

# AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL

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### Virtual voters

UN and European Union monitors reckoned that Obasanjo's election victory was seriously flawed but 'generally reflected the will of the people'. Translated, that means both sides rigged the vote but Obasanjo's party was better at it and he would have won anyway.

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### Transatlantic tryst

Washington now has closer relations with the ANC government than with any other in Africa, including Egypt and Morocco. Deputy President Mbeki and Vice President Gore get on famously and both are set to continue the pattern set by Presidents Clinton and Mandela.

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### Up with Biwott

Demoted to Industry Minister in the latest reshuffle, former Finance Minister Nyachae has resigned and publicly protested about the 'powerful untouchable people' who have been frustrating his anti-corruption efforts. Days later, an IMF team arrived in Nairobi to assess the government's progress on accountability.

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### Hard talk in Kinshasa

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## NIGERIA

### Soldier go, soldier come

#### President-elect Obasanjo's greatest challenge will be his plans to reform the military and end the putschist mentality

The Nigerian conundrum - 'it takes a soldier to end army rule' - is to be tested again. General **Olusegun Obasanjo**, the choice of most army officers and the Western powers, was dubbed PDP (Pre-Determined President) - the acronym of his People's Democratic Party. The 27 February presidential election indeed had a pre-determined feel to it (see Box). But that's not entirely surprising when Obasanjo faced an improbable coalition of erstwhile supporters of 1993 poll winner **Moshood Abiola** in the Alliance for Democracy and the All People's Party (dubbed the **Abacha** People's Party because so many of the late dictator's acolytes had joined it). Within hours of his victory, Obasanjo started choosing the transition committee which is to handle policy and appointments up to the formal handover to civilian rule on 29 May. His hotel suite in Abuja has been overflowing with well-wishers and office-seekers.

A paid-up Nigerian nationalist, Obasanjo makes his priority to build a team that brings in the broadest span of constituencies. As a south-westerner himself, with his running mate, **Atiku Abubakar**, from the north-eastern Adamawa State, the gaps are obvious: key roles must be found for candidates from Igboland in the south-east, from the emirates of the north-west, from the powerful and vocal Middle-belt of the country and from the oil-producing Niger Delta, the so-called 'South-South'. Obasanjo's rival for the PDP presidential ticket, **Alex Ekwueme**, is certain to land a top post in the new government: perhaps Ambassador to the United Nations or President of the Senate.

### Khaki shuffles

Yet the most important reshuffling will have to happen first in the military. Obasanjo has no delusions about the magnitude of the task. Last year, he asked his son at the Commander and Staff College, how many of his fellow officers saw the army as a route to political power. 'Nine out of every ten', came the reply. Like so many of his generation of officers - Lieutenant Gen. **Theophilus Danjuma**, Gen. **Alani Akinrinade**, Maj. Gen. **David Jemibewon** and Air Commodore **Dan Suleiman** - Obasanjo is appalled at the corruption, politicisation, low morale and breakdown of command structure that have riven the military in the regimes of Gens. **Ibrahim Babangida** and Sani Abacha.

After the election, Obasanjo quickly qualified his pledge to pull Nigerian troops out of **Sierra Leone** by talking of respecting Nigeria's international obligations. Like the current head of state, **Abdulsalami Abubakar**, Obasanjo may want to pressure the West into providing more financial and logistical support for Nigerian peacekeeping operations as well as press President **Ahmed Tejan Kabbah** into serious negotiations with the Revolutionary United Front. Much could be done to boost the morale of Nigerian troops in Sierra Leone by improving equipment and rations and allowing home leave (some soldiers have been abroad for over five years).

He will need to play a subtler game at home. The military is desperately unpopular, in north and south alike. Equally, many in the current military hierarchy are tetchy about being hounded out of power. The worst military malefactors of the Abacha regime who are still holding senior posts are highly suspicious of Obasanjo but he is a bridge between frustrated civilians and prickly soldiers. He wants to reprofessionalise the forces, put them firmly under constitutional control and with effective new training and welfare programmes.

Finance and force strength are two immediate problems. Privately, several senior officers concede that Nigeria needs only a two-division structure (it has four and a substantial presidential guard). This would emphasise flexibility, effective use of technology and professional competence. That could mean cutting the force by almost half. Finding the money to pay for redundancies and re-equipping the remaining soldiers will be difficult, even if the **United States** and **Britain** deliver their promised military assistance.

Military leadership is the other big question. Abubakar has said he's determined to retire on 29 May, although he would have been well-placed to help the military reform effort. Rear Admiral

## Virtual voters

Election monitors coined a phrase for General **Olusegun Obasanjo's** presidential victory on 27 February: the result was not 'free and fair' but 'generally reflects the will of the people'. That is the verdict of the European Union and United Nations. Nigerian cynics reckon that the result also 'generally reflects the will of Nigeria's principal trading partners'. The monitors meant that activists from both Obasanjo's People's Democratic Party and **Olu Falae's** rival Alliance for Democracy-All People's Party coalition tried to rig their man into power. All the EU monitors were sure Obasanjo had won - but by far less than the 63 per cent given to him, against Falae's 37 per cent.

