



## MEMORANDUM N° 110/2011

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## ONE) – CIVIL SOCIETY WELCOMES NEW FAO CHIEF

The track record of the newly elected Brazilian chief of FAO is a promise in itself for civil society. Representatives from the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organizations' 191 member countries convened on Sunday for a secret ballot vote that designed Brazilian José Graziano da Silva as the new director general elect of the Rome-based agency.

He took 92 votes out of 180, beating former Spanish foreign minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos, who received 88 votes. The other four candidates, each nominated by his government, were Franz Fischler (Austria), Indroyono Soesilo (Indonesia), Mohammad Saeid Noori Naeni (Iran) and Abdul Latif Rashid (Iraq). The new chief succeeds Senegalese Jacques Diouf, who was first elected in 1993. The new director-general takes over in January 2012 and will remain in charge until July 2015. Following a recently revised rule, he is only eligible for one additional four-year term, while Diouf has been elected to three consecutive six-year terms.

Economist Jose Graziano da Silva, who was FAO's regional representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, had served as food security minister under former Brazilian president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. In that position, he played a key role in the "Zero Hunger" government initiative that brought about a significant decrease in malnutrition in Brazil.

Working closely with civil society, and recognising the central role of women in agriculture, the programme contributed to lifting an estimated 24 million people out of extreme poverty, and to reducing malnutrition by 25 percent in the country, according to official figures.

Graziano's past success gives hope to civil society organisations, who largely expect an era of consultation and inclusion.

"By supporting smallholder agriculture, Brazil is tackling hunger successfully. We expect Graziano to bring the same approach to the FAO," said Marco de Ponte, secretary general of ActionAid Italy.

"In the Diouf era the common thinking was that transferring technical knowledge in agriculture was enough to fight hunger," de Ponte said. "But hunger is largely determined by political choices related to the food market, and hunger grows where you have unfair access to production."

According to de Ponte, FAO should definitely go beyond the prominently technical role it has had so far, and participate in the debate on economic, trade and financial policies that determine prices.

Of course this cannot be done without consensus by the member states. "The new FAO chief will have to get members' agreement on the central role of farmers in the fight against hunger in developing countries," said Francesco Petrelli, president of aid agency Oxfam Italy.

In fact the election showed a clear division between donor and developing countries.

"Divisions became clear in the election process," Graziano admitted. "But countries of the North, which are the most important donors, are not against me; after the election they all committed to supporting the organisation."

"We have to work on a minimum consensus so this organisation is not paralysed by these divisions," he said.

In his first speech to the assembly, Graziano said the election was not a North-South clash, but an exercise in democracy. He thanked Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff and her predecessor Lula for supporting his candidature, as well as the block of Latin American, African and non-aligned countries that voted for him. Europe supported his main rival, Moratinos.

He will certainly not miss support from civil society organisations, as a result of his own inclusive efforts made in Brazil.

"The consultative organ of the Brazilian presidency on nutrition and food security is an example of democracy and inclusion of civil society, in respect of everybody's roles," said Antonio Onorati from the International Planning Committee (IPC), a global network of NGOs and civil society groups involved in agricultural issues.

Consultative meetings with civil society have been stuck over the last three years at the FAO, Onorati said. "We have all known Graziano for many years in his previous positions, and we are confident that a serious cooperation will start again within FAO," he said.

The DG election opened the organisation's biennial assembly, which takes place as food issues, and international price volatility, feature prominently on the global agenda.

In their 2011-2020 Agricultural Outlook, FAO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecast that real prices for cereals could grow on average by 20 per cent over the coming decade, compared to 2001-2010. Farm output is expected to grow 1.7 per cent annually over the next decade, down from the 2.6 per cent growth rate of the past 10 years.

Agriculture ministers from the G20 major industrialised and emerging nations agreed on an action plan last

week in Paris to curb prices. In his first meeting with journalists on Monday, Graziano said it is impossible to predict how long high prices will last, but expressed the hope that the G20 action plan would help, if implemented.

He also stressed the need for a stable financial system as financial markets had 'contaminated commodity markets'. The FAO will play a greater role in helping developing countries cope with food price volatility, he said, which "is even worse than high prices because of the uncertainty it causes for consumers and producers."

Explaining priorities ahead, Graziano said FAO will give priority to Africa and play a central role in water resources management. He also pledged to quickly deliver the organisation's long awaited cost-effective reform.

