



MEMORANDUM N° 116/2011

14/07/2011

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ONE) – AFRICAN COUNTRIES COORDINATE TO IMPOSE TAXES ON MULTINATIONALS

Tax authorities in three African countries are now working together to prevent multinational companies from avoiding taxes and depriving their countries of money that could be used to fight poverty. The [African Tax Administration Forum](#) said this week that South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia plan to exchange information about taxpayers. The effort, spurred by an international aid group's research, is aimed at monitoring whether corporations are paying enough tax. Companies who find ways to use tax laws to pay as little as possible are "likely to get away with it more" in developing countries that often lack the resources to audit and investigate, according to Logan Wort, executive secretary of the African Tax Administration. Aid groups and governments are expressing growing concern about whether poor countries in Africa are getting a fair share of taxes from the rich companies that operate there. David McNair, a tax researcher for Christian Aid, said the steps being taken by South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia are proof years of lobbying is having an effect. "The growing profile of the role of tax in development ... has given developing countries confidence," McNair said. "It's really encouraging to see African countries standing up together." Even South Africa - which has the most sophisticated tax system on the continent - says it's losing billions of rand (dollars) in possible taxes. South African Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan was quoted by the government news agency recently as saying his country was missing out on uncollected taxes because companies' tax planners were so far ahead of government tax administrators. Activists point to multinational beer company [SABMiller](#) as one example of how accounting sleight of hand can reduce a tax burden in African countries. While SABMiller isn't breaking any laws, the group ActionAid issued a report last year questioning the ethics of depriving "governments of significant amounts of tax - enough money to educate a quarter of a million African children." ActionAid says one common method involves determining prices for payments made by a multinational's subsidiary in a developing country for goods or services provided by a sister company based elsewhere. Tax authorities would ideally like to see the payments be based on market prices, but that can be difficult to confirm or enforce. The result can be reducing or eliminating a subsidiary's taxable profits. London-based SABMiller - the world's second-biggest brewer, with subsidiaries across Africa - says it adheres to international standards on what is known as transfer pricing, and follows regulations in the countries in which it operates. The report prompted tax experts from South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia to turn to the African Tax Administration Forum to organize talks last week, Wort said. At the meeting, officials from the three countries agreed to work toward establishing a tax information exchange agreement that would give them legal authority to discuss specific taxpayers, and allow them to exchange information about what any particular company is claiming is its obligation in any country. The participants also decided that if they should decide to audit a company, they would turn to the African Tax Administration Forum to arrange expert help, possibly from Western governments. Still, experts note that investments by multinational countries have allowed African economies to grow, and that they should not see themselves as targets of a tax witch hunt. "In no way do we wish to send the message that multinationals are bad," Wort said. "We welcome them." The new initiative involves just three African countries but experts expect the effort to grow - pushing companies to change their practices. "The issue here is multinational tax avoidance," said Martin Hearson, a tax expert who wrote the ActionAid report criticizing SABMiller. "And it needs a multinational approach." (See full text of report [Calling time: why SABMiller should stop dodging taxes in Africa](#)) (AP)

TWO) - MEDITERRANEAN UNION WANTS TO JOIN 'ARAB SPRING', SAYS MOROCCAN BOSS

L'Union pour la Méditerranée (UPM), projet né au départ pour créer une dynamique de paix au Proche-Orient, veut prendre part au printemps arabe, mais sans pour autant "donner des certificats de démocratie", assure mardi son nouveau secrétaire général Youssef Amrani. M. Amrani prend ses fonctions mardi à Barcelone, en présence notamment du chef de la diplomatie française Alain Juppé, dont le pays a soutenu cette candidature. "En 2008 (quand l'UPM a été créée), la situation était totalement différente. Aujourd'hui les réformes et la modernisation démocratique sont à l'ordre du jour dans la majorité des pays" de cette région, souligne M. Amrani, jusqu'alors secrétaire général du ministère marocain des Affaires étrangères, dans un entretien à El Pais. "L'UPM doit travailler et proposer des projets dans le domaine de la démocratie et de la société civile", affirme-t-il. Mais, face à la répression menée par des pays comme la Syrie, "ni l'UPM ni aucune autre organisation internationale n'est en position de donner des certificats de démocratie. L'époque où l'Occident pouvait dicter les critères d'acceptation d'un pays est finie". Interrogé sur son "premier objectif" à ce poste, le diplomate répond: "consolider l'institution, qu'elle soit respectée, utile, qu'elle mette en pratique des politiques et des projets afin que l'espace euro-méditerranéen soit une réalité". "Intégration régionale et démocratie doivent aller de pair en Méditerranée, comme cela a été le cas en Europe", dit-il, et dans ce domaine "l'UPM peut jouer

