Administrative Justice (CAJ), popularly known as the Office of the Ombudsman, presents findings from a comprehensive assessment of 139 public and private institutions across 21 counties and over 400 citizen interviews.

It evaluates compliance with the ATI Act, outlines gaps, and proposes reforms to enhance transparency at all levels of governance.

CAJ Chairperson, Charles Ndung'u, insisted that access to information is not a privilege but a constitutional right enshrined in Article 35 of the Constitution.

“This right is critical not just for citizens but for government institutions themselves,” stressed Ndung'u, citing a legal case where delayed

access to land records nearly jeopardized the government's position in court.

He noted that Government Ministries often struggled to defend public interest due to delays in accessing archived documents, underscoring the urgent need to digitize government records to enhance accessibility and improve service delivery.

The Chairperson announced that the Commission is instituting measures to hold non-compliant officers accountable.

“We now have the authority to fine individual officers for every day they fail to release information upon request. This is not about punishing, but about creating a culture of responsibility and openness in government,” voiced Ndung'u.

The report also highlighted notable progress, including the establishment of information desks in some counties, translation of documents into Kiswahili and Braille, and efforts to disseminate information through vernacular radio stations.

However, the Commission also found that many counties and private entities still lag behind, citing outdated systems, resource limitations, and resistance from some public officials.

To address this, the government, in collaboration with development partners, is working to strengthen institutional capacity and roll out public awareness campaigns, especially in underserved and marginalized areas.

The Country Manager for the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), Teresa Mugadza, commended the government's openness and applauded the Commission for its self-assessment.

"Kenya is one of the few countries taking deliberate steps to localize and operationalize access to information laws," she noted.

Mugadza acknowledged that IDLO has supported county governments, including Marsabit and Nandi in drafting ATI legislation and integrating complaints management systems.

Executive Director of **Uraia** Trust Mr. Oliver Waindi, called for a cultural shift in how information is treated by government agencies.

"Access to information is the bridge between the people and the government. If we break that bridge, mistrust and misinformation will fill the void," he cautioned.

Waindi noted that many Kenyans were unaware of the role of the Ombudsman and urged the Commission to enhance its presence

across all regions.

"No matter how effective an institution is, it must be visible to be impactful," he maintained.

According to the Report, nearly one-third of Kenyans remained unaware of their constitutional right to information.

The government now plans to scale-up sensitization initiatives, focusing on women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and other marginalized populations.

The Report sets a baseline for future assessments and will guide policy reforms aimed at entrenching openness in government processes.

As the country moves forward, the government has pledged to remain steadfast in upholding the right to information as a fundamental pillar of Kenya's democracy.

Source: [Government reaffirms commitment to information access as a constitutional right - Kenya News Agency](#)

SOUTH SUDAN

SOUTH SUDAN: ESCALATING CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN FORCES MANY THOUSANDS TO FLEE JUST AS AID DWINDLES.

JUNE 3RD 2025

Geneva – Over 165,000 people have fled increasing tensions and conflict in South Sudan in the past three months, seeking safety both within the country and across borders and deepening an already dire humanitarian situation across the region, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, warned on Tuesday.

Since late February, political instability and rising hostilities between armed groups have led to fresh clashes, particularly in Upper Nile state, but also other hot spots, devastating lives and damaging essential services, forcing many people already grappling with displacement, disease and food insecurity to move yet again.

Some 100,000 people seeking safety in the neighboring countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda cited insecurity, inter-communal violence, and deteriorating humanitarian conditions as the main reasons for flight.

“South Sudan cannot afford yet another crisis. The world’s youngest country has received more than 1 million people who fled the ongoing war in Sudan, while millions of its citizens continue to recover from years of conflict and crisis at home,” said Mamadou Dian Balde, UNHCR’s Regional Director for the East, Horn of Africa and Great Lakes region.

As a result of fighting and movement restrictions in Upper Nile state and other areas, humanitarian access to an estimated 65,000 newly internally displaced people in affected communities remains significantly constrained. Desperately needed aid, including medicine and health care to tackle an increase

in cholera cases, has ground to a halt. Looming rains are likely to exacerbate the situation, with flooding making transport problematic and expensive.

As they continue to welcome new arrivals, neighbouring countries are struggling to cope as resources such as food, water, sanitation, shelter and health care run dry.

Around 41,000 people have crossed into Sudan’s White Nile, Blue Nile, Kordofan and Darfur states. This includes over 26,000 into White Nile state alone, which already hosts some 410,000 South Sudanese refugees, including those displaced for a second time due to the ongoing war in their host country. The influx has increased the need for additional space to accommodate new arrivals, while essential services remain severely strained amid cholera outbreaks and a fragile security situation.

In Ethiopia, new arrivals had been staying in precarious conditions in makeshift shelters along riverbanks in the border town of Burbiey, Gambella, but are now receiving assistance away from the border in Matar and Moun. UNHCR, WFP and partners have already assisted some 21,000 new arrivals with food and relief items, with thousands

more in need. Infrastructure and services in the Gambella region are already overstretched amid a cholera outbreak.

Uganda hosts the largest population of South Sudanese refugees in Africa, at one 1 million. It has received nearly 18,000 South Sudanese since March, a year-on-year increase of 135 per cent. Nearly 70 per cent of those arriving are children. This group of young refugees are taking increasingly long and dangerous routes to reach safety.

The DRC has received an estimated 23,000 new arrivals from South Sudan due to recent violence and tension, despite the country grappling with its own ongoing conflict and a major displacement crisis.

Across countries of asylum, UNHCR and partners are delivering critical relief items to new arrivals, such as sleeping material, buckets and soap. We are also providing refugees with documentation and specialized support to survivors of gender-based violence. Border monitoring and engagement with local communities are ongoing.

Source: [South Sudan: Escalating Conflict in South Sudan Forces Many Thousands to Flee Just As Aid Dwindles - allAfrica.com](https://www.allAfrica.com)

To deliver initial life-saving protection and assistance and enhance preparedness, UNHCR requires \$36 million to support up to 343,000 internally displaced people in South Sudan and refugees arriving in neighbouring countries over the next six months. This funding will allow UNHCR and partners to upgrade and establish reception and transit centres, and provide shelter, water, health and nutrition screening, and cash assistance to new arrivals.

"This emergency could not have come at a worse time. Many of the refugees are seeking safety in countries which have challenges of their own or are already dealing with emergencies amidst ongoing brutal funding cuts, straining our ability to provide even basic life-saving assistance," Balde added. "We reiterate calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities and urge all parties to spare civilians more suffering and find a peaceful solution."

South Sudan remains one of the largest displacement crises in the region with more than 2.3 million South Sudanese living as refugees in the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and Sudan.

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