## TWO) - ICELAND STARTS EU ACCESSION TALKS

European Union and Icelandic officials on Monday hailed the first progress in the Nordic country's talks on accession to the bloc, which did not touch on the thornier aspects of the negotiations. EU applicants have to align their legislation with the EU's on 35 technical dossiers, called "chapters." On Monday, talks were opened on public procurement, information society and media, science and research as well as on education and culture. Two of the four chapters opened - science and research and education and culture - were immediately closed, as the EU judged that Iceland already met the bloc's standards. "Today was a small and easy step," Iceland's foreign minister Ossur Skarphedinsson said in Brussels. Compared to poorer EU applicants in the Balkans, Iceland's path is easier because it already complies with the bloc's internal market and migration rules by virtue of being a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) and the Schengen border-free zone. Skarphedinsson said he would like talks to start on "half of the remaining" accession talks, including on the "two heavyweight chapters of agriculture and fisheries" over the next six months, when Poland will hold the EU's rotating presidency. The other half should be opened in the first semester of 2012, during Denmark's stint as EU president, Skarphedinsson said. Tough negotiations are expected on agriculture and fisheries because Iceland is keen to defend its autonomy against EU overfishing and what it sees as expensive agricultural subsidies. Fisheries "is related to the psyche of the nation, to the soul of everybody in Iceland," and the outcome of talks with the EU will be crucial for the success of an Icelandic referendum on accession, Skarphedinsson said. Hungarian Foreign Minister Janos Martonyi pointed out that talks on free movement of capital are also likely to be difficult, as they are related to the question of Icesave. "I do not see really any problem we could not overcome together," EU enlargement commissioner Stefan Fule said more optimistically. (Dap)

## THREE) - CHINESE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OWE \$ 1.6 TRILLION

China's local governments have piled up debts of \$1.6 trillion; the national audit agency announced Monday, amid mounting concern Chinese banks might be hurt if borrowers cannot repay loans. It was the first public accounting of massive borrowing by local governments to pay for construction and other spending. The [announcement](#), following months of speculation about the scale of the debt, might help to mollify worries about possible risks facing banks that also lent heavily to help China ward off the 2008 global crisis. Analysts say some local governments might be unable to repay loans but a banking crisis is unlikely because China's state-owned lenders are flush with cash and avoided the mortgage-related turmoil that battered Western institutions. Beijing has flexibility because economic growth is strong and its total government debt is well below that of the United States, Japan and some European economies, said Zuo Xiaolei, chief economist for Galaxy Securities in Beijing. "But the government must bear the risks in mind and try to prevent the local debts expanding too fast," she said. The National Audit Office report gave no indication what portion of local government debt might not be repaid. Its total figure was in line with estimates by outside analysts but it was unclear whether that included all government debts. The audit office said local governments owe 9 trillion yuan (\$1.4 trillion) to banks and other lenders and might be responsible for an additional 1.6 trillion yuan (\$200 billion) in debt. The disclosure came in a report to China's legislature that was released on the agency website. "Due to inadequate repayment ability, some local governments can only pay their debts by taking on still more debt," the report said. UBS economist Tao Wang, in a report this month, said local governments eventually might be unable to repay 2-3 trillion yuan (\$300-\$450 billion) in loans, equivalent to 4-5 percent of total lending by Chinese banks. Many local Chinese governments created investment agencies over the past decade to invest

in construction and other projects, financed by borrowing from state banks. An American researcher, Victor Shih of Northwestern University, has estimated total local government borrowing in 2004-09 at 12 trillion (\$1.6 trillion). (AP)

#### **FOUR) - MAURITANIA COULD LOSE ITS CAPITAL CITY TO THE SEA**

For the past five years, water has been seeping out of the ground beneath parts of Nouakchott, undermining foundations and transforming some areas of the Mauritanian capital into uninhabitable marshes.

Tabara Gaye, a widow living in the Socogim PS neighbourhood of this coastal city, said that her neighbours' house collapsed on Jun. 20. She is demanding urgent help from the government before this year's rainy season to pay for pumps and the cost of building embankments against the rising waters. In 2007, limited flooding was observed in several places during the rainy season. But in January 2011, residents were forced to flee their homes when water began invading several neighbourhoods, including Socogim, Bagdad, Sebkhah and Las Palmas. Murmurs of discontent gained strength until the clamour for compensation from the government and private developers who laid out the now-flooded sites spurred the government to act.

Mauritanian president Mohamed Abdelaziz personally visited the sites in April and set up an inter-ministerial committee to look into the problem, but the committee is yet to report back.

