

# AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL

## TANZANIA

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### Troubled isles

The union between the mainland and Zanzibar – 40 years old this week – remains a political hotspot, mainly because the ruling CCM has rigged two successive elections on the islands. Some hope that former OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim of Zanzibar will take over from President Mkapa next year and negotiate a new settlement with the opposition CUF.

## MALAWI

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### Bingu the favourite

The ruling UDF's Bingu wa Mutharika is tipped to win presidential elections on 18 May, but due more to opposition splits than on his own merit. Outgoing President Muluzi's imposition of Mutharika as UDF flagbearer prompted several high-level defections but not enough to dent his chances.

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### Brazzaville breakdown

Peace talks have run out of steam, key politicians remain in exile and veterans of the ruling PCT resent the power of the family circle around President Sassou-Nguesso. The most positive news is Finance Minister Andély's offer to audit state oil earnings in a bid to win debt relief. Tough negotiations lie ahead.

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A faction of the ruling ZANU-PF believes that it should turn down foreign food because it suggests that the government's land resettlement policy has failed.

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### Mass murder

#### Ten years after Rwanda's genocide, the NIF regime kills and displaces tens of thousands of civilians in Darfur – with impunity

Civilians in Darfur continue to die as a result of the National Islamic Front regime's ethnic cleansing and in the absence of serious diplomatic pressure. United Nations Secretary General **Kofi Annan** has warned that international military intervention might be required to stop the slaughter in Darfur, while senior UN officials refer to the NIF regime's scorched earth policy as 'genocide' or 'ethnic cleansing'. Yet last week the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNOHCHR) in Geneva again refused to recommend strong action against Khartoum and suppressed its own highly critical investigation, which found that government agents had killed, raped and tortured civilians.

On 23 April, the NIF exploited anti-Americanism to defeat a call from the United States and European Union to reinstate a Special Rapporteur (SR) on Human Rights. At 2003's annual session, Khartoum had successfully lobbied for the removal as SR of the **German** lawyer and former Interior Minister **Gerhard Baum**, an obvious candidate for enquiries in Darfur. The OHCHR has lost much of its remaining credibility. African members voted as a bloc; **South Africa** persuaded Khartoum's **Eritrean** foe to vote against an SR; **Uganda** alone broke ranks by abstaining (AC Vol 45 No 5); some African diplomats confided that they were unhappy.

**Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mauritania, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe** all voted for Khartoum's position, as did Sudan itself. So did non-African Arab members – **Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia**. The EU, led by **France**, arguing that something was better than nothing, changed sides, voting for a 'independent expert', whom insiders say will be much easier for Khartoum to obstruct.

#### Khartoum's 'reign of terror'

The OHCHR had sent a team, under UN Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs **Jan Egeland**, to investigate. It spent 5-14 April in **Chad**, interviewing some of the 120,000-plus Darfur refugees and waiting to go into Sudan. The regime refused access until 20 April, when the team was due to present its findings. Acting Commissioner **Bertrand Ramcharan** then delayed discussion of the report: two days later the vote for an SR was defeated. Khartoum offered dates when Egeland, who had slammed the NIF for ethnic cleansing, could not attend; World Food Programme chief **Jim Morris** has taken his place.

The report accuses the NIF of running a 'reign of terror' in Darfur, attacking civilians to forcibly displace or kill them and of working in 'close coordination' with the Arab militias known as 'Janjaweed'. Insiders say the suppression of the report, of which AC has a copy, was the trade-off for UN access.

Khartoum's forces are widely reported to be digging up mass graves to hide evidence and flying militiamen out of the region. Another UN team has gone to assess humanitarian needs; the UN and USA (and a few non-governmental organisations) have people discreetly in Darfur, who warn of catastrophic rates of death and illness from injury and disease while, with thousands of subsistence farmers killed and perhaps a million people displaced internally, delays in planting in May-June compound the threat of famine. Refugees in neighbouring Chad are eating wild famine food and wells are running dry, said the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees on 27 April.

None of this is a by-product of war: it is deliberate NIF policy, long used in the Nuba Mountains and South, to change the region's demography. The aim is to kill as many people as possible and drive the remainder from their lands, destroying the fabric of rural society and making space for 'Arab' and pro-government settlers. Common tactics include aerial bombardment and helicopter gunship attacks on villages where there is no sign of rebel activity; using proxy militias to torch villages and exterminate villagers, slaughtering livestock and poisoning wells with corpses to prevent residents returning.

In Darfur, the *Janjaweed* militias even put bullets through the most precious possession, the water bowl. Gang rape of women (often branded afterwards) and children reinforces the terror and helps to produce an 'Arab' next generation. Abduction has been widespread in Darfur, with groups of women flown away by helicopter. The liberal use of aircraft suggests access to fuel and cash, raising questions about Western eagerness to extend debt relief and economic aid to the regime once it signs a deal on the South with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army.

## Algerian bullets

Late last month, an Ilyushin-76 aircraft with clear **Algerian** air force markings unloaded ten tonnes of ammunition at Abéché airport, 170 kilometres from **Chad**'s border with Sudan, say Western diplomatic sources. The ammo was loaded on to trucks that were later seen heading north-east towards the border.

This came less than a fortnight after Chad had arrested several Islamist fighters after a clash in Tibesti on 9-10 March with Algeria's *Groupe Salafiste de Prédication et de Combat*. They had been tracked across the desert by **United States**' satellites (AC Vol 45 Nos 6 & 8). Did President **Idriss Déby** swap Algerian Islamists for support for his fellow Zaghawa fighting Sudan's Islamist regime, as many in the area believe?

Interested governments, which had explained (though rarely condemned) earlier NIF depredations in terms of the war and oil development, spoke of the Darfur conflict largely in terms of competition for scant resources fuelling traditional rivalry between 'Arab' and 'African' tribes. At an October public meeting in the Houses of Parliament, **Britain**'s Special Representative, **Alan Fletcher Goulty**, blamed the 'carrying capacity' of an overpopulated and poverty-stricken area. This month, a senior US diplomat said privately that Khartoum 'did not cause the conflict' but 'one year ago, it chose sides'.