The assessment was more embarrassing for Obasanjo's old friend, ex-President **Jimmy Carter**, whose **United States** monitoring team questioned the 'wide disparity between the number of voters observed at the polling stations and the final result that has been reported from many states'. Next day, back home, Carter concluded that 'it is not possible for us to make an accurate judgment about the outcome of the presidential election'. Nevertheless, Washington is right behind Obasanjo; it ended all sanctions against Abuja on the eve of voting, and can now support World Bank and International Monetary Fund loans.

**Britain** and **France** endorsed Obasanjo's victory under the cautious EU 'will of the people' formula, so Europe will almost certainly unblock aid funds of some 365 million Euros (US\$401 mn.) after Obasanjo's civilians take over on 29 May. Officials from Brussels and Abuja are already discussing how to apportion that money between anti-poverty programmes and mutually lucrative 'strategic energy' projects.

The Nigerian Transition Monitoring Group, with 10,700 observers across the country, judged that the 'incidence of electoral fraud was great enough to completely distort the election result'. The defeated Falae accordingly declared the election to be 'a farce and a charade', while his spokesman, **Yusuf Mamman**, a former Ambassador to Madrid, said it amounted to a 'coup d'état against democracy'. Falae initially said he would be reluctant to serve under Obasanjo but later argued that the disputed result made a government of national unity essential.

**South Africa** was delighted; Foreign Minister **Alfred Nzo** said Obasanjo's victory offered Nigeria a chance to 'firmly entrench a civilian democracy'. Obasanjo, in South Africa as a member of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group in the apartheid era, won respect from hard-nosed Afrikaners and adoration from township kids. Some in Pretoria may also feel a bit guilty that they did too little to free him when he was a political prisoner under the late Gen. **Sani Abacha's** regime.

We hear, moreover, that Federal Secretary **Gidado Idris**, in Pretoria last month, made a generous contribution to the African National Congress's own election fund.

Most anecdotal evidence suggests that Falae's supporters rigged results in Lagos and some of the (Yoruba-speaking) south-west states, such as Osun and his home state, Ondo. Obasanjo's people operated almost at will throughout much of the north and south-east. Most fraud reported was at polling booths, not at the ward, state or central counting centres. Monitors suspect senior officials in both parties ordered local activists 'to do their worst'. In Lagos, voting was effectively in the open, with voters surrounded by Falae-supporting 'area boys'. One observer questioning the stuffing of a ballot box by PDP supporters in Niger State (where the PDP won 83.8 per cent) was advised to go back to Europe where 'there are plenty more elections to watch'.

The fraud (usually pro-PDP) was blatant in the oil-producing Delta states, where hundreds of wards reported unbelievable 100 per cent turn-outs - 123 per cent was recorded in poverty-stricken Bayelsa State. The most suspect results came where the turnout was highest. The national average turnout was just over half of the estimated 40 million eligible voters. Benue recorded 66.7 per cent; Ekiti 66 per cent (pro-Falae); Gombe 75 per cent; Kogi 77 per cent; Kwara 70 per cent; Nassarawa 85 per cent; Rivers 71 per cent; Taraba 88.9 per cent.

Millions of naira changed hands. At pre-election fundraisers, Obasanjo brought in N400 mn. (US\$4.59 mn.) for the PDP and Falae brought in over N100 mn. for the AD-APP. Support shifted improbably towards the PDP. For example, in the gubernatorial elections in Kaduna in January, the PDP won 585,181 votes and the AD-APP 288,950 but in the presidential poll, the PDP vote nearly doubled to 964,216 while that of the AD-APP shrunk to 229,181. A popular story tells of a Kaduna schoolteacher confidently marching her pupils in their school uniforms to the voting stations.

One PDP supporter described the exercise as 'rigging for democracy'. If Obasanjo had lost or won too narrowly, the hopes of taming the military putschists would have been thwarted, he argued, as a Falae government would have been toppled in months. Instead, Nigerians must live with the disputed election of a retired general, pledged to root out corruption and return his fellow soldiers to barracks for good.

The biggest question is how seriously the election's flaws will compromise Obasanjo's legitimacy. Violent protests could give military coup-makers a chance to intervene in the name of 'national stability'. Even optimists expect a tense three months as Obasanjo prepares for power.

**Mike Akhigbe** is likely to follow him into retirement, although there is much dispute about which service chiefs should stay on. The Chief of Army Staff, Maj. Gen. **Ishaya Bamaïyi**, argues that he would provide continuity but his history as an important Abacha *apparatchik* makes him suspect to many. Two rising stars likely to be considered to replace him are the Commandant of the National War College, Maj. Gen. **Chris Abutu Garuba**, and the General Officer Commanding 1st Division (Kaduna) Maj. Gen. **Abdullahi Muktar**.

Before that, Obasanjo will have to name his Defence Minister. Some advise him to keep the portfolio himself (as is the tradition in military regimes) or to appoint a respected ex-general, such as the former Chief of Army Staff, Maj. Gen. **Salihu Ibrahim**, or Akinrinade (whom Obasanjo appointed to take charge of the army in 1979) or Danjuma. How far the military will be purged and probed will then be hammered out between Obasanjo, his retired general friends and his civilian advisors. Many expect him to employ a surgical strike rather than a gradualist approach. At the

same time, senior officers agree that a drawn-out 'truth commission' on army rule would be high-risk.