Retiree Moktar Kane, a victim of the flooding, says, "I spent 35 millions ouguiyas (around 138,000 dollars), to purchase a flood-prone plot. My neighbours and I, a total of 476 families, need a drain to drain waste water and runoff... or we want substantial compensation."

Compensation for Kane and his neighbours is out of the question, according to the developers, Iskan (the name means housing in Arabic). "The lots were allocated in 1982, and the water table then was at two metres," says Iskan's technical director, Med Ali. "All of Nouakchott finds itself below the water table. Only the government can settle this."

Recent studies by the government suggest that nearly 80 percent of the overall surface area of Nouakchott could be submerged in less than a decade - in 20 years at most. One scenario predicts the disappearance of the city by around 2050.

The director of environmental services, Ould Lefdal, explains it simply, "Nouakchott is located in a depression 50 centimetres below sea level. The sea is advancing towards the city at a rate of 25 metres per year."

Banimou Tlayor, from the local non-governmental organisation Action for Rational Management of the Environment, says that the city's port has changed the shape of the coast and that any rise in sea levels exposes Nouakchott to flooding.

In addition, the pumping of water from the Senegal River, a rise in the water table corresponding to rising sea levels in the Atlantic, and the absence of proper drainage are all playing a role.

Bamody Diakité, the coordinator of Nouakchott's Special Programme to Safeguard the City, says that 120,000 cubic metres of water from the river is treated for the city's fresh water supply, but a large part of this is lost to leaks in the antiquated pipe network. He says this, alongside the absence of a system of sewers and storm drains, is aggravating the phenomenon of the waters rising beneath the city.

The other contributing factor comes from the use of beach sand for construction, which - according to Diakité - has opened up 18 breaches in the coastal dune that protects inland areas from high seas.

The government has spent eight million dollars on the programme, the money going towards restoring the coastal dune as well as planting a green belt of protective vegetation.

Several studies have been carried out to assess how best to plug the gaps in the coastal dune. "The most feasible project - dredging the sea floor to reinforce the dune - will soon be put out to tender," says Diakité. He also acknowledged the serious deterioration of the natural environment near the Port of Nouakchott where 15 kilometres of the coastal bar has been destroyed by wind erosion; a Chinese firm is building a protective dike.

But Dr Marico Demba, head of the U.N.-financed Adaptation to Climate and Coastal Change Project in West Africa, fears that responding to the changes will call for resources greater than Mauritania possesses. The situation - its gravity realised very late - is precarious. Residents of Nouakchott fear for the future of their capital. Everything depends on the evolution of the climate and the warming of the planet, says Lefdal.