This echoes Western insistence, in the **Kenya** peace talks, on 'equivalence' – moral, political, military – between the NIF and SPLM/A. In Darfur as in the South, the situation is far more complex. The NIF mounts violent attacks on any group it deems seriously threatening. It has done so since seizing power in 1989, from executing army officers in 1990 to bombing Shilluk villagers in 2004 in breach of 2002's cessation of hostilities agreement and displacing 50,000 people. Darfur, with its semi-detached relationship with Khartoum, might not have started a rebellion if the NIF had been able to resist its urge to control the area. It also shows that NIF Islamism is fragmenting Sudan ethnically, rather than uniting it as the propaganda has claimed.

### Arab alliance

In 1987, after a devastating famine that killed perhaps a million people, an 'Arab Alliance' (*Tigamu el Arabi*) grew up, with official encouragement, to oppose the settled non-Arab ethnic groups, the largest being the Fur, Messalit and Zaghawa. Weapons flowed from Chad and **Libya**; skirmishes spread. After the NIF's 1989 coup, with the focus on Khartoum and the South few noticed events in Darfur's 520,000 square kilometres. By 1990, at the height of its 'Salvation Revolution' in Khartoum, the regime was quietly disarming non-Arab Muslim tribes, allowing its Arabic-speaking allies to keep their firearms.

In 2001, it imposed a state of emergency on Darfur, giving legal cover to its abuses. These included trials, often before unqualified judges; many people accused of theft or armed robbery (NIF metaphor for rebellion) were hanged, others received sentences of cross-amputation (right hand, left foot); young girls who said they had been raped were sentenced to stoning to death for adultery.

A Fur self-defence militia, formed in 2000 in the Jebel Marra massif, transformed itself in early 2002 into the Darfur Liberation Front/Army, soon renamed the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A). Within weeks, the Justice and Equality (or Equity) Movement (JEM) surfaced, and was rapidly claimed by Islamists close to the man who made the NIF what it is today, **Hassan Abdullah el Turabi** (AC Vol 45 No 7). Publicly, the SLA and JEM say they cooperate militarily. In the field, relations are poor. SLA sources say the JEM is better at making headlines than war, despite its apparently lush

finances. Many JEM fighters went over to the SLA after Khartoum recaptured the border town of Tine from it in January.

The JEM nevertheless possesses artillery and has been militarily active in Zaghawa territory in north-western Darfur. Its only visible spokesperson lives in France: **Khalil Ibrahim**, a medical doctor who was an advisor to NIF hardliner **El Tayeb Mohamed Kheir** ('Tayeb Sikha': Iron Bar), Darfur Governor in the 1990s and now Security Advisor to President **Omer Hassan Ahmed el Beshir**. He later went to the South with the People's Defence Force militia and is said to have fought there for seven months. He is also believed to be an author of the 'Black Book', in which people seen as close to Hassan el Turabi complained that 'black' Sudanese (i.e. not partly Arab) were disadvantaged by NIF power-brokers. El Turabi himself is Arabophone.

Politically secular, the SLA has joined the opposition National Democratic Alliance. Its Chairman is Fur lawyer **Abdel Wahid Mohamed Ahmed el Nur**, its Secretary General is **Minni Arkou Minnawi** (Zaghawa) and his Deputy is **Mansur** (Messalit). It claims over 10,000 troops, many former soldiers or police. Seen as organised and effective, it has repeatedly defeated NIF forces; it regards their atrocities partly as a response to military defeat. There are almost no reports of human rights abuses by SLA or JEM. The SLA says Darfur should be included in the Kenya peace talks and wants a referendum on autonomy for the region (which was incorporated into Sudan only in 1916). 'Our problem is not the Arabs, it is the government', said **Abdel Lateef Ismail** of the Darfur Centre for Human Rights and Development. 'Are we to stand in the queue and be killed?'

### Secret talks

Abdel Lateef's brother, Commander **Abdo Ismail**, is the SLA representative monitoring the 45-day ceasefire, agreed between government, SLA and JEM on 8 April in N'djamena. Khartoum fought hard to avoid a ceasefire, then worked to move the continuing talks to Addis Ababa, hoping the African Union will limit pressure from the USA and EU. The JEM also wanted the talks moved to 'a neutral capital', accusing Chad of siding with Khartoum. The NIF and JEM held secret talks in London in March. Humanitarian Affairs Minister **Mohamed Youssef** (a Fur) and **El Haj Atta el Manan** (a Shaigi, not from Darfur but formerly Southern Darfur Commissioner) met Khalil and agreed to tackle the issues; the SLA was not invited.

Outside governments turn a blind eye. Washington pulled out all the stops at the Geneva meeting but 'it knew what was happening in Darfur months ago and did nothing', said one source close to the US government, adding that the NIF 'is basically dictating the agenda'. Many Sudanese stress the tactic (and contradiction) of a regime using the peace talks in Kenya to enable it to make war in Darfur. 'The international community, especially the USA and UK and some EU countries, underestimates the ability of the regime to inflict damage internally, regionally and internationally', observed former Darfur Governor **El Tigani Seisi Mohamed Ateem**.

Earlier this month, US officials led by acting Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs **Charles Snyder** were threatening to pull out of the Naivasha talks, complaining they were being 'taken for a ride'. However, pre-election President **George W. Bush** wants a peace deal on the South so badly that his team is now pressuring the non-Muslim SPLM to accept the NIF's version of *Sharia* (Islamic law) in the national capital, even for non-Muslims. The USA has forgotten its May 2003 secret agreement with the SPLM leader, Colonel **John Garang de Mabior**, that Khartoum should be free of *Sharia*; they have now gone over the head of the Kenyan mediator, General **Lazaro Sumbeiywo**, to ask the Nairobi government to press him to push for Islamic law, we hear. The NIF could not ask for more.

## TANZANIA

# Troubled isles

## As the nation drifts quietly towards the polls, trouble looms offshore

As Tanzania this week celebrates 40 years of Union between the mainland and the islands of Zanzibar, the race to succeed President **Benjamin Mkapa** after next year's elections has begun (AC Vol 45 No 1). Mkapa insists the Union demonstrates a capacity for cooperation, yet it remains at the heart of Tanzania's biggest crisis. On paper, the Union has allowed Zanzibar semi-autonomy with its own president, while benefiting from the mainland's economic weight.