un rôle important". Face au conflit arabo-israélien, l'organisation revendique aussi son utilité: "l'UPM n'est pas le cadre pour négocier la paix, mais c'est l'unique lieu de rencontre entre toutes les parties du conflit". L'UPM, créée le 13 juillet 2008, compte 43 membres dont, outre les pays de l'Union européenne, la Turquie, Israël et les pays arabes riverains de la Méditerranée. Au plan politique, le conflit israélo-palestinien a obéré tout progrès dans son action. L'organisation ambitionne de donner un nouveau souffle à la coopération euro-méditerranéenne lancée en 1995 à Barcelone et restée lettre morte. (AFP)

THREE) - EU VERY WORRIED BY SOUTH KORDOFAN CLASHES

L'Union européenne s'est dite mardi "très préoccupée" par la poursuite des combats au Soudan entre l'armée et des milices pro-sudistes dans l'Etat du Kordofan-Sud, à la lisière entre les deux futurs pays, et a demandé un cessez-le-feu rapide. Lors d'un entretien lundi à Bruxelles avec le chef de la diplomatie soudanaise, Ali Karti, "la Haute représentante (de l'UE pour les Affaires étrangères, Catherine Ashton) a dit être très préoccupée par les informations sur la situation au Kordofan-Sud, particulièrement en ce qui concerne les conséquences sur les civils", indique un communiqué de l'UE. "Elle a appelé les parties à conclure le plus vite possible un accord de cessez-le-feu et d'autoriser l'accès des organisations humanitaires" dans la région, ajoute-t-il. L'UE est prête à continuer à aider tant le Nord que le Sud du Soudan, a estimé Mme Ashton. Elle a aussi jugé que la sécession imminente du Sud du pays constituait "une opportunité pour le Nord d'ouvrir un nouveau chapitre dans les relations entre le Soudan et l'UE", à condition que la question du Kordofan-Sud soit réglée. Le Sud-Soudan s'apprête à devenir le 9 juillet indépendant après cinq décennies de conflit avec le Nord. Mais un certain nombre de questions clés doivent être réglées. La coopération de l'UE avec le Nord du Soudan est compliquée par le refus du président soudanais Omar el-Béchir, recherché par la Cour pénale internationale (CPI) pour génocide et crimes de guerre, de ratifier la révision de l'accord de Cotonou qui permet à l'UE de verser son aide à la coopération pour le développement. (AFP)

FOUR) - AQ MAGHREB ATTACKS MAURITANIA MILITARY BASE

Des éléments d'Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (Aqmi), ont attaqué mardi après-midi une base de l'armée mauritanienne près de Bassiknou, dans le sud-est de la Mauritanie à proximité de la frontière avec le Mali, a appris l'AFP de source militaire. "Plusieurs véhicules de terroristes ont participé à l'attaque, l'armée nationale qui les suivait depuis quelque temps les attendait et a pris l'initiative sur eux", a affirmé cette source sous couvert de l'anonymat, en précisant que l'aviation est intervenue pour mettre fin à l'attaque. **20 ATTACKERS KILLED** (AFP) - Une vingtaine de membres d'Al-Qaïda au Maghreb islamique (Aqmi) ont été tués mardi lors de l'attaque qu'ils ont menée contre une base de l'armée mauritanienne dans le sud-est de la Mauritanie, a appris l'AFP de source militaire à Nouakchott. Quatre militaires mauritaniens ont également été blessés lors de cette attaque menée près de Bassiknou et ont été admis à l'hôpital de cette ville en fin d'après-midi, a pour sa part indiqué à l'AFP une source hospitalière. (AFP)

FIVE) – SOUTH AFRICA: SCIENTISTS FIND GREEN METHOD TO PURIFY TOXIC WATER

South African scientists have developed an environmentally friendly method to clean highly toxic water and convert it into drinkable water. Once available commercially, the method could drastically reduce the negative impact industry has on water pollution worldwide.

Called eutectic freeze crystallisation, the technique freezes acidic water – or brine – to produce potable or drinking water as well as useful salts, such as sodium and calcium sulphate.

Alison Lewis, professor for chemical engineering at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, who has led the research since 2007, claims 99.9 percent of the polluted water can be reused after applying the new technique. Unlike other water cleaning methods, it practically doesn't produce any toxic waste.

"It's an environmentally friendly and cost-effective technology that can be used pretty much in all industrial sectors that pollute water and thus produce brine," explains Lewis. This includes sectors like mining, the oil and gas industry, chemical industry, paper processing or sewerage.