## FIVE) – AFRICAN UNION SENDS STERN WARNING TO NATO OVER LIBYA BOMBARDMENTS

Le président sud-africain Jacob Zuma a, au nom de l'Afrique, haussé le ton dimanche face à l'OTAN, soulignant qu'elle n'avait pas été mandatée par l'ONU pour conduire "l'assassinat politique" de Mouammar Kadhafi, alors que les rebelles avancent et sont à 50 km de Tripoli. Les médiateurs africains, dont M. Zuma, à l'issue de leur réunion à Pretoria, ont seulement annoncé que le dirigeant libyen avait accepté de ne pas faire partie des négociations sur la Libye pour mettre un terme à un conflit qui dure depuis quatre mois. Sur le terrain, la rébellion a repoussé les loyalistes de 20 km, et se trouve à environ 50 km de la capitale, remontant vers le verrou stratégique de Bir Al-Ghanam. Les deux camps s'affrontent à l'arme lourde, entre intenses bombardements aux roquettes de type Grad et tirs soutenus de mitrailleuses lourdes, selon un correspondant de l'AFP. Réuni dimanche à Pretoria, le comité des médiateurs de l'Union africaine (UA), composé de cinq chefs d'Etat - Afrique du Sud, Congo, Mali, Ouganda, Mauritanie - a passé en revue les efforts de médiation devant aider à un règlement de la crise libyenne. Mais d'emblée, le président Jacob Zuma a souligné la "préoccupation" du comité et de l'assemblée de l'UA devant les "bombardements continus de l'OTAN", ajoutant que "la finalité de la résolution 1973 (de l'ONU, adoptée le 17 mars) était de protéger le peuple libyen et faciliter les efforts humanitaires". "La finalité n'était pas d'autoriser une campagne pour un changement de régime ou un assassinat politique" de Mouammar Kadhafi, a souligné M. Zuma à l'ouverture de la réunion du comité. **GADDAFI EXCLUDED FROM NEGOTIATION PROCESS** Mais après quatre heures de discussions, le comité s'est borné à saluer "la décision du colonel Kadhafi de ne pas faire partie du processus de négociations". Le texte a été lu par le commissaire de l'UA pour la paix et la sécurité Ramtane Lamamra, qui a refusé de répondre aux questions des journalistes. Mais un membre de la délégation sud-africaine a ensuite tempéré la portée du texte: "nous voulions que Kadhafi fasse une déclaration publique selon laquelle il ne prendrait pas part aux négociations mais il ne l'a pas fait". "Cela signifie qu'il est fini", a-t-il assuré. Le communiqué des médiateurs africains a également réitéré l'appel de l'organisation panafricaine à un cessez-le-feu immédiat pour permettre des négociations. Cette réunion s'est tenue alors que les rebelles libyens avaient indiqué samedi soir attendre rapidement une offre de Kadhafi pour mettre fin à la guerre. Mais le porte-parole du régime libyen, Moussa Ibrahim, a déclaré dimanche à l'AFP que le colonel Kadhafi ne quitterait ni le pouvoir ni le pays. "Kadhafi est ici. Il y reste. Il dirige le pays et il ne le quittera pas et il ne démissionnera pas parce qu'il n'a aucun poste officiel", a déclaré M. Ibrahim. Les juges de la CPI doivent dire lundi s'ils délivrent ou non des mandats d'arrêts contre le colonel Kadhafi, son fils Seif Al-Islam et le chef des services de renseignements libyens Abdallah Al-Senoussi. Le procureur avait effectué une requête en ce sens le 16 mai. La réunion des médiateurs africains intervient juste avant le 17e sommet de l'Union africaine qui se tiendra à Malabo, en Guinée-équatoriale du 30 juin au 1er juillet, et où la crise libyenne sera au centre des discussions. Le ministre des affaires étrangères algérien Mourad Medelci a par ailleurs reçu dimanche à Alger un envoyé spécial du colonel Kadhafi. (AFP)

## SIX) – LIBYAN REBELS CONFIRM INDIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH GADDAFI

Indirect talks between Libya's government and opposition have been taking place in Paris and South Africa, a spokesman for the opposition Interim Transitional National Council (ITNC) confirmed in an interview published Friday. "Yes, there is contact currently through intermediaries. But these negotiations are never direct," Mahmoud Shammam, spokesman for the Benghazi-based council told Le Figaro. Libyan leader Moamer Gaddafi had recently sent a representative to Paris to take part in the talks, he said. The rebels' conditions for ending their offensive against Gaddafi's regime "remain unchanged", he said, repeating the ITNC's demand that Gaddafi and his family be excluded from any future government. "We have no objection to him withdrawing to a Libyan oasis, under international control," Shammam said. The regime's reaction to their demands had been "contradictory," he said. "Sometimes we get close to our goal but sometimes, we move further away. It depends on Gaddafi's humour at any given time." Gaddafi, who has ruled Libya for 42 years, is clinging to power in the face of a two-pronged rebel and NATO offensive. This week he remained in defiant mood, warning NATO that "in the end, the aggressor is the one who will lose." (Dpa)

## SEVEN) – CONTROVERSIAL COURT ISSUES ARREST WARRANT AGAINST YET ANOTHER AFRICAN : GADDAFI

La [Cour pénale internationale](#) a annoncé lundi la délivrance d'un mandat d'arrêt pour crimes contre l'humanité contre le colonel Mouammar Kadhafi, le second chef d'Etat poursuivi par la CPI, après le président soudanais Omar el-Béchir. "Il y a des motifs raisonnables de croire que (...) Mouammar Kadhafi, en coordination avec

son cercle rapproché, a conçu et orchestré un plan destiné à réprimer et à décourager la population qui manifestait contre le régime et ceux considérés comme dissidents au régime", a déclaré la juge Sanji Mmasenono Monageng, lors d'une audience publique à La Haye. Les juges ont également lancé des mandats d'arrêt pour crimes contre l'humanité contre le fils du colonel Kadhafi, Seif Al-Islam, et le chef des services de renseignements libyens, Abdallah Al-Senoussi, comme l'avait demandé le procureur Luis Moreno-Ocampo dans une requête déposée le 16 mai. "Pour éviter qu'ils ne continuent de dissimuler les crimes qui continuent d'être commis et qu'ils n'en commettent de nouveaux, ils doivent être arrêtés. C'est là la seule manière de protéger les civils en Libye", a réagi M. Moreno-Ocampo dans un communiqué. Un seul chef d'Etat en exercice, le président soudanais Omar el-Béchir, fait jusqu'ici l'objet d'un mandat d'arrêt de la CPI. Béchir ne reconnaît pas la compétence de la Cour. Entrée en fonction en 2002, la CPI ne dispose d'aucune force de police propre et dépend de la volonté des Etats pour l'exécution des mandats d'arrêt. La Cour a compétence en Libye en vertu de la résolution du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies du 26 février, ce que contestent les autorités libyennes qui affirment ne pas être "concernées" par ses décisions, n'ayant pas ratifié le statut de Rome, son traité fondateur. (AFP)

