

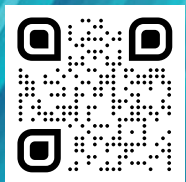


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# MONITOR



SEPTEMBER 2023

# TANZANIA

## TANZANIA OPPOSITION LEADER LISSU RELEASED AFTER WEEKEND ARREST

PUBLISHED ON 11<sup>TH</sup> SEP 2023

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One of Tanzania's main opposition leaders and former presidential candidate Tundu Lissu has been released on bail hours after he was arrested by police for allegedly holding an illegal gathering.

Lissu, vice chairman of Tanzania's largest opposition party CHADEMA, was arrested from a hotel along with other party leaders in northern Tanzania's Arusha region on Sunday and released later that evening, Lissu's party wrote on social media platform X. Lissu has been holding political rallies across the country since returning from exile in January, criticising President Samia Suluhu Hassan's administration for its human rights record and its handling of a controversial ports management deal. He returned from exile after Hassan lifted a six-year ban on political rallies. He had been in Belgium since he fled in 2020 after losing the presidential election to John Magufuli.

In June 2016, Magufuli prohibited elected officials from holding rallies outside their constituencies. The former president argued that election season was over and rallies were a waste of time and a distraction from development. This soon became a blanket ban for political gatherings as the police turned down opposition requests to organise rallies. In some cases, even internal party meetings were disrupted with leaders and their followers harassed and arrested.

But Magufuli himself kept holding rallies and crisscrossing the country by road with his entourage, making numerous impromptu stops to address locals and make off-script decisions. Hassan, his successor, has made moves to reconcile with the opposition, including lifting the ban. But she was also seen as continuing some of the draconian policies of her predecessor – including a seven-month imprisonment of Chadema leader Freeman Mbowe on charges of “terrorism financing”. Police said on Sunday that Lissu and three other people were detained for questioning about accusations they were holding an unlawful assembly and preventing police from doing their job. In a short video posted on X, Lissu was seen along with other party members flashing a V-for-victory hand signal, which is regularly used by CHADEMA.

SOURCE: AL JAZEERA AND NEWS AGENCIES

# UGANDA

## UGANDA'S ANTI-LGBTQ LAW CAUSING WAVE OF RIGHTS ABUSES, ACTIVISTS SAY

PUBLISHED ON 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

The passage of one of the world's harshest anti-gay laws by Uganda's government has unleashed a torrent of abuse against LGBTQ people, mostly committed by private individuals, rights groups say.

The Anti-Homosexuality Act (AHA), enacted in May, prescribes the death penalty for certain same-sex acts. At least six people have been charged under it, including two accused of the capital offence of "aggravated homosexuality".

But a report, authored by a committee of the Convening for Equality (CFE) coalition and made public on Thursday, says the main perpetrators of human rights abuses against LGBTQ people this year – including torture, rape, arrest and eviction – were private individuals.

The report said this pointed to the way the law and the rampant homophobic rhetoric that preceded its passage earlier in the year had radicalised the public against the LGBTQ community.

For example, the report said, mob-aided arrests had become increasingly common "because AHA has put LGBTIQ+ persons on the spot as persons of interest, and the public seems to be the custodians of enforcing the witch hunt".

Between January 1 and August 31, researchers documented 306 rights violations based on the victims' sexual orientation and gender identity, with state actors as the perpetrators in 25 of those cases. By contrast, reports by rights activists in 2020 and 2021 found that state actors were responsible for nearly 70 percent of the rights violations documented in those years. The report did not provide comparative figures for 2022.

The report's authors said they had documented 18 instances in which the police conducted forced anal examinations of people in their custody to gather "evidence" of homosexuality.

*"Surviving a forced anal examination at police [stations] is something that lives with you forever," it quoted one survivor as saying.*

Police spokesperson Fred Enanga told Reuter's news agency that he had not yet read the report and could not comment.