The simultaneous separation and purification method is based on bringing the contaminated water temperature down to reach its eutectic point – the lowest possible temperature of solidification. At this point, toxins crystallise to form salts and sink to the ground, while the clean water turns into ice, floating on the surface.

"By its nature, ice is the purest form of water because it repels any impurities. It's actually very simple," explains Lewis. "The method is ecologically significant because it can turn toxic waste into a useful product." Industrial firms in South Africa, but also in Germany, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia have already expressed interest in the new approach, she says.

The water purification method has also received support from the South African Water Research Commission.

"Eutectic freeze crystallisation is a brilliant water recycling method that is superior to all existing methods for cleaning toxic water," confirms the commission's research manager Dr. Jo Burgess.

Up until now, industrially polluted water is purified using two methods: the brine is either stored in huge evaporation ponds, which bring the danger of ground water pollution, or through evaporation-based crystallisation method, that uses huge amounts of electricity. Eutectic freeze crystallisation, however, uses six times less electricity than the conventional evaporation method, says Lewis.

"In addition, both existing methods leave toxic waste products behind and are therefore not ecologically sustainable," notes Burgess. Conventional methods produce poisonous solids, the accumulation of all toxins in the brine, that then need to be disposed of correctly.

Eutectic freeze crystallisation, in contrast, produces 99 percent usable products – clean water and pure salts. "It is therefore completely environmentally friendly," says Lewis. She points out that companies can make additional revenue from selling those salts, hoping this will be an additional incentive to use the new method. Recycling scarce water resources also makes economic sense. A report of the Green Economy Initiative (GEI) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – which assists governments in shaping policies, investments and spending towards a range of green sectors, including clean technologies, industry, renewable energies and water services – shows that every dollar invested in safe water, creates health, social and ecological "revenue" worth three to 34 dollars.

"Investing in clean water will pay multiple dividends," promises UNEP executive director Achim Steiner.

"Meeting the wastewater challenge is not a luxury but a prudent, practical and transformative act, able to boost public health, secure the sustainability of natural resources and trigger employment in better, more intelligent water management."

In South Africa, eutectic freeze crystallisation could be used in the mining sector, which has for decades produced more brine than companies can recycle. Mining is the most important sector of the economy of the country, which is rich in gold, platinum, diamonds and coal. For years, the polluted water has been stored all across the country in huge evaporation ponds.

"The problem is that we produce much more brine than we can evaporate. And even if we succeeded to evaporate it all, non-recyclable waste materials would remain. Evaporation ponds are therefore not a sustainable, ecological solution," warns Burgess.

Eutectic freeze crystallisation could save the South African government huge sums of money. The department of environmental affairs recently announced it needs at least 30 million dollars to drain brine from only the biggest mining areas around country's main city Johannesburg.

Acid mine water is standing in the canals of Gauteng, the province in which Johannesburg is located, only 500 metres below the surface and its disposal should be made top priority, warned environment minister Edna Molewa.

Unfortunately, it might take another four to six years until the eutectic freeze crystallisation method will be available for use by private industry. Lewis' research team plans to build a pilot site later this year. The 1.3 million dollar project is supposed to become operational within the next two to three years and will be able to purify one cubic meter of brine per hour. After the pilot stage, it will take another two to three years to develop the technology for industry use.

SIX) – VIOLENCE, DROUGHT CREATE TRAGEDY IN SOMALIA, SAYS UNHCR

Les violences en Somalie, auxquelles s'est ajoutée une grave sécheresse, ont provoqué le déplacement de 135.000 personnes depuis le début de l'année, créant une "tragédie humaine inimaginable", a estimé mardi l'ONU. "Les violences incessantes associées à une sécheresse dévastatrice ont forcé plus de 135.000 Somaliens à fuir cette année", a déclaré un porte-parole du [Haut commissariat de l'ONU aux réfugiés](#) (HCR), Melissa Fleming, lors d'un point de presse. Rien qu'en juin, quelque 54.000 personnes ont fui au Kenya et en Ethiopie, soit trois fois plus qu'en mai. Cette "sécheresse, combinée avec une violence rampante dans le sud et le centre du pays, est en train de transformer une des pires crises humanitaires de la planète en une tragédie humaine d'une proportion inimaginable", a insisté Mme Fleming. Désormais, "un quart de la population somalienne de 7,5 millions de personnes soit est déplacé (à l'intérieur du pays), soit vit à l'extérieur du pays en