## **EIGHT) – DR CONGO: WATER SHORTAGES GRIP THE CAPITAL**

In recent months, no one in the Congolese capital has been spared the effects of water shortages. Where spending entire days criss-crossing Kinshasa in search of water with battered containers in hand was previously the unhappy task of women and children, now men in suits have joined the fray.

"I know of many of my friends whose official vehicles are shuttling back and forth to bring water to their homes each day," says Félicien Kabamba Tino, at the Faculty of Science at the University of Kinshasa. "Here at the university, the lecturers come with their jerry cans and other receptacles to get water at the administrative building."

Fidèle Mwaku, an associate professor at the National Pedagogy University, agrees. "I had a friend from the Plateau des Professeurs neighbourhood [popular for university lecturers] come to draw water at my house in Lemba."

Mwaku says households across the city are doing the same to deal with the situation. Kinshasa's poorer residents have long been resigned to this state of affairs.

"We've been waiting a week for water, and the last time we had it, it came at three in the morning only to stop again a few hours later," complains Judith Kapenda, mother of four, in the Kinshasa commune of Kintambo.

"I spent a day in Selembao [another area of the city] and what I saw there was terrible," says Michel Kalumvueziko, the provincial executive secretary of the Action Committee for Water and Sanitation. "Men, women and children in the street searching for water. The situation made me feel sick, to see so many people in the street, all searching for water."

The impact of water scarcity is manifested in waterborne diseases which affect many poor families.

### ***Water, water everywhere, but...***

The water supply problems in Kinshasa are a painful irony, since the city and the Democratic Republic of Congo as a whole have ready access to immense water resources: the Congo River, the world's second largest river system, discharges itself into the Atlantic at Kinshasa.

Many residents also find it hard to understand the severe shortages in light of the numerous water treatment plants operated in and around the city by the public water utility, REGIDESO - Kinshasa boasts six such facilities.

"I live in Bumbu, a commune in Kinshasa West," says Fidèle Ipama, a leader in the Mbandaka district. "This part of the city doesn't get potable water although there is a water reservoir in [neighbouring] Selembao." But the infrastructure is inadequate: Kinshasa's population needs an estimated 700,000 cubic metres of water per day. The utility produces only 425,000 cubic metres.

REGIDESO says the water utility's poor performance is partly due to aging infrastructure, such as the Lukunga waterworks. Lukunga, with a capacity of just 48,000 cubic metres a day, must serve a million residents in two districts of Kinshasa, according to David Ekwanza, director of operations at REGIDESO. The plant was built by the Belgian colonisers in 1939 and has not been substantially refurbished since."

The World Bank-supported Urban Potable Water Supply Project (known by its French acronym, PEMU) was launched several years ago, but does not appear to have had a significant impact. PEMU proposed to increase access to water in urban areas by improving the utility's technical and financial effectiveness, particularly relating to massive arrears in payments.

The project had a three-pronged focus: "the restoration of financial viability; the creation of conditions for dynamic management which will transform this public enterprise into a social entity designed to increase

managerial autonomy; as well as the renewal and upgrading of facilities in the three centres most likely to generate the revenue needed to restore balance and help support secondary centres."

### ***No tangible progress***

But two years later, large parts of the capital remain unconnected to the water infrastructure, and those lucky enough to have a water connection in their homes say they are not much better off.

"The water only comes at night," says Joseph Lubamba, "if you don't wake up in time, you miss it. And then my family is obliged to get water from elsewhere, and to pay around 100 francs Congolais - the equivalent of a U.S. dollar - for a jerry-can of 20 litres."

Yet his bill from the utility company remains high. "I have to pay nearly 80,000 francs over ten months, that is 90 dollars. What is there to encourage me to pay so much money for a water supply that I can rarely use?" Mwaku says even when the water flows just once a week, REGIDESO's customers still receive large bills, and households which use very little water are asked to pay the same amount as those which draw a store for several days.