By comparison, Obasanjo should find repairing Nigeria's foreign image much easier. On 8 March, he sets off on a post-election tour of Britain, **France**, **Germany** and **Italy**, where he will reopen discussions about economic reform, debt relief and concessionary loans. Obasanjo is probably more sceptical than his rival **Olu Falae** about free market economics but is equally capable of banging the drum for foreign investment in Nigeria. The details of economic strategy will have to emerge quickly: a national conference on economic policy is scheduled for this month in Abuja, followed by a donors' conference chaired by the World Bank.

The Abubakar government's outline agreement with the International Monetary Fund (AC Vol 40 Nos 3 & 4) will need Obasanjo's approval and that of his (yet to be named) finance minister before it can go to the Fund's Board. The highly-regarded incumbent finance and planning ministers **Ismaila Usman**, and **Rasheed Gbadamosi**, will be critical to the transition process.

### Olusegun international

Much is expected from Obasanjo's international standing. He is close to several former leaders, including **Julius Nyerere**, **Jim Callaghan**, **Jimmy Carter** and **Helmut Schmidt** and has particularly warm relations with **Nelson Mandela's** government. But he will have to work hard to prevent some of his domestic obligations from alienating his international supporters, for whom Nigerian politics remain somewhat surreal.

Obasanjo's chairmanship of Transparency International's board of advisors and his role in helping to found that anti-corruption lobby group give his anti-graft credentials some credibility. Quite how that squares with Nigeria's system of money politics, which brought him to power, is another matter. He has pledged to set up an independent anti-corruption agency but its real test will be its handling of his business backers, who raised hundreds of millions of naira for the PDP campaign, when they seek a return on their 'investment'. According to one of Obasanjo's fellow retired generals, anti-corruption campaigner Maj. Gen. **Ishola Williams**, it's a matter of breaking down Nigeria's 'contractocracy'.

An interesting mixture of journalists, intellectuals, business people, retired officers and career politicians populate the Obasanjo camp. Among the scribes are **Ad'Obe Obe**, former Editor of *West Africa* and director of Obasanjo's Africa Leadership Forum, who has taken on a virtual chief of staff role; **Onyema Ugochukwu**, also a former editor of *West Africa* and Managing Editor of the *Daily Times* group, who was Obasanjo's press spokesman; and **Haroun Adamu**, who directed campaign strategy.

Business backers include **Kase Lawal**, a Houston-based oil magnate; **S.O. Bakare**, the Lagos-based car dealer who drummed up Yoruba support; **Aliko Dangote**, a Kano-based magnate who was one of the biggest contributors to campaign funds; and the omnipresent **Isyaku Ibrahim**. Among the politicians, one of the most influential will be **Jerry Gana**, a former geography professor at Ahmadu Bello University, along with other ABU luminaries such as **Ango Abdullahi** and **Iyorchia Ayu**. Some political debts will have to be repaid to **Jim Nwobodo** (Anambra State), **Solomon Lar** (Plateau), and **Tony Anenih** (Edo) for helping to deliver critical constituencies. However, perhaps most important are Obasanjo's fellow officers, notably Danjuma and former military intelligence director Maj. Gen. **Aliyu Mohammed Gusau**, who help provide the president-elect with his most convincing insurance policy.

## SOUTH AFRICA/USA

# Transatlantic tryst

## Clinton's White House and Mandela's Tuynhuys have a special relationship

Washington now has closer relations with the African National Congress government than with any other in Africa, including the governments of **Egypt** and **Morocco**. The institutionalisation of the new Washington-Pretoria axis started three years ago, when President **Bill Clinton** and President **Nelson Mandela** launched the Bi-National Commission. Its meeting last month in Cape Town produced a bonding that some diplomats call a 'special relationship', symbolised by US participation in Blue Crane, the Southern African peace-keeping exercise due on 12 April. After last month's commission meeting, Deputy President **Thabo Mbeki** said the discussions 'showed the rapid growth in the detailed relationship between the two countries'.

This bonding follows a ten-day conference at the end of January, to which Pretoria's Department of Foreign Affairs (AC Vol 40 No 4) summoned its top diplomats from 75 countries. Foreign policy has been haphazard under Foreign Minister **Alfred Nzo** (likely to go after the elections) but the new Director General appointed by Mbeki, **Jackie Selebi**, is highly regarded. Pretoria's focus on Africa has been broadened to embrace 'strategic partners', such as **Argentina**, **Brazil**, **Britain**, **China**, **Germany** and the USA. A Foreign Ministry source said Pretoria would not keep its distance from Washington 'just to satisfy African opinion'.

- The relationship is led by the two heirs-apparent, Vice-President **Al Gore** and Deputy President Mbeki, who jointly chair the Bi-National Commission's six-monthly meetings. Discussions range over global issues and conflicts in Africa but centre on economics: growth and job creation. The two leaders announced a new agreement on trade and investment and another to resolve disputes, such as the US complaint about SA's imports of unpatented pharmaceuticals.

- Eight committees cover: Trade and Investment; Environment, Conservation and Water Affairs; Sustainable Energy; Human Resources Development and Education; Science and Technology; Agriculture; Defence; Justice and Crime. There are sub-committees on Health and Housing.