tant que réfugié", a-t-elle expliqué. L'agence onusienne est particulièrement préoccupée par l'état dans lequel arrivent ces dernières semaines les réfugiés dans les pays voisins, après un périple de plusieurs jours, voire semaines, de marche durant lequel ils peinent à se nourrir. "Plus de 50% des enfants somaliens arrivant en Ethiopie sont en état sérieux de malnutrition", a souligné Mme Fleming, précisant que la proportion atteint 30 à 40% de ceux qui se réfugient au Kenya. "Nous avons de plus en plus d'informations sur des enfants de moins de 5 ans mourant de faim et d'épuisement durant le trajet", a-t-elle ajouté, expliquant également que beaucoup d'autres meurent dans les 24 heures après leur arrivée malgré les soins qui leur sont prodigués. Alors que les violences en Somalie rendent les activités des agences humanitaires pratiquement impossibles, les réfugiés ont raconté au HCR qu'ils avaient épuisé toutes leurs ressources avant de se décider à partir. (See [details](#)) (AFP)

SEVEN) – 197 SOMALI MIGRANTS KILLED AS BOAT SINKS OFF SUDAN COAST

A boat packed with refugees bound for Saudi Arabia sunk off the Sudanese coast, killing 197 people, Sudanese media linked to the government said on Tuesday. Only three people were rescued, the state-linked news agency Sudanese Media Center said, quoting officials in Port Sudan. (Reuters)

EIGHT) – KENYA: BUDGET CUSHIONS AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AMIDST STAGGERING INFLATION

As the country's inflation rate hits a staggering 14.5 percent – compared to 4.5 percent in December 2010 - Kenyans are struggling to afford basic commodities like maize, amid a shortage of the staple food.

Although the country produces its own maize, because of climate change and the resultant drought in some parts of the country, most farmers are only harvesting their crop for their own consumption.

"One packet of maize flour has shot to almost two dollars when we always bought it for slightly above a dollar. Without maize flour, the country is facing a severe food crisis that has not been experienced since the 90's," explains Tim Njiru, a maize trader in Eldoret, Rift Valley.

But with a recent budget allocation of almost 112 million dollars for agriculture, maize shortages may soon become less frequent in years to come. For the first time in the country's history, the agricultural sector has received a budget allocation of almost 112 million dollars. The allocation to agriculture leaped from a partly four percent to nine percent.

At nine percent, the budget allocation is only one percentage shy of meeting the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) policy framework. CAADP requires that countries signatory to the agreement allocate at least 10 percent of the national budget to agriculture.

Until now the sector has been underfunded despite its significance to sustainable human development, a situation that has further been complicated by extreme and unpredictable climatic conditions. Kenya's economy is predominantly dependent on agriculture, according to the ministry of agriculture; the sector directly contributes an estimated 26 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and an additional 25 percent indirectly.

According to Titus Warimi, an agricultural officer in the Rift Valley region, which is the country's breadbasket, "insufficient funds hamper research into various agricultural products. With the persistent and drastic climatic changes, it is imperative to venture into crop options that can flourish under the circumstances."

According to Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM) the country's main coordinating body that brings together various stakeholders to ensure that the country is food secure, the changing weather patterns will continue to impact heavily on the country's ability to feed its people.

"It will be difficult for the country to make any money from the agricultural sectors if farmers are hardly making any money," adds Warimi.

Ruth Ngige, a small-scale farmer in central Kenya echoes Warimi's sentiments. "Farmers are plowing back much of their profits into buying farm inputs, this is due to lack of subsidies in fertilizers and seeds. The products then become too expensive and customers therefore buy only what they really need to survive," she says

It is because of the importance of agriculture on the continent that the African Union's (AU) NEPAD established CAADP in July 2003.

Under CAADP, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa has been hard at work to ensure that member states move towards the attainment of Millennium Development Goal One (MDG1) to cut hunger and poverty by half by 2015 and to ensure environmental sustainability.

CAADP is the highest policy framework for the development of agriculture in Africa and its overall goal is to help African countries reach a higher path of economic growth through agriculture led development which eliminates

hunger, reduces poverty and food insecurity and enables expansion of exports.

"Eighteen member states have initiated the CAADP process by nominating CAADP focal points and 13 of these members, Kenya included, have launched the CAADP process," explains Professor Mary Abukutsa-Onyango, a lecturer in Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, and a pioneer of extensive research into traditional vegetables like African eggplant, nightshades and cowpeas.

The Kenya CAADP Compact is a strategy document that commits government to implementing the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS).

"The objective of the strategy is to fundamentally restructure the sector to move from subsistence to commercial agribusiness," Abukutsa explains.

ASDS's main objective is to achieve an agricultural growth rate of seven percent per year over the next five years. It is therefore a strategy that works towards a food secure nation.