"It has become a serious problem for the city," said Franck Kimbembe, director of water distribution for Kinshasa West. But he says the problem is linked to work on the "Cinq chantiers de la République" development initiative launched to coincide with the DRC's 50th anniversary.

The five "chantiers", or sites for development, cover infrastructure, health and education, housing, unemployment, and - ironically - electricity and water. According to Kimbembe, the city itself is a permanent construction site, with the work constantly in progress, sometimes forcing REGIDESO to suspend or move even the principal arteries of its distribution network.

"What's more, the repeated interruptions to the power supply are a challenge to our efforts to maintain a consistent service to satisfy the needs of our customers, because our production relies on electricity," he says. Jean-Pierre Ntomobolo, responsible for communications at REGIDESO's Water Projects Implementation Unit, believes that with time, the situation will settle down and improve as various projects are completed.

## **NINE) – TANZANIA PLANS TO LEASE LAND TO FOREIGN INVESTORS**

Tanzania plans to provide over 1.6 million hectares of land for lease by foreign investors to set up manufacturing plants, and plans to create free trade zones to boost exports, the Prime Minister said. East Africa's second largest economy -- which expects to grow by 7.2 percent in 2012 -- depends largely on tourism, mining and agriculture but is hoping to expand its manufacturing, telecommunications, energy, financial services and transport sectors. Tanzania's Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda told parliament while presenting a budget proposal for the 2011/12 financial year late on Thursday that Africa's fourth biggest gold producer also plans to increase economic processing zones (EPZ) and special economic zones to expand exports. Presently there are six EPZs in Tanzania. Pinda did not say how many more the government wanted to establish. Companies have injected about 1 trillion shillings (\$621.1 million) in free trade zones since 2007 and exported goods worth 525 billion shillings in same period, he said. He said foreign direct investment (FDI) in Tanzania grew 13 percent to 860 billion shillings in 2010, and the government has projected FDI inflows would increase to \$800 million this year. (Reuters)

## **TEN) – ZIMBABWE: HARVESTING WATER FOR FOOD SECURITY**

Earth mounds running across her field hold back the water that Caroline Ndlovu uses to grow maize, pumpkins, beans and watermelons long after the short rainy season in this arid part of Zimbabwe. Ndlovu, a mother of three who trains other farmers, is one of over 100 smallholder farmers practicing the water harvesting technique of using earth dams. The water collected in the field allows farmers to increase their crop yields, which ordinarily are poor in this region.

Almost four years ago Ndlovu harvested one 50-kilogram bag of maize from her 1.5 hectare piece of land, which sits on an undulating slope. Thanks to harvesting water, Ndlovu's maize yield has quadrupled and her neighbours wonder what she is doing they are not.

"For a long time I was worried about poor harvest because of low rainfall until I heard about water harvesting," Ndlovu, said pointing to full granary of maize. "The poor rainfall limited me to grow sorghum and millet but that was not for me because I am not able to (protect) the crops from the birds. I grow maize and have realised good harvests because of implementing water harvesting."

The secret to water harvesting is hard work and a passion for farming, Ndlovu revealed. "I work hard and put to practice the skills I have learnt on pegging and digging the contours in the most suitable location to ensure that they hold the water after the rains," said Ndlovu.

"I have encouraged other farmers to try water harvesting and some of them wonder if I am using a tractor when they see my harvest yet it all about learning the technique and applying it correctly."

Dead level contours are a useful technology for farmers farming on sloping fields to harvest rainwater. The trenches, around 50 centimetres deep and 1 metre wide, are dug across the slope. During rainfall, they capture run off, which is then slowly released to the field below over the next few weeks, giving crops moisture during dry spells.

Farmers have faced the challenge of not having the tools to dig the contours as well as not having the labour involved in making the contours. So communities in Sizhulube village work together to dig the contours. While older or disabled members look after the children and help prepare food.

Gwanda, 180 kilometres north of Bulawayo, is tucked away in the southern part of the country and is classified as a natural region suitable for semi extensive farming as it receives up to 400 millimetres rainfall annually. Farmers have learnt and practise rainwater harvesting to survive the long dry spells.

Village head and ward coordinator for the water harvesting project in Sizhubane village, Phineas Maphosa, said the project has empowered farmers in the area. Following a training workshop in 2006, 15 economic groups were identified in the six villages that make up the ward, which prioritised food security using water harvesting.

"Our rainfall is really pathetic and each year farmers get nothing from their fields. But now we see a difference in the harvests," said Maphosa. "I practise water harvesting and train other farmers on using it because I have improved my harvest as a result."