The report cautioned that its statistics could not be considered exhaustive given the difficulties LGBTQ people face in reporting violations. The climate of fear and intimidation unleashed by the

law has also led to rising cases of mental health conditions in the LGBTQ community, including suicidal thoughts, it said.

Since it was enacted in May, the law has drawn widespread condemnation from across the world. In June, the United States imposed travel restrictions on Ugandan officials in response to the legislation and the World Bank announced in August that it was pausing project financing to the country.

SOURCE: REUTERS

## SUDAN

### SUDAN ARMY CHIEF WARNS UN THAT WAR COULD SPILL OVER, ENGULF REGION

PUBLISHED ON 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

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Sudan's army chief warned the United Nations that months of war in his country could spill over into the region, and he called for international pressure to be placed on the paramilitary forces he is fighting, including their designation as "terrorists".

Army leader Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, speaking at the UN following a string of foreign trips, called on the international community on Thursday to designate the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) as a terrorist organisation and to target its sponsors outside Sudan's borders – an allusion to ties with Russia's Wagner mercenaries.

*"The danger of this war is now a threat to regional and international peace and security as those rebels have sought the support of outlaws and terrorist groups from different countries in the region and the world," Burhan said.*

*"This is like the spark of war, a war that will spill over to other countries in the region," he said.*

"Regional and international interference to support these groups is crystal clear by now. This means that this is the first spark that will burn the region, and will have a direct impact on regional and international peace and security," he added. Sudan's military chief accuses paramilitary of committing war crimes

Fighting broke out in Sudan on April 15 after the collapse of a plan to integrate the army and the RSF, led by Burhan's former deputy, General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, who is known as Hemedti.

Both sides blamed the other for starting the war that erupted in the capital Khartoum and has spread to other parts of the country including the western region of Darfur, killing at least 7,500, according to reports, displacing more than five million people and threatening to destabilise the region.

At the UN, Burhan urged world powers to designate the RSF as “terrorists”.

*“They have committed all sorts of crimes that give grounds for such a designation,” he said.*

“Those who have supported killing, burning, raping, forced displacement, looting, stealing, torture, trafficking of arms and drugs, bringing mercenaries or recruiting children – all such crimes necessitate accountability and punishment.” Sudan food shortage: Nearly half of population facing hunger, UN says “Today, we renew our commitment to the peaceful process to put a halt to this war,”

Hemedti said. “The RSF are fully prepared for a ceasefire throughout Sudan to allow the passage of humanitarian aid ... and to start serious and comprehensive political talks,” he said.

Previous assertions by the army and the RSF that they are seeking a solution to the conflict, as well as announcements of ceasefires by both sides, have failed to stop the bloodshed and the deepening of a humanitarian crisis in Sudan.

The United States earlier this month imposed sanctions on RSF leaders, including senior commander Abdelrahim Hamdan Dagalo, the brother of the group’s leader, over alleged abuses including the killing of the governor of West Darfur.

The US and other Western powers have also been strongly critical of Burhan.

Alongside RSF leader Dagalo, Burhan in 2021 sidelined the civilian leadership that had been part of a transitional power-sharing deal following mass protests that brought down longtime leader Omar al-Bashir.

Burhan said on Thursday that he was “committed to our previous pledges to transfer power to the people of Sudan with great national consensus and consent”.

“The armed forces would leave politics once and for all,” he said.

Saudi Arabia and the US have tried to secure a lasting ceasefire in Sudan, but the process stalled amid parallel international initiatives in Africa and the Middle East.

*SOURCE: NEWS AGENCIES*



# ETHIOPIA

## SECOND ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS ON ETHIOPIA'S MEGA-DAM WRAP UP

PUBLISHED ON 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

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The second round of trilateral negotiations surrounding the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), which also holds immense significance for Egypt and Sudan, have ended on an inconclusive note, with Ethiopia pledging to continue talks “in good faith”.