- The key committees, jointly chaired at cabinet level on both sides, will meet alternately in SA and the USA. US Commerce Secretary **William Daley** and SA Trade and Industry Minister **Alec Erwin** will chair the Trade and Investment Committee; Agriculture Secretary **Dan Glickman** will share with his SA counterpart **Derek Hanekom**; Energy Secretary **Bill Richardson** with **Penuell Maduna**. The Justice and Crime Committee, chaired by Attorney General **Janet Reno** and Minister of Safety and Security **Sydney Mufamadi**, includes representatives of Mufamadi's Ministry, Correctional Services (prisons), Justice, Intelligence, Finance, Welfare and Home Affairs. The main target is the invasion of SA since 1994 by international crime syndicates, including drug traders who both spread the use of drugs in SA and use it as a staging post from South America and the Far East to the USA and Europe (AC Vol 40 No 3).

The Crime committee has started already. Gore says it 'will give South African officials access to resources from the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Agency, Customs, the Immigration Service and other law enforcement agencies'. Technical assistance and the training of SA law enforcement agents in the USA will be run by the office of SA's newly appointed National Director of Prosecutions, **Bulelani Ngcuka**.

Defence cooperation has moved ahead fast. The US Air Force is sending two C-130 Hercules troop-and-cargo aircraft to ferry soldiers from neighbouring countries to the Blue Crane exercise at the Army Battle School at Lohathla, Northern Cape; Washington is also helping with finance, as are Britain, **France** and Germany. Participating Southern African countries include **Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia** and **Zimbabwe**. **Angola** and the **Democratic Republic of Congo** are busy elsewhere with their own wars.

Zimbabwe's President **Robert Mugabe** is irritated because his country hosted the first regional peacekeeping exercise, Blue Hungwe, in 1997, with 1,500 troops; Blue Crane is far larger, with 8,000. The two defence chiefs - Minister **Joe Modise** (who retires after the polls) and Secretary **William Cohen** - have both said things Mugabe dislikes. Referring to President **Laurent Kabila** and his allies (including Mugabe), Modise said: 'Neither can beat the other, they have got to get round the table to discuss and resolve their problems. There can be no lasting peace without that'. Cohen said the Pentagon wanted to broaden its military relationship with SA, which it saw as the 'natural leader' for regional stability'.

Personal chemistry is critical between two men who are would-be successors to charismatic predecessors: one Pretoria official said, 'It is a special relationship because the relationship between Mbeki and Gore is special'; a US diplomatic source described the relationship as 'remarkable' and 'very close', based on 'respect for each other's intellects and thinking'. On Gore's recent trip to Cape Town, they spent seven hours together, much of it on their own, prompting some of Gore's aides to become 'a little worried as to what ideas the two of them might be cooking up on their own'.

## No crowing

Washington officials, as one put it, see Mbeki as a 'pragmatist who will make decisions based on what he thinks is best for South Africa. We trust his view on this. Our engagement with South Africa has made us better students of African affairs'. US diplomats say they want closer ties with South Africa because of:

1. Pragmatism: Washington views South Africa as an 'important, stabilising, democratic force in Africa - we want to encourage that stability and influence'.
2. Economics: 'Economically and commercially, we view SA in the same way - stable and free. It is a gateway to the rest of the continent'. Moreover, SA has a 'relatively sophisticated industrial and scientific community'.
3. Psycho-politics: 'We are both trying to make multi-ethnic, multi-cultural societies work. It would be a blow for the US if South Africa failed'. This point appeals to African-Americans, most of whom vote Democrat.

Pretoria seeks to deflect accusations by Mugabe and others that it is becoming a US client-state. Washington had to accept with good grace Pretoria's refusal to join the US-sponsored African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). SA said it preferred to respond to crises multilaterally through the Southern African Development Community, Organisation of African Unity and United Nations. Washington has even moderated its criticism of Pretoria's relations with **Libya** and **Cuba**: 'We don't rule out that South Africa can do some good here.' Mandela has used his ties with Tripoli to try and settle the Lockerbie trial issue.

Pretoria's diplomats do not believe the 'special relationship' with Washington will overshadow ties with European powers such as Britain, Germany or France (which have also set up cooperation commissions with Pretoria). Noted one: 'For the US, it is part of

its new policy on Africa - it is a question of showing commitment to Africa'. Asked whether the special relationship would allow Pretoria access to satellite intelligence and cooperation on intelligence gathering, a Pretoria official said the two countries were 'in a process of developing trust. If there was an intelligence committee in our bi-national relationship, I wouldn't expect anyone to crow about it'.

## KENYA

# Up with Biwott

## The ruling party's factions fight for the purse strings

The government reshuffle of 18 February was, as usual in President **Daniel arap Moi's** Kenya, announced by radio during the lunch hour, catching unaware the ministers and top civil servants involved. However, the most sensational change came three hours later, when **Simeon Nyachae**, Finance Minister since January 1998 and demoted to Industry Minister, resigned from cabinet. He was replaced by old Industry Minister **Yekoyada Francis Omoto Masakhalia**, a veteran economist and first-time member of parliament who is little known to the public.

An International Monetary Fund delegation arrived in Nairobi on 1 March. The government wants the Fund to restart its suspended structural adjustment facility, worth US\$230 million, as had been expected until the reshuffle. The IMF has held back credit pending the appointment of a credible head of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority. The Fund team may be discouraged by Masakhalia's keen support for Nyachae's main cabinet rival, **Nicholas Kiprono Kipyator Biwott**, whose official post is East African Cooperation Minister and who is widely recognised as the government's hard man. Biwott's faction of the ruling Kenya African National Union lost its grip on the main financial institutions in 1993, when the principal donor governments prompted the removal of **George Saitoti** from the Finance Ministry in the wake of the Goldenberg financial scandal. With an eye on the presidential poll due in 2002, the old crowd is moving back.