Two problems haunt the relationship, though: firstly, that the ruling *Chama cha Mapinduzi* (CCM) has used its overwhelming support on the mainland to bludgeon Zanzibar's opposition Civic United Front in two successive elections; secondly, that Zanzibar's formerly wealthy economy has declined sharply in relation to the mainland's (particularly after the Union government dropped its state socialist ideology in the early 1990s). In particular, state spending on Zanzibar's schools and clinics has decreased, which worsens the irritation towards an imposed CCM administration. Despite these grievances, only a small minority is calling for Zanzibar's secession, but this could change if the succession is badly handled.

For now, CCM barons urge discretion. The veteran guide of the CCM, **Rashidi Kawawa**, discourages even talk about the succession. The party must pick its candidate in eleven months' time and whoever it chooses will almost certainly follow Mkapa next year, when he steps down after two terms. Presidential hopefuls are quietly talking up their chances, while (except in Zanzibar) the 17 opposition parties are, as usual, divided and lack charismatic leadership.

The overall favourite is the experienced diplomat and former Premier **Salim Ahmed Salim**. His long service abroad kept him clear of the corruption which became widespread in the 1970s and damages some other candidates' chances. He has not yet said whether he'll stand; if, as some expect, he persuades another respected former Premier, Judge **Joseph Warioba**, to run as his vice-presidential team-mate, they could be unbeatable. Salim is from Pemba Island and Warioba from the populous Sukuma region. Salim is back on the CCM's Central and National Executive committees and heads the Nyerere Foundation, a useful link to *Mwalimu*'s heritage.

### The other contenders

- Vice-President **Ali Mohamed Shein**, from Zanzibar, was picked from nowhere by Mkapa in July 2001 after the death of his predecessor. He has done his work with intelligence and diligence; it is the custom, not the rule, that presidents alternate between mainland and isles.
- **John Malecela**, CCM Vice-President and former Prime Minister, is popular in the party. Its old guard favours him but he is 70.
- Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Minister **Jakaya Kikwete**, from the younger generation, came second to Mkapa (who was backed by the late **Julius Nyerere**) when the party picked its candidate in 1995.
- The energetic Water and Livestock Development Minister, **Edward Lowassa**, a Maasai.
- Prime Minister **Frederick Sumaye**, once an agricultural engineer, was a surprise choice by Mkapa in 1995; he is quiet and effective but has little party backing.

- **John Magufuli**, an articulate, hardworking ex-engineer, has performed well in the difficult Ministry for Works.

- Professor **Mark Mwandosya**, Telecommunications Minister.

- If the time for a female president has arrived, Ambassador **Gertrude Mongella** is internationally known and represents her country in the new African Union parliament.

### Zanzibar, another story

In the election for the islands' presidency, the CCM incumbent, **Amani Karume**, will face **Seif Sharif Hamad**, opposition CUF leader and formerly Chief Minister of Zanzibar. In a free and fair election – the last two were widely regarded as rigged – Hamad would probably win. That could threaten the Union and increase Arab influence, both of which the CCM would do much to avoid.

The CCM, which has ruled Tanzania for 43 years, took shape under Nyerere, the 'Father of the Nation', who resigned the presidency in 1985 but went on leading until his death in 1999. His many errors (later admitted) included the attempt to introduce a **Chinese**-style socialism, which kept the economy back for 25 years until **Ali Hassan Mwinyi** took over in 1985, dismantling the command economy and freeing the private sector – thus opening the door to much grander corruption. His successor Mkapa has further strengthened the economy and fostered foreign investment (AC Vol 45 No 2), especially in the rich but neglected natural resources; the revenue this brings is now trickling down to primary schools and hospitals.

In Zanzibar, though, the legacy of 1964's bloody revolution lingers on and the island economy is dire, since rising production in **India** and **Indonesia** has hit the market for cloves, the sole significant export. The CCM there is backed mainly by descendants of African slaves, the CUF mainly by descendants of the old property-owners. The CCM is itself divided. Former President **Salim Amour** was angry when the party, dominated by mainlanders, rejected his wish for a third term in 2000 and backed Karume as his successor. Last year, Amour's elder brother, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) **Abubakar Amour**, launched a new party, *Safina* (Ark), from which he has since been expelled after allegations of misconduct. The Electoral Commission (EC) has closed down *Safina* because the party could not find the required 200 supporters in ten regions of the Union.

On the mainland, Nyerere damped down religious rivalries, though Muslims complain that Christians get most government jobs. (The colonial education system, which relied upon missionaries, meant that Christians were often better qualified.) In the 1960s, the state banned the East African Muslim Welfare Society. Similar repression followed the killing of Muslims at Mwembechai Mosque in Dar es Salaam in 1998. Muslim spokespeople objected strongly to the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 2002, saying it was directed against Muslims.

Christian-Muslim tension is rising, with encouragement from some clerics and fundamentalists. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dar es Salaam, Cardinal **Polycarp Pengo**, chose Good Friday this month to accuse the CUF of organising paramilitary groups. CUF Chairman **Ibrahim Lipumba** said his party was considering suing the Cardinal for 'defamatory, false and malicious utterances' and that the CUF's Blue Guard youths were merely undergoing judo and karate training. The government then banned political parties from involvement in military activities and the CUF agreed to stop karate and judo training.

In Zanzibar, the radical newspaper *An Nuur* is said to encourage Muslim militancy and street protests. In early March, the police tried to quash an unlicensed demonstration by a splinter group, the Association for the Revival and Propagation of the Islamic Faith. Angry Muslim militants burned tyres and threw stones at the riot police, who responded with tear gas. More seriously, six bombing incidents in March and April

damaged property, including a house belonging to the Zanzibar Transport and Communications Minister, another belonging to a village leader, a police vehicle, a bus from St. Francis Primary School and the house of the moderate Mufti of Zanzibar: a mixed group of targets.