The two-day talks, which brought together representatives from Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt to address contentious issues surrounding the GERD project on the Blue Nile, ended on Sunday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Ambassador Seleshi Bekele, head of the Ethiopian negotiating team, said in a statement on Sunday: “[The parties] exchanged constructive ideas on various outstanding issues ... Ethiopia reiterates its commitment to continue negotiating in good faith.”

In a statement released by its Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation on Sunday, Egypt said the latest round of discussions concerning the \$4.2bn dam concluded without making any significant progress.

Ethiopia, the statement noted, still opposed compromise solutions or internationally agreed-upon technical arrangements that could address its specific interests related to the GERD without encroaching upon the rights and interests of the downstream nations.

The statement added that the Egyptian negotiating team remains committed to constructive negotiations with clearly defined objectives.

### FEARS OVER WATER ACCESS

Protracted negotiations since 2011, which have tried to find common ground on key issues such as the filling and operation of the dam as well as mechanisms for resolving any future disputes, have failed to bring about an agreement between Ethiopia and its downstream neighbours.

The dam’s potential effect on downstream water flow into Egypt and Sudan has been the most significant concern.

After years at loggerheads, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed had agreed in July to finalise a deal on the dam within four months, resuming talks in August.

Earlier this month, Ethiopia announced it had completed the fourth filling of the dam, which it views as being central to its development plans.

In February 2022, Addis Ababa announced that the dam had begun generating electricity for the first time. At full capacity, the huge hydroelectric dam – 1.8km (1.1 miles) long and 145 metres (476 feet) high – could generate more than 5,000 megawatts.

That would double Ethiopia’s production of electricity, which only half the country’s population of 120 million currently has. Egypt and Sudan, heavily reliant on the Nile’s waters for agriculture, drinking water and overall livelihoods, have consistently emphasized the importance of finding a fair solution. The United

Nations says Egypt could “run out of water by 2025” and parts of Sudan are increasingly vulnerable to drought as a result of climate change.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry, whose country relies on the Great Nile for 97 percent of its water needs, said in an address to the UN General Assembly that Cairo wants a “binding agreement” on the dam.

*“It would be a mistake to assume we can accept a fait accompli when it comes to the very lives of more than 100 million Egyptian citizens,” Shoukry said.*

SOURCE: NEWS AGENCIES

# MADAGASCAR

## MADAGASCAR PRICE BULLETIN

PUBLISHED 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023

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The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) monitors trends in staple food prices in countries vulnerable to food insecurity. For each FEWS NET country and region, the Price Bulletin provides a set of charts showing monthly prices in the current marketing year in selected urban centers and allowing users to compare current trends with both five-year average prices, indicative of seasonal trends, and prices in the previous year.

Locally-produced rice is the most important staple food for households in northern and central Madagascar. Imported rice is a less-preferred substitute, but often consumed by poor households because it is cheaper than locally-produced rice and expands more during the cooking. Dried cassava is the primary staple food in the south, although it is consumed in other parts of the country during the lean season when household food stocks are low. Maize is the third most important staple and the second most consumed cereal in Madagascar. Antananarivo, the capital city, is the largest urban market and is the major hub for the country's staple food trade networks.

Antananarivo is a net consumer of staple food and is supplied by imports arriving through the port of Toamasina and from key surplus producing areas throughout the country. Antsirabe, the second urban market, is located in the surplus rice-producing Vakinankaratra region and one of the markets that supply Antananarivo. Located on the eastern coast, Toamasina is the main port city of Madagascar where major quantity of imported commodities comes before traded throughout the country. The southern Madagascar including Ambovombe, Tsihombe, Amboasary and Fianarantsoa markets are the main providers of cassava and maize.

Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/madagascar/madagascar-price-bulletin-september-2023>



# MADAGASCAR PRESIDENT RESIGNS AHEAD OF POLLS IN NOVEMBER

SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2023 2:54 PM GMT+3

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ANTANANARIVO, Sept 10 (Reuters) - Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina has resigned after he was officially confirmed as a candidate in the Indian Ocean Island nation's presidential elections scheduled for November 9, according to the country's constitutional court.