Last October, the unassuming and soft-spoken Masakhalia, a respected administrator who had never taken a public stand on anything much, surprisingly called a weekend press conference at Nairobi's Grand Regency Hotel to defend Biwott against the recurring allegations that he was involved in the murder, in February 1990, of the then Foreign Minister, **Robert Ouko**. Masakhalia denied that Ouko and Biwott had disagreed over the tendering for a failed molasses factory at Kisumu.

## Against the odds

Masakhalia, **Harris Mule** and **Terry Ryan** were the first three Kenyan economists employed by the government at Independence in 1963. Masakhalia rose to the rank of permanent secretary in the Water Development Ministry but left in disgrace in 1984 after the Moi government accused him of hiring staff from his own Luhya people without following civil service procedures (few insiders believed this). He then worked at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa until 1997, when he retired and was elected to parliament on the KANU ticket.

Now he will have to talk to the IMF. Also talking to the Fund will be the young Treasury technocrats and Central Bank of Kenya

## Betrayed

**Abdullah Oçalan**, leader of the *Party Krekarani Kurdistan* (PKK, Kurdistan Workers' Party) could not have picked a worse time to take refuge in Nairobi. Since the **United States** Embassy was bombed on 7 August (along with that in **Tanzania**) at least 100 American agents have been working in Kenya, with local police, on the trail of **Usama bin Laden** and associated Islamists (AC Vol 39 No 17). US security officials are on permanent stakeout at Nairobi and Mombasa airports, we hear. Oçalan's abduction back to **Turkey** triggered protests by Kurdish exiles across Europe, North America and even in the Middle East.

Oçalan had been identified as soon as he landed, courtesy of the Athens government, at 11.33 A.M. on 2 February, aboard a private jet from **Greece**. Characteristically, sections of Kenyan security helped him or betrayed him, depending on how much was paid to whom and by whom.

With local assistance, Oçalan and four comrades made it to the Greek Embassy residence in the rich Muthaiga suburb, using false passports and without clearing customs or immigration. Once there, Oçalan and his hosts dropped their guard: the US spooks and 'their' Kenyans monitored his walks in the garden, along with his cellphone calls to his lawyer and Kenyan contacts.

Tipped off by the USA, Ankara dispatched commandos to Nairobi: they left their jet in Entebbe, **Uganda**, so as not to attract interest. On the Monday evening, 15 February, *Africa Confidential* understands that Oçalan was seduced out of his hideout by Kenyan security men whom he (and apparently his Greek hosts) thought were on their side, ostensibly to ride in their jeep to the airport for a flight to Amsterdam. *En route*, he was drugged and handed over to the Turkish special forces, whose aeroplane now waited on the Nairobi runway. Ankara was jubilant at the success of 'Operation Safari' in capturing its 'public enemy number one'.

Angry Kurdish exiles occupied Kenyan embassies in **Austria**, **France** and **Germany**. Kenya closed its 34 embassies worldwide for a week. Others took over Greek embassies, including that in **Britain**. **Israeli** guards shot dead three unarmed protesters trying to enter Israel's mission in Bonn. Israel went to

extraordinary lengths to deny involvement, with *Mossad* boss **Efraim Halevi** writing to the PKK and even to his own staff. Widespread belief in Israeli involvement was reported from Israel, despite its traditionally pro-Kurdish stance. Yet the joke also spread, recounted journalist **Haim Baram**, that *Mossad* couldn't have been involved 'or Oçalan would either be walking free on the streets of Nairobi or lost *en route* to Ankara'. Had *Mossad* been involved, the joke ran, 'we would now be in Kenya negotiating the release of our agents'.

Greece did lose three ministers and its internal intelligence boss in the affair. Oçalan had unsuccessfully sought refuge throughout Europe and Greece was reportedly seeking a haven for him elsewhere in Africa (which may partly explain **Egypt's** and **Uganda's** denials of involvement). Athens later slammed the European Union for failing to agree on Oçalan; the affair certainly underlined the problems of any common EU foreign policy. So did **Iraqi** Deputy Premier **Tariq Aziz's** visit to Ankara, at Premier **Bülent Ecevit's** invitation, two days before Oçalan was snatched.

Back in Nairobi, speaking to the press on 16 February, Foreign Minister **Bonaya Adhi Godana** fiercely denied Kenya had handed over Oçalan to Turkey, blaming the Greek Ambassador to Kenya, **George Costoulas**. (Costoulas had been forbidden to ride in the jeep carrying Oçalan, which eluded him when he tried to follow it).

Yet Godana admitted his government had known of Oçalan's whereabouts since his arrival. Meanwhile, immigration chief **Francis Kwinga** was proudly telling the press: 'We sent Oçalan away and are very happy he is no longer here. We put him on a flight. We did our job which was to flush him out'. Two days later, Kwinga was fired.