### Grenades and viruses

The First Secretary of the **British** Embassy in **Rwanda** and several tourists escaped unhurt after a hand-grenade landed on their restaurant table; it did not explode, because its safety pin had not been pulled but it was live. Conspiracy theorists blame the Zanzibar CCM, keen to destabilise the isles and postpone an election it may well lose. Mkapu said on 6 April: 'We can't allow political parties that think they can spread the viruses of religious, tribal, zonal and gender bias'. Some took this as a reference to the CUF, others noted that he was merely repeating state policy since Independence. A fire at State House in Dar es Salaam on 14 April is said to have no political implications.

The CUF wants a peaceful, free and fair election supported by the international community and indicates that it would happily work in coalition government with the CCM – which is not ready to oblige. The Zanzibar attacks may in fact have been carried out by militant Islamist groups from the mainland, where the largely Christian *Chama cha Demokrasiana Maendeleo* party says it will put up its first presidential candidate, instead of working in non-sectarian alliance with the CUF.

On the mainland, there has been no progress in making the EC more representative. In Zanzibar, an agreement between CCM and CUF, signed after much violence in October 2001, promised electoral reform. The CCM claims that 90 per cent of the agreement has been implemented; the CUF points out that the EC has not been reformed and the 'Permanent Voters' Register' is stalled. When the EC blamed the delay on financial constraints, the Zanzibar government took charge and promised progress – until it was revealed that the Joint Presidential Commission which oversees the agreement was caught in a US\$280,000 scandal involving vehicles financed by donors, some of whom have therefore stopped their support.

## MALAWI

# Bingu the favourite

### Opposition splits, not political merit, will help the UDF win the presidency – again

By most measures, the governing United Democratic Front (UDF) would have little hope of winning the national elections on 18 May. President **Bakili Muluzi**'s UDF government has presided over worsening poverty and corruption since it took over from President **Kamuzu Hastings Banda**'s brutal dictatorship in 1994. However, most of the political freedoms gained ten years ago have survived and the UDF's presidential candidate, **Bingu wa Mutharika**, has credibility as a technocrat – albeit one of 72 and with little charisma.

Muluzi's ham-fisted imposition of Mutharika as presidential candidate prompted an exodus of senior officials from the party but Mutharika, who stood against the UDF in the 1999 election, is favourite to win, perhaps with as few as a third of votes cast. If this happens, he would owe his victory more to the fractious opposition than to his own political merits (AC Vol 45 Nos 1 & 2).

There are four rival candidates and over a dozen parties contesting for parliament. Senior UDF ministers who stormed out are not cooperating with each other and the traditional opposition blocs, the

Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and Alliance for Democracy (Aford), have both split. The decision of Aford leader **Chakufwa Chihana** to support Muluzi's bid for a third term and then join an electoral pact with the UDF prompted most Aford members to break away to form the Movement for Genuine Democratic Change (Mgode).

The late Banda's MCP finally fell apart in January when **Gwanda Chakuamba** broke away to form the Republican Party (RP). Chakuamba, who led the MCP to a close second in 1999, left after it became clear that he could not dislodge his old rival **John Tembo** as presidential candidate.

**Brown Mpinganjira**, a populist politician who split with Muluzi in 2001, has built his new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) into a well organised grassroots party. With a strong support base in the densely populated south and a growing national profile, the NDA could have seriously challenged the UDF. However, Mpinganjira's ego and colourful business history meant he was unable to win over other UDF dissidents such as Agriculture Minister **Aleke Banda** and Vice-President **Justin Malewezi**.

Aleke Banda, widely seen as honest and effective, opted for the People's Progressive Movement (PPM), which recently joined forces with the RP, Mgode and four minor parties to form the Mgwirizano Coalition. With Chakuamba as presidential candidate and Banda as running mate, Mgwirizano presents the biggest threat to the UDF and would have been favourite if it had got the NDA on board. It is also hampered by internal discord, mainly over which party should field the coalition candidate in several key constituencies, including Banda's. Malewezi's petulant decision to stand as an independent after failing to win the Mgwirizano leadership is a further blow.

The UDF is also richer and can use state resources in its campaign. With about 85 per cent of Malawians living in the countryside and a literacy rate of about 40 per cent, controlling state radio is useful. Opposition parties have complained to the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) but it has not intervened. State-owned vehicles are used to ferry UDF supporters to remote areas; cash and grain are handed out to electors, with plenty of inducements available for clergy, trades unionists and journalists to make the case for the UDF.

### Looking the other way

Neither the police nor the MEC have responded to complaints about violence and intimidation by UDF thugs. Many have questioned the MEC's conduct of electoral registration; accusations are flying around about the buying and stealing of voting certificates. Such is the opposition disarray that the UDF could win without rigging but it is unlikely to leave matters to chance. The election is complicated by the multiplicity of parties, which may fracture traditional voting patterns.

In the two previous elections, the North, Central and Southern regions voted overwhelmingly for Aford, the MCP and the UDF respectively. This time, there will be at least two parties with strong local roots competing in each region. But how much weight will regional loyalties carry? The stronger they are, the better for the UDF with its huge voter base in the south. The big threat is that people may vote against the UDF, blaming it for worsening economic conditions. Few policy issues have been raised in opposition campaigns, though.

An exception is corruption. Over the past decade, Muluzi has built up a personal fortune and an extensive patronage network. Earlier this year, a former government advisor and business associate of his, **Kalonga Stambuli**, circulated a dossier purporting to recount Muluzi's business holdings. Shortly afterwards, Stambuli was found dead.

If the UDF does win, how will Mutharika and Muluzi be able to work together? Some suspect that Mutharika may decide to disown his mentor in the way that President **Levy Mwanawasa** did with his

predecessor, **Frederick Chiluba**, in **Zambia**, perhaps even allowing opposition attempts to arraign Muluzi on corruption charges. Muluzi's bid for a third term unfolded in Malawi just as Mwanawasa was turning the Zambian state machine on Chiluba.

With little support within the party and little political experience, Mutharika may be unwilling to take on Muluzi (who retains the Chairmanship of the UDF). Instead, he may prefer to deal with pressing economic issues and leave the political arena to the man to whom he owes his ascendancy. Muluzi is far more prominent in the campaign and there is no bar on him standing for the presidency again in 2009. Yet Mutharika would find it hard to improve Malawi's economy without cutting at least some of the corruption and clientelism.