"The government has already submitted its medium-term investment plan to the AU/NEPAD for review and plans to submit its proposal to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), which is a multilateral mechanism to assist in the implementation of pledges made by G8 at the Aquila summit in July 2009," Abukutsa says.

In 2008, the G20 under president Obama's leadership established GAFSP to assist countries develop and implement their long-term food security investment programs. The primary objective of GAFSP is to address the lack of sufficient funds of country and regional agriculture as well as food insecurity towards meeting MDG 1.

"Since its launch GAFSP has pledged amounts of up to 925 million dollars, as at February 2011 and has further approved and disbursed grants totaling 321 million dollars to eight countries (six are from Africa but Kenya is not among them)," Abukutsa clarifies.

NINE) – NORTH AND SOUTH SUDAN DELAY TALKS UNTIL AFTER SECESSION

Leaders of north and south Sudan agreed on Monday to continue talks on a series of disputes after the south's impending secession, officials said -- a move that will disappoint Western countries hoping for a quick deal. Sudan's oil-producing south is due to declare independence on Saturday -- a split that was voted for in a referendum promised in a 2005 north-south peace deal. The north and south, which fought a civil war for decades, have yet to agree on the position of their shared border and how they will manage oil revenues. The north's army and fighters with links to the south have also been clashing in Southern Kordofan, the north's main oil state, in recent days, according to the United Nations. Western governments have kept up pressure on both sides to resolve at least some of their disputes before the partition, fearing the eruption of another full-blown conflict that could reverberate far beyond Sudan. South Sudan's president, Salva Kiir, met President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who will lead only the north after the split, in a conference in Addis Ababa organised by IGAD (the [Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa](#)). "(IGAD) strongly commends President Bashir and ... Salva Kiir for signing the framework agreement for continuing negotiations after July 9, 2011, for the resolution of all outstanding issues in the spirit of the CPA (the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement)," IGAD said in a [statement](#). It praised both sides for the deals they had made, including an agreement to deploy Ethiopian U.N. peacekeepers in Abyei, a disputed region that has seen north-south fighting. But it said it was concerned about the lack of progress in other areas, including discussions over splitting debts and how the south will pay the north to transport its oil to Sudan's only sea port, on the north's Red Sea coast. Khartoum stands to lose about a third of Sudan's total landmass -- and about three-quarters of its known oil reserves -- when the south secedes. Under the terms of the 2005 accord, the north has been receiving half of the revenues from oil drilled in the south. But after the split, the south will own all the oil drilled on its territory. It will have to pay the north pipeline fees to transport it, but these are likely to come to significantly less than the revenues the north has been receiving until now, with consequences for an economy that has relied heavily on oil. The south has said Bashir will attend its Independence Day celebrations in its capital Juba on July 9, a fact that could embarrass any Western dignitaries at the event. (Reuters)

TEN) – SOUTH SUDAN: EQUITABLE OIL DEAL NEEDED FOR PEACE

The sharing of oil between North and South Sudan needs to be urgently addressed otherwise conflict between the two regions will escalate and could possibly lead to civil war, according to government officials and rights organisations.

Ambassador James Morgan, who represented Sudan in Indonesia until June, said matters related to oil need

an urgent solution.

"There is no oil in South Sudan now for a week, because the North blocked the pipeline before they started bombing Abyei. Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir is insisting on a 50/50 percent share of the oil. But we just want to pay rent for the pipeline and the use of Port Sudan, which we use for our oil export," says Morgan. South Sudan produces 85 percent of the oil from Sudan. On Jul. 9 South Sudan will celebrate the birth of a new nation, the 55th nation in Africa, and will separate from North Sudan.

The speaker of South Sudan's Legislative Assembly, James Igga, will proclaim the independence of the Republic of South Sudan, then the flag of Sudan will be lowered and the flag of the new republic hoisted. President Salva Kiir will sign a new transitional constitution into force and then take his oath of office as president of the new country. The country will be divided into 10 states, all to be headed by governors. But as South Sudan prepares to celebrate independence, the issue of oil sharing and the resolution of the conflicts in Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states are yet to be addressed.

Global Witness, an organisation which has analysed several trends regarding Sudan, says there needs to be greater transparency in Sudan over its oil revenues to help preserve peace.

"The most important thing about southern secession is what will happen to the oil revenues," says Rosie Sharpe from Global Witness, which released a report on the country's wealth.

"Without a new, equitable oil deal between the north and south, it is difficult to see how Southern separation will pass off peacefully," she adds.

"A new oil deal between north and south is essential to prevent a return to full-scale war. There has been much mistrust over whether the current revenue distribution system has been implemented fairly," the report says.