In Kenya, the memory is fresh of August's bombing, when 250 Kenyans died and over 1,000 were injured, many permanently. Amid widespread fear that the PKK could seek revenge, popular anger focusses on government corruption and ineptitude in handling international terrorism and armed movements from abroad.

officials under Governor **Micah Cheserem** who have braved the political odds in attempting fiscal restraint and loan recovery. Nyachae, though, was quick to take credit for both. After his fall, with his Kikuyu wife **Grace** at his side, he claimed that he had been sacked for his determined pursuit of presidential allies who 'owed billions of shillings' to the banks (AC Vol 39 No 25). He protested loudly against the 'continuous frustration by powerful untouchable people' who resented his 'war against corruption'.

The dispute is part of the faction-fighting within KANU for the succession to Moi (AC Vol 39 No 23), who is supposed to retire in 2002. We hear that ministers from the two main factions, Nyachae's KANU-A and Biwott's KANU-B, refuse to speak to each other, even in cabinet. Biwott's triumph includes both Nyachae's exit and the demotion of Nyachae's ally, **Kipkalya Kones**, from the Public Works Ministry, which hands out contracts, to the innocuous Technology and Research Ministry. Nevertheless, Moi still did not fill the vacant vice-presidency: this might drive the losing KANU faction into opposition arms and Moi isn't risking that.

New Public Works Minister is **Noah Katana Ngala**, a member

of neither faction. Yet as Lands Minister, he failed to stop the allocation of public land and government forests (most notoriously Karura forest in Nairobi) to the same notables in KANU of whom Nyachae complains. His successor at Lands is **Gideon Ndambuki**, who owes large sums to Kenya's troubled banks.

As usual, Moi said the reshuffle was meant to 'bring efficiency in the delivery of public services' and to curb corruption by streamlining tendering procedures for contracts and supplies to government departments. The Central Tender Board and the ministerial tender boards are due for yet another reorganisation. Other highlights of the reshuffle are:

- **Frederick Amuko wa Anangwe** (previously Cooperatives Minister) and **Julius Lekany ole Sunkuli** (former assistant minister) are both promoted to become ministers of state in the Office of the President. The sharp-tongued Amuko wa Anangwe, once lecturer in government at Nairobi University, is fiercely loyal to Moi and Biwott. Julius Sunkuli's elevation will worry his Maasai rival **William Ntimama**, member of Nyachae's 'A' faction.

- **Sally Kosgey**, with robust connections to State House, returns from the

President's Office to the Foreign Affairs Ministry as Permanent Secretary. This follows the embarrassing abduction of **Abdullah Ocalan** (see Box).

● Principal Immigration Officer **Francis Kwinga** has been retired following the Ocalan affair. The controversial Police Commissioner, **Duncan Wachira** ('Strongman' to the cops), was replaced by the Deputy Commissioner for road traffic, **Philemon Abong'o**. **Francis Sang** becomes Director of the Criminal Investigation Division, although **Noah arap Too**, whom he replaces, was regarded as efficient.

In Kenya's ethnically charged politics, the impact of the latest changes has gone deep into the rural homelands where, at weekends, the elites party on roast goat, *ugali* (maize porridge) and warm Kenya beer. Nyachae's departure has increased the anti-Moi rumblings in his homeland, the western area of Kisii; only three months ago, he was assuring his people that it was 'time for a Kisii to lead Kenya'. The fractious Kisii clans have united as never before, even though new Industry Minister **Christopher Obure** is a Kisii. The opposition parties - especially **Mwai Kibaki's** Democratic Party - hope to exploit that anger. The Kisii KANU-B loyalists, whose leader is Local Government Minister **Samwel Ongeru**, are severely weakened.

Among the Luo, **Raila Odinga's** position as supreme leader has been strengthened by the appointments of two other Luo - **Abong'o** as police chief and **Lazarus Amayo** as High Commissioner to **India**. Odinga's campaign for more jobs for Luo, which began when he joined the pro-Moi chorus early last year, has been rewarded. He has praised Moi, spoken often about the 'danger' of a Kikuyu return to power and refrained from criticising corruption or the theft of public land.

Masakhalia's Luhya people - Kenya's second largest group, after the Kikuyu - are usually divided; his promotion will also promote factionalism. He becomes the most senior Luhya cabinet minister while another Luhya, **Anangwe**, has been promoted into Moi's office. This angers the dissident KANU Luhya MPs, such as **Cyrus Jirongo**, who claim that Moi and Biwott have neglected their western area and have been trying (in the face of Moi's personal refusal to register the party) to form a new opposition 'United Democratic Movement' to contest the 2002 presidential election. However, the Luhya members of the opposition Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya, led by **Michael Wamalwa Kijana**, favour an alliance with Moi. In 2002, the Luhya vote will probably split all ways, as usual. That suits KANU-B just fine.

Meanwhile, the constitutional review process, which KANU promised to implement after the bloody riots of July 1997, has ground to a halt. Inter-party consultations began in late 1997 and agreed to set up a 25-member Constitutional Review Commission. Twelve commissioners have already been nominated by civic groups, non-governmental organisations and churches. Thirteen were to have been nominated by the political parties: five by KANU, three by the DP, two by Odinga's National Development Party and one each by Ford-Kenya, the Social Democratic Party and the five other tiny opposition parties together.