Running a UDF minority government (which is the best election result Mutharika is likely to get) will require plenty of political skill. Opposition parties have already started baying for Muluzi to face corruption charges. In a weak post-election position, it would be hard for Mutharika to dismiss such pressures. Conditions may be so tough that Mutharika prefers to stand down after an interim period, leaving the way clear for UDF vice-presidential candidate **Cassim Chilumpha**. Like Muluzi, Chilumpha has links to **Libya's** Colonel **Moammar el Gaddafi** and Middle Eastern businesses. As a Muslim (also like Muluzi) Chilumpha faced opposition from Malawi's powerful church groups, who wanted a Christian head of state.

Whoever wins will face tougher conditions on foreign aid. Several governments have cut off or reduced aid since 2000 and relations with Western governments are worse than ever. **British** High Commissioner **Norman Ling** has raised questions about future aid if rapid steps are not taken to balance budgets and improve fiscal management. Government spending is another target for foreign critics, including expenses such as travel allowances for the bloated 46-member cabinet. This year's supplementary budget was presented as 'pro-poor' but in reality, 70 per cent was allocated to the Office of the President, to cabinet and to state residences. With over half of the annual budget underwritten by foreign aid, any rupture with Western governments could prompt yet more economic troubles after the election.

## CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE

# Brazzaville breakdown

## As the President boosts his family's power, the ruling coalition is cracking up

The peace process has run out of steam, key politicians remain in exile, and veterans in the ruling *Parti Congolais du Travail* (PCT) increasingly resent the dominant role of members of President **Denis Sassou-Nguesso's** immediate family and wider Mbochi clan. A peace agreement with the Ninja rebels of **Frédéric Bitsangou**, known as *Pasteur Ntumi*, was signed on 17 March 2003, but he refuses to move to Brazzaville from his stronghold near the capital unless Sassou forms a national unity government. Rather than reaching out to his opponents in the populous south, the President is boosting his fellow Mbochi, from the thinly populated north-central Cuvette region.

Some of Ntumi's Ninja and Nsiloulou militias were supposed to be absorbed into the army, *gendarmérie* and police; other former rebels to be disarmed and demobilised by the International Organisation for Migration and United Nations Development Programme with 731,000 euros (US\$870,000) of European Union money. In January, Ntumi announced that he would cooperate only if the government agreed to new political demands – for a government of national unity, the return

# Nepotists' nirvana

President **Denis Sassou-Nguesso's** trusted advisors include:

- **Emmanuel Yoka**, the President's uncle and *directeur de cabinet*. A lawyer and former Ambassador to **Morocco**, he headed the commission that revised the constitution.

- **Firmin Ayessa**, deputy head of the President's Office which he joined in January 1999. Ayessa organised the National Dialogue and President's election campaign with **Isidore Mvouba**, before he was elected member of parliament for Makoua in the Cuvette region. His daughter **Belinda** is Editor-in-Chief of the pro-government *Les Dépêches de Brazzaville* website.

- **Jean-Richard Bruno Itoua**, Mbochi from Cuvette, of the Gamboma clan. Not a direct relative of the President, but a sort of honorary son as nephew of **Charlotte Ovunda**, a friend of Sassou and his wife. A key member of the President's team, advisor on oil and gas and also Director General of the state *Société Nationale des Pétroles du Congo* (SNPC).

- **Claudia Lemboumba-Nguesso**, Sassou's daughter, wife of **Martin Lemboumba**, son of **Gabon's** former Finance Minister **Jean-Pierre Lemboumba**: she is the President's communications advisor.

- **Sandrine Nguesso**, another presidential daughter; she is married to **Congo-Kinshasa's** President **Joseph Kabila**.

- **Jean-Dominique Okemba**, the President's nephew, special advisor and Secretary General of his Security Council: a man for secret missions and discreet matters.

- **Edith Nguesso-Bongo**, Sassou's daughter, married to **Gabon's** President **Omar Bongo**, is listened to by her father on security issues.

- **Edgar Nguesso**, another Sassou nephew, son of Sassou's late brother. **Eugène Ambendé Nguesso**; he is director of the President's estate.

- **Hilaire Moko**, another nephew, is in charge of presidential security. With **Blaise Adoua**, Commander of the Republican Guard, Moko is responsible for the President's close protection.

- **Denis Christel Nguesso**, another Sassou nephew, heads the SNPC office in London.

- **Wilfrid (Willy) Nguesso**, Edgar's brother, is Transport Director at the *Société Congolaise des Transports Maritimes* (Socotram).

- **François Ibovi**, Regional Administration Minister, is Mbochi from the Oyo clan.

- **Roger Rigobert Andély**, Finance Minister, also Mbochi, is a former official of the *Banque des Etats de l'Afrique du Centrale* (BEAC).

- **Pierre Moussa**, Minister of Planning and Regional Development.

- Foreign Minister **Rodolphe Adada**.

- Brigadier **Pierre Oba**, the Security Minister, is Sassou's cousin. Presidential security director in 1984, then Director General of Public Security in 1987, he joined the PCT Central Committee in 1989. Of the Ollombo clan, Oba is marginalised in favour of Jean-Dominique Okemba.

- **Isidore Mvouba**, Minister of State for Transport, the most senior member of the government, effectively serves as prime minister. He ran Sassou's election campaign, owes his position to his status as a PCT member from the Pool region, but has no great influence.

- Gen. **Jean-Richard Mondjo**, Armed Forces Chief of Staff, is Mbochi, promoted directly from colonel – to the displeasure of other generals.

- Gen. **Gilbert Mokoki**, Army Chief of Staff, supervised the peace process.

- Col. **Marcel Ntsourou** is head of military intelligence.

- **Antoinette Sassou Nguesso**, Sassou's wife, heads a humanitarian organisation called Congo-Assistance, and brings her husband support from her home region of Kouilou (Pointe-Noire). She advises on political appointments from Kouilou, such as Speaker of Parliament **Jean-Pierre Thystère Tchicaya**.

of political exiles, and formal definition of Ntumi's status. He asked **Gabon's** Ambassador to mediate, and threatened to disclose a document (which the government says is a forgery) alleging that Sassou had planned to suppress the northern Pool region and other opposition strongholds of Niari, Bouanza and Lékoumou ('Nibolek') in late 1999.