The report also states that currently Sudanese citizens cannot be sure how much oil their country produces and therefore cannot be sure that the oil wealth-sharing agreement is being implemented fairly.

"It is therefore important that these issues are addressed," the report states.

The Sudanese government and China National Petroleum Corporation – the region's main oil company – have not adequately accounted for discrepancies in published production figures.

Since the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), North and South Sudan split the country's oil revenues equally but analysts estimate that almost three-quarters of the daily 500,000 barrels of oil comes from the south.

North Sudan's economy will suffer with South Sudan's independence. According to Global Witness, oil revenues accounted for 50 percent of domestic revenue and 93 percent of Sudan's exports in 2009. Already prices for food and basic goods are rising, as the government scales down on subsidies it feels it will no longer be able to afford.

Publicly, the northern authorities are optimistic and exude confidence. Nafie Ali Nafie, a close confidant of Sudan's Al-Bashir and a former head of national security, said that those who spread rumors that the economy in the North would collapse due to South's secession were "greatly deluded".

But South Sudan's reliance on oil, which provides 98 percent of its revenue, makes it vulnerable too. Since the CPA was signed South Sudan received almost 10 billion dollars in oil revenue. But many people say they have seen little benefit from the petrodollars, and South Sudan remains one of the least developed regions on earth. If the oil stops flowing, South Sudan's economy would collapse. The 85 percent of its people who depend on agriculture might not be directly affected, but the state would be unable to pay its soldiers and instability would undoubtedly be the result.

So it is paramount that oil keeps flowing after separation. South Sudan's government has said it will respect deals that have already been signed and some oil executives have already moved to South Sudan's capital, Juba, from Khartoum.

But in the long term the South will need to diversify its economy away from oil. "With additional discoveries, it is estimated that output will peak in the 2011-12 year and then gradually decline thereafter and is likely to run out in 20 to 30 years," says Dirk-Jan Omtzigt, the Referendum Taskforce economic advisor.

There is not enough electricity in South Sudan but other businesses are booming. The construction industry leads the way and there are a number of buildings being erected in the region.

Leonard Moss, a civil engineer says he is happy with independence because it will now give the South Sudanese an opportunity to enjoy the proceeds from their natural resources.

"Our country has a lot of national parks and good rains, we shall prosper if everyone plays his role," he says. But a visit to shops owned by North Sudanese in downtown Juba two days before independence shows that many are not optimistic and is scared of being kicked out of the new country.

Abu Masri, a North Sudanese who sells spare parts, separation will mean being expelled by the South Sudanese who feel the North has trampled upon them. He thinks that the assurance from Kiir that there will be no discrimination against North Sudanese is not enough to pacify people.

"We as traders not only fear negative reprisals like being forced to return to Khartoum, but also the possibility

the Southerners will take most of Sudan's oil with them," says Masri forlornly.

But Dr. Barnabas Mariel Benjamin, South Sudan's minister of information and broadcasting is upbeat. He is urging people to come out and celebrate the country's new-found freedom.

"It will be a historic occasion for all our people who have travelled a long and difficult road to the birth of this nation. We all know we face many challenges ahead but we will face them as united, peaceful and independent and build a stable and prosperous country. Outstanding issues will be negotiated in a separate process, with the support of the international community," Benjamin says.

ELEVEN) – NATO URGES UN TO TAKE OVER LIBYA OPERATION AFTER GADDAFI IS 'OUSTED'

L'ONU devra prendre le relais de l'Otan en Libye après le départ du dirigeant libyen Mouammar Kadhafi, a estimé mardi le secrétaire général de l'Alliance, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, lors d'une visite en Russie. "Nous ne prévoyons pas que l'Otan joue le rôle principal dans l'après-Kadhafi. Nous voudrions que l'ONU prenne le relais pour aider le peuple libyen pendant la période transitoire vers la démocratie", a déclaré M. Rasmussen au cours d'une conférence de presse à Saint-Pétersbourg (nord-ouest). "L'unique moyen de répondre aux aspirations du peuple libyen est le départ de Kadhafi", a-t-il ajouté soulignant que la feuille de route élaborée par l'opposition libyenne "était digne de confiance". Lundi, le chef du Conseil national de transition (CNT) a estimé qu'il n'y avait "aucune chance, actuellement ou dans l'avenir, pour que Kadhafi reste en Libye" tout en reconnaissant qu'une telle offre lui avait auparavant été soumise. Le colonel Kadhafi, au pouvoir depuis presque 42 ans, répète lui à l'envi qu'il ne cédera pas à la pression militaro-diplomatique. L'opération de l'Otan en Libye a déjà duré plus longtemps que certains l'avaient anticipé quand l'Alliance en a pris la direction le 31 mars, prenant le relais d'une coalition occidentale qui avaient lancé les premières salves deux semaines plus tôt. La lassitude et la discorde se font sentir au sein de l'Alliance après trois mois de frappes qui n'ont pas réussi à déloger le colonel Kadhafi et alors qu'aucune issue ne paraît imminente dans ce conflit que les alliés restent pourtant déterminés à gagner. (AFP)