Madagascar's constitution requires a sitting head of state who wants to contest a presidential election to first resign.

Rajoelina sent his resignation letter to the court on Saturday following confirmation of his candidature in the elections, the High Constitutional Court said in a statement late on Saturday.

the president of the senate is supposed to assume presidential powers when the head of state resigns but the court said the senate head, Herimanana Razafimahefa, had declined to take over.

*"For personal reasons, he will not be able to fully exercise the responsibilities that the office of Head of State requires," the court said referring to Razafimahefa.*

Instead, the court said, presidential power would now be exercised by the government collectively with the prime minister as the head.

Also on Saturday, Madagascar's High Court published the official list of presidential candidates. Of the 28 contenders, 13 were selected, including Rajoelina and two former presidents Marc Ravalomanana and Hery Rajaonarimampianina.

Madagascar is hoping for its third peaceful election since the upheaval of 2009, when Rajoelina ousted President Marc Ravalomanana in a coup, prompting an exodus of foreign investors from the Indian Ocean Island.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/madagascar-president-resigns-ahead-polls-november-2023-09-10/>

## PRESIDENT RAMKALAWAN ATTENDS AOSIS LEADERS MEETING

24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023 | FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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New York, United States -23 September 2023: The Heads of State and Government of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), met in New York on 22 September on the margins of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

President Wavel Ramkalawan presently in New York leading the Seychelles delegation represented Seychelles at the AOSIS High-level meeting. Small Island developing States continue to champion responses that account for their particular needs and circumstance.

While there is greater appreciation in the international community, specific SIDS solutions have yet to be effectively implemented. Critical interrelated processes and discussions are underway that will result in outcomes of pivotal importance to the Alliance of Small Islands States.

In this context the Samoa Prime Minister, Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa in her capacity as the Chair of the AOSIS convened the meeting for a high-level discussion on the critical process that lie ahead. Core areas of discussion included the 4th SIDS Conference in 2024, which will adopt a new 10-year Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States, the reform of the international financial architecture, including the immediate and critical step of adopting and operationalizing the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) and the Climate COP28 in December, which will finalize and operationalize and adopt a deceleration that will provide political direction in shaping the outcomes. Addressing the floor, President Ramkalawan's intervention during the high-level dialogue focused predominantly on Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI).

“Seychelles acknowledges the progress made so far, and commends the dedication, commitment and efforts that have gone towards conceptualising and developing a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI). While great strides have been made, we must however be frank and admit that as it stands, the (interim) MVI Report does not necessarily respond to our needs as SIDS. We note the complexities of our individual vulnerabilities - while some vulnerability will apply to all such as freshwater resources, sanitation services, others, such as regional conflict and refugees etc. will only apply to some countries.

We acknowledge the need to give each due consideration as there is no doubt of the negative impacts they have on our respective nations. On the other hand, we must also ensure that no SIDS are left at a disadvantage due to the different weight of the various indicators. For example, on the basis of the indicators used during the pilot study, Seychelles has one of the highest Economic vulnerabilities rating due to a high dependency on exports.

Whereas for environment and social indicators, we have one of the lowest ratings based on geographical location outside the cyclone belts and limited flooding. However, the fact remains that all SIDS are inherently vulnerable to climate change and global crises” stressed President Ramkalawan.

Following discussions, the proposed AOSIS Leaders’ Declaration was adopted followed by closing remarks by the Prime Minister of the Independent State of Samoa and Chair of the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS).

Source: <https://www.statehouse.gov.sc/news/5963/president-ramkalawan-attends-aosis-leaders-meeting>

By: Wal Nyak Dol, Betty Joggo Wani and Ricardo Makuil Dak

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P.O. BOX 619, Hai Jebrona, Adjacent to Martyrs School,  
Opposite Simba Playground, Juba, South Sudan.  
Tel: +211 (0) 920 310 415 | +211 (0) 915 652 847  
<https://cspss.org.ss>