The government was certainly brutal in 1998-99 in Nibolek. Its forces, with the Cobra political militia and their foreign allies – troops from **Angola** and **Chad**, exiled former soldiers of the late President **Mobutu Sese Seko's** army from **Congo-Kinshasa** and members of the notorious **Rwandan** Hutu *Interahamwé* militia – crushed the Cocoye rebels who backed the exiled former President **Pascal Lissouba**, killing civilians, particularly young men of fighting age. Much of the population of Dolisie, Niari's main town, fled into the rainforest. Civilians suffered similarly during the brutal fight against Ntumi's rebels of 1992-93 in Pool, the region around Brazzaville.

On 8 March, Minister of State for Transport **Isidore Mvoubi** – the leading Pool voice within government, and an architect of last year's peace process – rejected Ntumi's political demands, agreeing only to define his status, to refurbish a house for him in Brazzaville, and to supply him with security guards. He proposes two commissions, representing Ntumi and the government. One will oversee the disarmament process, the other will look into Ntumi's demands and status. Ntumi remains mistrustful, and interpreted clashes between government units and Ninjas last December as an attempt to push his guerrilla protectors out of the city. Some government supporters may hope to cut the ground from under Kolélas by promoting Ntumi, but he seems to be resisting the strategy.

### Lissouba in London

Lissouba has settled into a comfortable enforced retirement in London, but Kolélas is still campaigning hard, encouraged by the present disenchantment in political circles. A letter to Sassou has been circulated from Brigadier **Emmanuel Nguélondé-Mongo**, criticising the decay of the army and civil service, the lack of state authority, high-level racketeering and corruption, and the sale of state assets at knockdown prices. This is significant because Nguélondé-Mongo's son **Hugues**, Mayor of Brazzaville, is married to Sassou's daughter (and advisor) **Ninéle**, and one of Sassou's sons is married to Nguélondé-Mongo's daughter. **Jean-Pierre Thystère Tchicaya**, President of the National Assembly and head of the *Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social*, spoke out in parliament on 25 March against clandestine immigration, cash demands by the security forces, and water and electricity shortages. Tchicaya, a Vili, has done deals with successive Brazzaville leaderships; he was number two in the PCT regime from 1974 to 1984, prominent during Sassou's first presidency, became Mayor of Pointe-Noire during Lissouba's presidency without being seen as a Lissoubiste, and is now a senior figure in the second Sassou era.

On 8 April came a statement from the leaders of five small parties belonging to the *Forces Démocratiques Unies* (FDU), denouncing corruption, impunity, the dominance of the presidential clan, and the management of the state's oil, mineral and timber assets. Last year Sassou ignored a similar, but private, complaint from the FDU, consisting of the *Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès* of **Pierre Nzé**, the *Union pour le Redressement National* of **Gabriel Bokilo**, the *Association pour l'Ouverture, la Solidarité et le Salut* of **Léon Alfred Opimba**, the *Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Congolais* of **Jean-Marie Tassoua**, a former energy and water resources minister, and the *Union Patriotique pour le Renouveau National* of **André Ganfina**. They want an FDU congress to discuss

the country's problems; their alliance, formed in 1994 under Lissouba, supported Sassou's return to power in 1997 and his successful 2002 election campaign. Other prominent critics include frustrated ex-ministers such as **Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou**, a defence minister in the government set up by Sassou after he seized power in 1997.

The opposition is reorganising itself around Lissouba's *Union Panafricaine pour la Démocratie Sociale* (Upads), whose leader within Congo is **Joseph Kignoumbi Kia Mboundou**, a Mbembe businessman from Lékoumou who ran as his party's candidate in the 2002 presidential election. He lost by a mile, but was elected to parliament and leads the Upads group there.

### Gerrymandering

The electoral roll for the presidential and legislative polls of 1997 was fixed to reduce the voting power of Nibolek's inhabitants, some of whom were left off the list while pro-government Rwandan refugees were included. If the rolls were revised – perhaps under pressure from donors – Nibolek's increased weight would improve Mboundou's chances. He keeps clear of the exiled Lissouba, but works closely with the faction of the *Mouvement Congolais pour la Démocratie et le Développement Intégral* (MCDDI) loyal to the exiled Kolélas, and is setting up an organising committee for the 2007 elections.

The other wing of the MCDDI is led by **Michel Manpouya**, who was a minister under Sassou; it lacks grassroots support and is not recognised by Kolélas. The pro-Kolélas faction, represented by **Jacques Mahouka**, gets almost all its support from Pool. Kolélas has several times tried to return home, but the government has asked airlines and foreign governments to ensure he does not. In September 2003, the authorities closed the airport and the ferry from Kinshasa; on 6 December Kolélas was sent back to **Kenya** from Kinshasa's Ndjili Airport. There is some support in Pool for **André Milongo's** *Union pour la Démocratie et la République-Mwinda*, but despite Kolélas's absence, Milongo has never managed to supplant him.

The *Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (RDD), led by another exiled politician, **Jacques Joachim Yhombi Opango**, gets most of its support from his northern Kouyou people. Yhombi is a long-time rival of Sassou, who forced him out of power in 1979. The trades unions are fairly quiet. Civil servants' salaries are paid more or less regularly, even if pensioners and students suffer from late payments. The *Confédération Syndicale Congolaise* and the *Confédération Syndicale des Travailleurs du Congo* signed a two-year renewable truce with the government in July 2001.

Last year Congo's failure to open up its oil accounts ended one of the International Monetary Fund's staff-monitored programmes. Finance Minister **Roger Rigobert Andély** now offers the Fund the transparency it wanted (AC Vol 44 No 24); it is sending another mission to Brazzaville in May to talk about a full-blown Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, and eventual reduction of Congo's \$6 billion foreign debt under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) scheme. World Bank Managing Director **Shengman Zhang**, in Brazzaville on 13 April, offered to organise the necessary talks with donors.