TWELVE) – DIPLOMATIC MEETINGS IN TURKEY ABOUT LIBYA

Le chef de la diplomatie turque Ahmet Davutoglu recevra mardi à Ankara des représentants de l'ONU, de la rébellion libyenne et du groupe de contact sur la Libye, au surlendemain d'une visite à Benghazi, la "capitale" rebelle, a affirmé un diplomate turc de haut niveau. M. Davutoglu aura un entretien bilatéral avec l'envoyé spécial de l'ONU pour la Libye, le Jordanien Abdel Ilah al-Khatib, selon cette source s'exprimant sous le couvert de l'anonymat. La rencontre survient alors que M. Davutoglu a affirmé dimanche à Benghazi que la Turquie reconnaissait désormais le Conseil national de transition (CNT), la direction politique de la rébellion, comme étant "le représentant légitime du peuple libyen". Le chef de la diplomatie turque participera également à une réunion trilatérale avec son homologue des Emirats arabes unis Abdullah bin Zayed et le numéro deux de la rébellion libyenne, Mahmoud Jibril. "Ils discuteront des détails de la prochaine réunion du groupe de contact sur la Libye, qui doit avoir lieu le 15 juillet à Istanbul", a indiqué le diplomate turc. Le groupe de contact international sur la Libye, créé à Londres le 29 mars, comprend tous les pays participant à la campagne de l'Otan contre le régime de Mouammar Kadhafi. La réunion d'Istanbul sera la quatrième du genre. Les Emirats arabes unis avaient accueilli la précédente rencontre en juin. La Turquie a renforcé au cours des derniers jours son activité diplomatique et durci le ton à l'égard du régime de Tripoli. Ankara a annoncé samedi le retrait définitif de l'ambassadeur de Turquie à Tripoli, Salim Levent Sahinkaya, qui avait quitté la capitale libyenne en mars en raison des combats. Le même jour, Le Journal officiel a publié un décret gouvernemental adaptant dans le droit turc les sanctions décidées en février par l'ONU contre Mouammar Kadhafi, sa famille et des proches de son régime. Les sanctions visent notamment la Libyan Foreign Bank, dont les parts --62,37%-- dans la banque turco-libyenne A&T Bank ont été saisies et placées sous le contrôle du Fonds d'assurances des dépôts d'épargne, selon un communiqué d'A&T Bank diffusé lundi. (AFP)

THIRTEEN) – GADDAFI SEEKING A WAY OUT, SAYS RUSSIAN PAPER

Muammar Gaddafi is sounding out the possibility of handing over power, a Russian newspaper said on Tuesday, but the Libyan government denied it was in talks about the veteran leader stepping down. Five

months into a conflict that has embroiled NATO and become the bloodiest of the "Arab Spring" uprisings, there has been a flurry of reports about talks on Gaddafi ending his 41 years in power in exchange for security guarantees. Russia's respected Kommersant newspaper based its story on a high-level source in Moscow. But the report was denied in Tripoli and Italy expressed scepticism. "Information about negotiations about Gaddafi stepping down or seeking a safe refuge inside or outside the country is simply untrue," Libyan government spokesman Moussa Ibrahim told Reuters. "Gaddafi is not negotiable, this is our position of principle, and the future of Libya will be decided by Libyans. Gaddafi is an historical symbol, and Libyans will die to defend him," said Ibrahim. "The talks were about a ceasefire, humanitarian aid, and the start of a dialogue between Libyans, and then the fourth stage which is a transition period over the political change that will be decided by Libyans," he said. Some analysts say that Gaddafi is starting to contemplate an exit plan as shortages of cash and fuel, the NATO bombing campaign and rebel military pressure, shorten the odds on him being able to hold on to power. But Western diplomats caution that it is in Gaddafi's interests to send out conflicting signals about possible deals, in the hope that it will sow confusion among the rebels and the fragile Western alliance trying to push him out. **"SEEKING GUARANTEES"** A respected Russian newspaper reported that Gaddafi is sounding out the possibility of a way out. "The colonel (Gaddafi) is sending signals that he is prepared to relinquish power in exchange for security guarantees," Kommersant newspaper quoted what it called a high-level source in the Russian leadership as saying. The report came a day after Russia hosted South African President Jacob Zuma -who has tried to broker a peace deal for Libya- and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, for talks which focussed on Libya. After his return from Russia, Zuma's office issued a statement saying he had asked NATO to persuade the rebel National Transitional Council to come to the negotiating table. "The meeting was very successful, and I am confident that it will contribute significantly to reaching a solution that will bring peace and stability in Libya," the statement said. On Monday, the Libyan government had said it held talks in Italy, Norway and Egypt with senior figures in the opposition about finding a peaceful way out of the conflict. But the Italian government denied any talks had taken place on its soil and expressed scepticism that Gaddafi's administration was sincere about talks. (Reuters)