The micro-parties balked at this, insisting on a seat each. More formidable obstacles have been erected by Biwott's KANU faction, which understands only too well that it would be in a minority within the Review Commission. The day after the cabinet reshuffle was announced, 17 KANU MPs, led by Biwott, Saitoti and Home Affairs Minister **Shariff Nassir**, stormed the Commission's inaugural meeting at County Hall, opposite parliament, and claimed for KANU a majority in the Commission. Nassir explained this was 'because we want to show you we rule this country'. The proceedings came to an abrupt halt.

## CONGO-KINSHASA

# Hard talk in Kinshasa

## Kabila's allies are pushing him to make peace with the rebels

Looking for a way out of the Congo war, Presidents **Robert Mugabe**, **Sam Nujoma** and **José Eduardo dos Santos** emerged grim-faced from their Kinshasa summit with President **Laurent-Désiré Kabila** on 1 March (AC Vol 40 No 2). Under heavy pressure at home, Dos Santos had already reduced **Angola's** contingent in the pro-Kabila alliance to a few hundred troops around Matadi and the border area; Mugabe and Nujoma are set to follow suit, leaving Kabila dangerously exposed to the military campaign of the **Rwandan** and **Ugandan**-backed rebel movement, the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD).

Mugabe's tone at a post-summit press conference told the story. Triumphant talk about chasing the invading rebels out of Congo-Kinshasa was junked in favour of a commitment to concluding 'an honourable ceasefire'. After visiting Kinshasa, the **British** Minister for African Affairs and Human Rights, **Tony Lloyd**, said in late February that Kabila was willing to talk to the RCD 'any place, any time'. The RCD, now sensing a clear military advantage, remains unenthusiastic about a meeting.

Behind the public shows of solidarity, we hear there has been much frustration in the alliance with Kabila's methods. Meanwhile at home, he has lost almost all the personal support he initially gained in the war against the rebels. Already appalling economic conditions continue to deteriorate. In March, just eleven ships are expected at Matadi; there were 21 in January, 27 in December. The only civil servants to get regular pay are Kinshasa teachers. Kananga, the capital of Eastern Kasai, has had no drinking water for six weeks, since there is no fuel to run water company *Regideso*.

In Mbuji-Mayi, the capital of Western Kasai and of small-scale diamond mining, the new Congolese franc notes are not accepted: people still use the old Zaïre notes from **Mobutu Sese Seko's** time (AC Vol 39 No 23). Since it was first issued in June 1998, the new currency has depreciated by 80 per cent against the US dollar. Now that the law forbids the sale of diamonds other than for Congolese francs, declared sales of diamonds from the province's small mines have fallen by half. In flight after their October defeat at Kindu, Maniema Province, 8,000 soldiers of the supposed national army, the *Forces Armées Congolaises*, pillaged every parish in Tshumbe diocese and robbed farmers' houses in Lodja region.

Laurent Kabila's forces are on the run, with his foreign allies threatening to pull out. On 27 January, government troops lost the battle for Lubao, 240 kilometres east of Mbuji-Mayi; subsequently, Eastern Kasai Governor **Omer N'Kamba** was arrested, along with the local commander, **Kabengele**, by the chillingly named *Département Militaire pour la Répression des Activités Anti-Parti* (Demiap). This Military Department for the Repression of Anti-Party Activities is a revival of an eponymous agency in Kabila's guerrilla group of 1967-1986.

The peace talks are wavering. Kabila entered the talks as the only way to hold back the tide of unpopularity and for the same reason, he dismissed his government on 20 February, in the hope of widening his political base. His narrow coalition does not even include **Antoine Gizenga's** *Parti Lumumbiste Unifié*, strongly

based in Kinshasa and the Bandundu and the largest of the various groups loyal to the memory of **Patrice Lumumba**.

Nobody believes that Kabila has made public life more honest. The *Office des Biens Mal Acquis*, set up to recover assets stolen by Mobutu's officials, is now accused of fraud by employees of organisations which it has taken over. The only region that backs Kabila is his native Katanga but even the Katangese grumble that he has handed control of *Gécamines*, the profitable mining enterprise, to **Zimbabwean** entrepreneur **Billy Rautenbach**.

One important ministry fell vacant on 27 February, when Foreign Affairs Minister **Jean-Charles Okoto Lolakombe** was made Governor of Eastern Kasai. A candidate for the job is **Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda**, former leader of the *Front Commun des Nationalistes*, who served as Foreign Minister when **Léon Lobitsch Kengo wa Dondo** was Premier under Mobutu. Kamanda met Kabila when the President visited Paris in late November. Yet Kabila may not manage genuinely to widen his political support. On 9 January, he issued Decree 194, enacting the rules for a new democracy. Opposition parties were not impressed. They suspect that Kabila, like Mobutu before him, wants to buy off his rivals.

### Unpopular power

The parties insist they must be recognised unconditionally and allowed to operate freely, with room to negotiate a programme for a government they might join. For several months, Kabila hoped that **André Bo-Boliko**, President of the *Parti Démocrate Social Chrétien*, would become prime minister but Bo-Boliko's senior party colleagues said they would abandon him if he joined up with the President. The PDSC regards Decree 194 as 'absurd', since its conditions for registering parties cannot be met even by the *Comités de Pouvoir Populaire* which Kabila set up early this year to replace his *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL).