One continuing embarrassment is the investigation in **France** into the 'Beach affair' – the disappearance of 353 returning Congolese refugees, mostly young Lari men, from Brazzaville's river port in May 1999 (AC Vol 43 No 23). National police chief **Jean-François Ndengue** was arrested in France on 1 April, and freed the following night to leave the country. The French magistrates' association wants an official investigation into possible pressure on the judicial process. If the French courts accused Congo's rulers of human rights crimes, it would threaten relations with donors.

Relations with Kinshasa are frosty, especially since 28 March, when

the Kinshasa authorities claimed that a coup had been mounted across the river from Brazzaville, where former members of Mobutu's *Forces Armées Zaïroises* took refuge after the fall of his regime, some joining the army, some Sassou's Cobra militia. It irritates Sassou that President **Joseph Kabila**, despite his relative youth, has managed (so far) to conduct a peace process and establish a national unity government. Most of the 91,000 civilian refugees in Congo-B are from Congo-K, with some from **Chad, Central African Republic, Rwanda** and a few Cabindans. Most of the Congolese refugees are fishermen from Equateur, and some have gone home since the national unity government was set up in Kinshasa.

## **ZIMBABWE**

# Disappearing food

## The government may turn away foreign food aid as part of its ruthless election strategy

An internal United Nations' memorandum describes Zimbabwe's latest crop projections as 'complete nonsense' and 'quite impossible.' That's no surprise. Fanciful agricultural forecasts are common in Agriculture Minister **Joseph Made**'s department but these particular projections are critical. The forecasts were used to justify the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front government's decision to turn down food aid this year.

At a meeting on 30 March, a Ministry official claimed that the harvest would be 1.7 million tonnes, an impossibly big figure. The following day, Minister of Labour **Paul Mangwana** met UN officials and diplomats, reiterated the figures and emphasised that the government had asked the UN to keep food aid out of the humanitarian assistance appeal.

Now Mangwana privately tells aid officials that a final decision will not be taken until the end of May. The government is reconsidering because keeping out food aid agencies may be too risky for the ruling ZANU-PF and is not supported by all the party factions. Many in the party have not forgiven Made for denying the food shortages of three years ago.

Some fear that they are being misled, again. So a UN technical team has been authorised to verify independently the country's harvest and food supply figures. The team is on the ground now and will report its findings at the end of May. One Western diplomat says that some in the government want 'a reality check' and objective statistics.

### The lean season and 'wmd'

Next year's parliamentary elections are scheduled for March at the peak of Zimbabwe's lean season. ZANU-PF apparatchiks are making much of Reserve Bank governor **Gideon Gono**'s anti-graft campaign, which they claim is giving ZANU-PF renewed credibility. That will be worth little if massive food shortages persist. In March this year, the UN handed out rations for 4 million people in bags marked 'Gift of USA', 'Gift of **United Kingdom**' and 'Gift of the European Commission'. A ZANU-PF official in Mashonaland has referred to the bags as 'weapons of mass destruction' because the ruling party fears that Zimbabweans link food aid with the opposition Movement for Democratic Change. Indeed, the government's electioneering demonises the MDC as poodles of Britain and America. That tactic could backfire if people need food aid during the election period.

Outside the election timing problem, shutting out aid agencies at exactly the time when hunger is likely to peak fits in with the ZANU-

PF *nomenklatura*'s commercial strategy. Government policies (price controls, parastatal monopolies) are used to create artificial shortages of vital commodities – food, fuel, foreign exchange. Business friends and the party elite then charge higher prices for goods traded in conditions of scarcity. Those who benefit are expected to give material and electoral support to the party. Thus ZANU-PF's preferred method is to use government contracts to win friends – and government food to influence voters.

Foreign food aid is problematic. ZANU-PF doesn't want hundreds of UN and non-governmental organisation officials roaming the countryside handing out bags of food during the elections. Moreover, the government's claim of a successful land reform programme is difficult to maintain if foreign food aid is distributed.

Any plan by ZANU-PF to win votes with government food would need heavy financing well ahead of the elections. To date, the government has skilfully accessed credit lines using the diminishing tobacco crop as collateral. It has also arranged 'tobacco for maize swaps' – a good deal, considering that the government pays tobacco farmers at official prices in Zimbabwe dollars but receives maize valued in hard currency.

In effect, Western governments have paid for ZANU-PF's electoral food kitty. Last year, Made and his colleagues debated for months about whether to issue an appeal for humanitarian assistance. The government's deliberate delay alienated donors and made it difficult for them to commit additional funds. By December and January, the UN was forced to reduce rations.

So UN officials were very shocked to see a report in the state-owned daily *The Herald* which boasted of a strategic grain reserve. In the midst of national scarcity, the government was sitting on a reserve of 240,000 tonnes, enough to feed everyone for two months. The UN politely requested more information on government plans to release this stock. The government responded by vaguely dismissing the reserve as 'academic.'

International food aid had enabled the government to finance a reserve for campaigning instead of placing that food immediately on the market. This year, the government relied on donors to feed Zimbabweans so that next year it might dish out the reserve in a way that will win votes – and without any prying eyes.

Yet the current debate within ZANU-PF shows that there are still practical constraints. Periodic fuel shortages and scarcity of spare parts limit the government's ability to move the food quickly to wherever it can win most votes. So a ruthless campaign to benefit from shutting out foreign food aid could still work against the ruling party. Politicians will lose votes if the gamble goes wrong; hungry Zimbabweans may lose their lives.

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# Pointers

## CONGO-KINSHASA

### Future shock

The new integrated army, created to solve political problems, is not much use for military tasks such as peacekeeping. Its First Brigade, whose 190 **Belgian** and twelve **French** instructors are to be strengthened at the end of April by others from **Germany** and **Luxembourg**, is supposed to take over from the *Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* (MONUC) in Ituri.

Belgian Defence Minister **André Flahaut**, visiting in April, was told that a battalion of 300 was ready to start work in the former flashpoint of Bunia. The men are from the former government army (AC Vol 45 No 7), *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC), *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma* (RCD-G) and from the Mai-Mai militias. But he had to press President **Joseph Kabila** for payment of their wages.