FOURTEEN) –UNDER INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE, FRANCE ENDS AIR DROPS OF ARMS TO LIBYA REBELS

La France a mis fin à ses parachutages d'armes aux rebelles libyens, qui ont suscité des divisions dans la coalition alliée contre Mouammar Kadhafi, jugeant par ailleurs que "l'impatience" des insurgés à fondre sur Tripoli se heurte à un "principe de réalité". En Libye "émerge une organisation politique distincte de celle de Tripoli", a relevé mardi devant quelques journalistes le ministre de la Défense, Gérard Longuet. "C'est la raison pour laquelle les parachutages ne sont plus nécessaires - ils l'ont été il y a plusieurs semaines de cela - parce que des territoires organisent leur autonomie", leur permettant désormais de s'approvisionner auprès de parties tierces, a-t-il ajouté. "Cette autonomie leur permet d'établir des relations avec des partenaires extérieurs, y compris lorsqu'il s'agit de s'équiper en auto-défense. Mais cela, ce n'est pas l'affaire de la coalition et ce n'est pas l'affaire de la résolution 1973", a précisé le ministre de la Défense. Paris avait reconnu fin juin avoir livré des armes individuelles, "fusils-mitrailleurs, lance-roquettes", aux rebelles libyens. Cette mesure a suscité les réserves de pays alliés, comme la Grande-Bretagne, et une vive opposition de la Russie pour qui les résolutions de l'ONU sur la Libye sont "interprétées n'importe comment". M. Longuet a aussi laissé entrevoir des doutes sur la capacité de la rébellion à mener une grande offensive sur Tripoli, fief de Mouammar Kadhafi(AFP)

FIFTEEN) – RED CROSS ALARMED BY SITUATION IN LIBYA, FEARS WORSE

Health care and food supplies are deteriorating in Libya, but the Gaddafi government has managed to keep paying wages and subsidies in areas under its control, the International Committee of the Red Cross said on Tuesday. The independent aid agency voiced concern the humanitarian situation could deteriorate further if fighting breaks out in the capital, Tripoli. "Frankly, today we are in a situation where the ICRC is very alarmed by the situation, which is very dynamic and could become even more violent than today," Paul Castella, head of the ICRC delegation in Tripoli, told a news briefing. "We are preparing to respond to urgent needs if combat erupts because we see the frontlines keep moving and fighting is ongoing," he said. The shifting frontlines near Misrata and the Nafusa mountain region of western Libya, southwest of Tripoli, have forced more families to flee their homes, said Castella. "We don't think that the frontlines will stabilise anytime soon." The ICRC is

helping hospitals treat wounded from the Nafusa mountain areas and has delivered surgical and other medical supplies to Misrata, it said in a statement. U.N. aid workers who reached four towns in the Nafusa mountain area found that people lacked food and had sold off most livestock, the World Food Programme said on Tuesday. The ICRC, the only aid agency to have access to virtually all of Libya, said the health sector was its priority. It has also visited nearly 1,000 detainees captured by government forces and rebels during the conflict now in its fifth month. The ICRC was on alert for any sign the government of Muammar Gaddafi, being pounded by NATO allies supporting rebels fighting to topple his 41-year-old government, could no longer make payments or ensure food supplies, according to Castella. The risk of a food crisis exists in most areas of Libya which imported up to 70 percent of its food before the war. "We haven't identified a food crisis in government-controlled areas. ... Every family receives food subsidies, which are of great value, for a month," he said. "Government wages are still paid, including to those who are displaced, through the banking system. This still works. "So even if people lose their jobs, they still receive their wages as far as I understood, and this is on top of the in-kind support they receive and in addition the pension system is still working as well," Castella said. But all Libyans are severely traumatised by the bombing and fighting, and many women have stopped nursing their babies out of fear they will transmit their anxiety, he said. "There has been a huge psychological impact on the whole population which never thought they would see their country at war," he said. (Reuters)

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