Maphosa said at first some farmers were sceptical and lazy to adopt the technique. But 'look and learn' tours were used to encourage them and some now grow pumpkins and beans.

International non-governmental organisation Practical Action has trained farmers to use water harvesting techniques.

Rockwell Matengarufu, the district facilitator for Practical Action's 'Enhancing Livelihoods and Food Security in Vulnerable Semi-Arid Areas of Matabeleland South' programme, said that water harvesting techniques are an insurance against the uncertainty of rain-fed agriculture in a changing climate. Practical Action has trained farmers to use improved farming methods and extension services they can share at village level in Gwanda.

According to the Southern and Eastern Africa Rainwater Network (SearNet) hosted by the World Agroforestry Centre in Kenya, most sub-Saharan African countries are currently using at most five percent of their rainwater potential. By recognising and incorporating the greenwater — the water ignored in hydrological planning — it may be possible to improve the food insecurity situation while also protecting the environment.

"There is overdependence on rain-fed agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa and not enough ways to deal with the effects of dry spells and droughts," said Maimbo Malesu, the World Agroforestry Centre's water-management programme coordinator for Eastern Africa writing on the SearNet website. "As a result, grain yields are below one tonne per hectare in most of the region. This has mistakenly been blamed on physical water scarcity. But it is not physical as much as it is economic. There is simply a lack of investments to both capture and boost water storage."

## **ELEVEN) – MOROCCAN REGIME SENDS DEMONSTRATORS TO COUNTER PRO-DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT**

Pour la première fois cependant, les manifestants favorables au référendum se sont rassemblés en très grand nombre à Casablanca. Une source auprès du ministère de l'Intérieur contactée par l'AFP a chiffré le nombre de ces manifestants à "des dizaines de milliers de personnes". Ces manifestants répondaient à l'appel de partis politiques et notamment de la confrérie religieuse soufie "Zaouia Boudchichia", favorable au pouvoir, et dirigée par le Cheikh Hamza, qui a dit avoir mobilisé en masse ses "disciples". "On n'est pas un parti politique, mais il y a une dynamique politique régionale et notre jeunesse veut l'accompagner pacifiquement pour soutenir le projet royal", selon Lahcen Sbaï Idrissi, porte-parole de la confrérie. "Je comprends les revendications sociales de ce mouvement, mais je vais voter pour le projet de Constitution. Je suis pour le roi", indiquait pour sa part un manifestant de 20 ans. "Je suis venu de Settat. Je suis imam et je

suis venu dans un bus collectif pour participer à cette marche. Je veux dire oui à ce projet", a déclaré Mohammed Messaoudi, la quarantaine. (AFP)

#### TWELVE) – PRO DEMOCRACY MOROCCANS DEMONSTRATE AGAINST KING'S MINI-REFORM

Thousands of rival demonstrators marched through cities in Morocco on Sunday over constitutional reforms proposed by King Mohammed after unrest inspired by "Arab Spring" uprisings in the Arab world. Critics of the reforms say they do not go far enough to reduce his powers. The march against the monarch's measures was the latest in a wave of protests in the North African state and comes days before a July 1 referendum on the reform plan. "We reject the offers made (by the king). They keep the essence of authority in the hands of a non-elected person who will not be subject to any form of accountability," said Hamid, a jobless 38-year-old among 7,000 protesters who marched through a working class suburb of Casablanca, Morocco's largest city. Aziz Yaakoubi, a member of the "February 20" pro-democracy street movement named after its founding date, said two of the protesters were injured after being pelted with stones by a group of rival demonstrators in favour of the king's reform. A smaller rally of about 2,000 people opposed to the king's proposals marched through the capital Rabat, separated from rival marchers by dozens of baton-wielding riot police. "The police encircled us, they didn't let us march to the parliament," said Najib Chawki, one of the coordinators of the movement, which is urging supporters to boycott the vote. "It shows that the powers in Morocco have no interest in changing." The new charter still allows him to name a prime minister and to vet appointments of other ministers and suggest the termination of their mandates. It explicitly grants the government executive powers, but it keeps the king at the helm of the army, religious authorities and the judiciary and still allows him to dissolve parliament. The Moroccan street movement has not won the mass support that toppled leaders of Tunisia and Egypt and does not demand an end to the monarchy. It focuses instead on the king's perceived growing business influence and his grip on the political system. National income per head in Morocco was \$2,810 in 2009, according to the World Bank, higher than Egypt's \$2,070. But Morocco ranks 13 places below Egypt at 117th in the United Nations' Human Development Index, a measure of quality of life based on factors such as child welfare and life expectancy. **DISOBEYING THE KING WOULD BE UNISLAMIC** Authorities on Friday ordered mosque preachers to urge worshippers to vote for the reform, saying it would be unIslamic to disobey the king, described in sermons as "God's appointee". Mustapha Nazih, a cleric at a pro-reform march in Casablanca organised by Boutchichiya Zawiya, one of Morocco's biggest and wealthiest sufi schools, said he had come all the way from the town of Beni Mellal, 300 km from Casablanca. "We didn't have to pay for the bus fare. The Islamic Affairs Ministry asked us to come to Casablanca and we did so happily." (Reuters)