Pay scales still have not been agreed: the Kinshasa, MLC and RCD soldiers are all arguing for different rates above the basic scale for privates of 5,000 Congolese francs (US\$15) per month. Their only visible weapons were a few old AK-47 rifles (but they may have cached better ones). Their peacekeeping lessons did not include weapons training. Some spoke only Lingala, some only Kiswahili, very few spoke French. Their first vehicles, a dozen trucks and some jeeps from Belgium, will take a month to reach eastern Congo.

Belgium's Colonel **Philippe Martin**, commanding the training team, finds that MONUC's blue berets have not completed their own deployment around Bunia. A year ago, Kabila sent *gendarmes* to help keep order; they sold off their weapons to local Lendu militiamen, described by a UN officer as still having 'a potential for anarchy', even though they and the Hemas have stopped massacring each other. On 19 April, MONUC intercepted an Antonov cargo aircraft at Bunia field; its crew said it was picking up palm oil. They seemed to be **Russians** or **Ukrainians** but their documents were forged.

There is trouble in Kisangani too. On 5 April, some **Moroccan** UN troops, searching for weapons, shot an RCD officer's bodyguard who, said the Moroccans, had fired first. RCD soldiers work fairly closely with the Special Presidential Security Group in the town, whose residents resent the blue helmets' living standards: they have electricity, the locals don't. Before leaving, Flahaut discussed with Vice-President **Azarias Ruberwa**, an RCD man, the formation of a second brigade of the new army. It may not happen.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Sour Mango

President **Thabo Mbeki** has finally ended the African National Congress's awkward relationship with Inkatha Freedom Party leader **Mangosuthu Buthelezi** by leaving him out of the cabinet in the post-election reshuffle on 28 April (AC Vol 45 No 8). Mbeki's minimalist changes keep the coalition alive by reappointing Inkatha's **Musa Zondi** as Deputy Minister of Public Works and give ministries to New National Party leader **Marthinus van Schalkwyk** (Environment & Tourism) and Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) leader **Mosibudi Mangena** (Science & Technology).

Rising stars include the new Deputy Finance Minister, **Jabu Moleketi**, widely praised for his performance as Finance Commissioner in the Gauteng provincial government, and new Trade & Industry Minister (formerly Deputy Finance) **Mandisi Mphahlele**. Both would be experienced enough to take over the Finance Ministry later; meanwhile the popular **Trevor Manuel** stays on as Finance supremo. Well regarded, **Alec Erwin** is moved from Trade to Public Enterprise.

Rising fast is former Northern Cape Premier, **Manne Dipico**, who becomes Mbeki's Parliamentary Counsellor and a key member of the inner circle. The Foreign Ministry team will be boosted by the appointment of a second Deputy Minister, **Sue van der Merwe**, alongside Deputy **Aziz Pahad** and senior Minister **Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma** offering a ministerial rainbow: Afrikaner, Indian and African. The return to cabinet of leading ANC intellectual **Pallo Jordan** (Arts & Culture) will be popular across the party.

Of 28 cabinet ministers, twelve are women (9 in the last cabinet): **Thoko Didiza** (Agriculture & Land), **Ivy Matsepe Casaburri** (Communications), **Naledi Pandor** (Education), **Dlamini-Zuma**, **Manto Tshabalala-Msimang** (Health), **Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula** (Home Affairs), **Lindiwe Sisulu** (Housing), **Bridgette Mabandla** (Justice), **Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka** (Mines), **Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi** (Public Service), **Stella Sigcau** (Public Works) and **Buyi Sonjica** (Water).

## ZIMBABWE

### Locking up the Minister

Finance Minister **Christopher Kuruneru** is the first of President **Robert Mugabe**'s big guns to go to gaol, where police can hold him for a month before bringing him to court. On 24 April, he was accused of 'externalising' US\$1.082 million, £34,471 sterling and 30,000 euros. It is an awkward triumph for 'Cyclone Gono', the recovery and clean-up operation mounted by his supposed

partner, Reserve Bank Governor **Gideon Gono** (AC Vol 45 No 8).

The Minister, promoted to the job by Mugabe on 9 February, claims he earned the money abroad and was entitled to keep it there, which is not what the law says. Last month, the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* revealed that he was building a vast house in a posh Cape Town suburb, where one of his companies owns property, too. He has previously been acquitted on corruption charges in Zimbabwe and his businesses have had serial debt problems. It turns out that he also has a **Canadian** passport: Zimbabwe prohibits dual nationality.

The government hopes that the campaign to attract funds from Zimbabweans abroad will win at least US\$1.2 billion annually. The Bank will allow money to be changed through the transfer agencies at close to parallel market rates. More cash should come in, more legally, if Kuruneru's arrest does not discourage too many of the more questionable operators with the biggest resources.

## GUINEA

### Plot news

Plot accusations are common in Guinea. Yet the latest charges of plotting, levelled against former Prime Minister **Sidya Touré** and the deputy army Chief of Staff, Colonel **Mamadou Camara**, suggest Touré's *Union des Forces Républicaines* is becoming a force to be reckoned with.

Touré was charged and provisionally released on 27 April following the arrest of the popular former Mayor of Conakry's Matam district, **Rougui Barry**, and two other UFR supporters. In mid-February, police discovered UFR leaflets in a container at Conakry port and arrested the importer, **Abdoulaye Capi Camara**, then **Baidy Aribot**, a central bank employee and son-in-law of Col. Camara. The trio was questioned by Police Commissioner **Bakary Thermite Mara** and charged with threatening state security.

On 10 April airport police barred Touré and **Bâ Mamadou** of the *Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée* from leaving for Dakar, **Senegal**. Touré's 1996-98 premiership saw the renewal of relations with donors, the restoration of mains power in Conakry and curbs on state spending.

The former *Directeur de Cabinet* of **Ivorine** ex-Premier-turned-opposition-leader **Alassane Dramane Ouattara**, Touré represents, at 59, a younger generation than President **Lansana Conté** and his veteran opponents **Alpha Condé** (66) and **Bâ** (71). **Siradiou Diallo**, head of the *Union pour le Progrès et le Renouveau*, died in Paris on 14 March. Conté, now in his third term after December's elections, is ill and has no designated successor. There has been little change under new Premier **François Lonsény Fall**, despite promises to cut state spending and boost budget income.