#### THIRTEEN) – UN SECURITY COUNCIL TO VOTE TODAY ON FORCE FOR SUDAN'S ABYEI

Le Conseil de sécurité de l'ONU doit se prononcer lundi sur un projet de résolution autorisant le déploiement de 4.200 Casques Bleus éthiopiens dans le territoire soudanais disputé d'Abyei, ont indiqué dimanche des diplomates. Cette force aurait notamment pour mission de surveiller le retrait des troupes de Khartoum de la région et de veiller au respect des droits de l'Homme dans le territoire, selon ces diplomates. L'ambassadrice des Etats Unis à l'ONU, Susan Rice, avait annoncé jeudi avoir soumis au Conseil de sécurité un projet de résolution prévoyant l'envoi de 4.200 Casques Bleus éthiopiens à Abyei dans le cadre d'une mission de maintien de la paix. Mme Rice avait par ailleurs démenti les affirmations du gouvernement de Khartoum selon qui un accord conclu entre le Nord et le Sud rivaux avait placé Abyei dans le Nord. Le gouvernement de Khartoum a occupé Abyei le 21 mai et des dizaines de milliers de personnes ont depuis fui vers le Sud. Le gouvernement soudanais et le gouvernement du Sud-Soudan ont conclu un accord lundi qui prévoit que le territoire d'Abyei serait démilitarisé. Mme Rice avait indiqué que l'accord était "urgent et fragile" et qu'un vote rapide du Conseil de sécurité était nécessaire. Les 4.200 soldats éthiopiens placés sous mandat de l'ONU représenteraient quatre fois les effectifs de l'ONU actuellement dans le territoire. (AFP)

#### FOURTEEN) – TRAIN CARRYING SOUTHERN SUDANESE ATTACKED

A train carrying southern Sudanese migrants was attacked in the country's conflict-stricken Southern Kordofan border state on Sunday, killing at least one person, the United Nations said. U.N. spokeswoman Hua Jiang

said the most recent information indicated armed Misseriya tribesmen were behind the attack. A senior Misseriya official denied the tribe had a role in the attack, and blamed it on rebels from neighbouring Darfur. South Sudan will declare independence on July 9, but fighting in the vaguely-defined border region has complicated the split and raised fears of a broader conflict. Many southerners are trying to return home ahead of the secession, which sometimes involves crossing through volatile areas. "A train transport of southern Sudanese returnees going from Kosti to Wau was attacked by Misseriya militia this morning," Jiang said, adding at least one person was killed and four were wounded. Mohamed Omer al-Ansary, a Misseriya leader, confirmed an attack occurred, but said the tribe was not involved. He blamed the attack on rebels from Darfur, which neighbours Southern Kordofan and is the site of a separate insurgency. "The Misseriya did not attack this train and we do not fight civilians," he said. The Misseriya are a nomadic, Arabic-speaking tribe associated with the north. Clashes broke out between the northern army and southern-aligned troops in Southern Kordofan -- the north's main oil state -- on June 5. About two weeks earlier, Khartoum moved tanks and troops into the disputed Abyei region. More than 180,000 people have fled the fighting in Abyei and Southern Kordofan, the United Nations says. (Reuters)

#### **FIFTEEN) – SUDAN PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL IN CHINA DELAYED**

A Chinese official says Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir's arrival in Beijing has been delayed and a meeting with President Hu Jintao has been postponed. Foreign Ministry official Guan Enxia told reporters waiting at Beijing's airport that al-Bashir's scheduled events for Monday had been delayed. She did not give a reason for al-Bashir's delayed arrival. He had been scheduled to arrive early in the day. Al-Bashir is wanted by the International Criminal Court for allegedly orchestrating atrocities in Sudan's Darfur region during the country's civil war. China has major oil investments in Sudan. Beijing is not a member of the court and has expressed concerns that its indictment of al-Bashir could cause further instability in the region. (AP)

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