The rules say parties hoping to register must have sections in every province, which is impossible while over half the country is controlled by rebels. Regional organisations such as the *Association des Bakongo* or the mainly Katangese *Union des Fédéralistes et des Républicains Indépendants*, would be shut out of national politics. The Decree bans parties from affiliating in any way with foreign organisations, which excludes both Bo-Boliko's PDSC, affiliated to the Christian Democrat International, and **Etienne Tshisekedi wa Malumba's** *Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social*, which has observer status with the Socialist International. Furthermore, it forbids parties to use names or symbols formerly used by any organisation 'whose attitude or actions have been contrary to the national interest'. This is aimed at Mobutu's old *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* and at ex-Premier **Léon Kengo wa Dondo's** *Union des Démocrates Indépendants*.

Kengo wa Dondo and many other exiles would be kept out of active politics by the article asserting that party founders must have lived in Congo for at least a year before registration. Parties wishing to register must pay a deposit of 30,000 Congo francs to the state and their founding members must demonstrate 'an adequate level of intellectual, scientific or technical education' (sic) or 'proven professional or political experience'. They must also enjoy 'perfect physical and mental health', a condition that even Kabila might fail since, on 12 February, he visited Luanda's Central Military Hospital for treatment by **Cuban** doctors for heart problems and a gastrointestinal infection.

Kabila wants to set up a 'People's State' with his *Comités de Pouvoir Populaire* as the instrument for replacing the 'comprador

state'. He stands by his economic ideas and promised on 21 January that Congo would soon be able to produce tanks and armoured vehicles. His gestures towards widening his political base included, on 10 and 11 February, the arrest of two members of the UDPS national committee, **Mukendi M'Paya** and **Sylvain Kamanyi**, who join other party leaders in gaol. On 22 February, Bo-Boliko was forbidden to travel to **Belgium**, in punishment for the PDSC's decision to form a strategic electoral alliance with the UDPS and other parties of the former *Union Sacrée de l'Opposition Radicale*. A decree on 1 February prohibits all political meetings.

With the political opposition disqualified, only a few individuals, most of them former *Mobutistes*, are in line for ministerial jobs. In addition to Kamanda, one is **André Atundu Liongo**, at present based in Sandton near Johannesburg and running the *Comité de Bons Offices et de Facilitation pour le Consensus National*, apparently an organisation for ministerial candidates. Under Mobutu, Atundu Liongo served as head of a security agency, the *Agence Nationale de Documentation*, and as Chief Executive Officer of *Gécamines Commerciale*. He is close to **Victor Nendaka-Bika** who, along with Mobutu and **Jonas Mukamba Kadiata**, organised the transfer of Patrice Lumumba to meet his death in Katanga, in January 1961. Other ex-Mobutist officials in their group include **Célestin Anzuluni Bembe** from South Kivu and ex-Foreign Minister **Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya**.

The rebel RCD has also been infiltrated by many former Mobutists and is torn by ethnic tensions between its Tutsi leaders and the representatives of Kivu's many minorities who run the MaiMai militias. **Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma** has been replaced as party Vice-President by Commandant **Jean-Pierre Ondekane**. External relations go to **Alexis Thambwe Mwamba**, replacing **Bizima Karaha**, a Tutsi who has taken over security and information. Defence becomes the responsibility of a former Mobutist, Gen. **Célestin Ilunga Shamamba**. Z'Ahidi Ngoma, who saw himself as the leading RCD democrat, has resigned in protest and founded the *Union Congolaise pour la Paix*; from exile in Paris he denounces the 'Goma mafia' but still predicts a rebel victory.

In South Kivu, there was fighting in late January between Banyamulenge (Congo Tutsi) soldiers and troops from Rwanda who had been sent to discipline them. The Banyamulenge suspect that the Rwandans, far from selflessly defending Tutsi interests, have their own agenda; Z'Ahidi Ngoma's allies claim Rwanda has lent the RCD \$10 million, on terms known only to party coordinator **Vincent de Paul Lunda Bululu**. There is tension, too, in areas controlled by Ugandan troops, who have detained some Congolese soldiers in camps to submit them to 'ideological education'.

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# Pointers

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Cyril and the suits

The ousting of former African National Congress Secretary General **Cyril Ramaphosa** as a deputy chairperson of NAIL (New Africa Investments Limited) on 22 February raises questions about his business and political future. It was ordered by his most senior fellow-directors - **Nthato Motlana** (executive chairperson), **Dikgang Moseneke** (lawyer and ex-Pan Africanist Congress member) and **Zwelakhe Sisulu** (ex-journalist, ex-head of SA Broadcasting Corporation and scion of a leading ANC family).

Ramaphosa's other directorships (Anglo American, SA Breweries, First National Bank, Malope Bakeries) conflicted with NAIL's requirements, company sources said. There was also disagreement over strategy for Johnnic, a company Ramaphosa chairs and in which NAIL holds a stake via the National Empowerment Consortium (NEC), a black coalition which includes unions.

We also hear Motlana asked Ramaphosa to resign his chair of both Johnnic and Times Media Ltd., in which NAIL also has an interest via the NEC. In Johannesburg, TML owns the mass circulation *Sunday Times*, daily *Business Day* and weekly *Financial Mail*. Ramaphosa refused to go. He had looked set for stardom as main ANC negotiator in the pre-1994 elections settlement. The turning point was **Nelson Mandela's** decision to appoint **Thabo Mbeki** not Ramaphosa Deputy President in 1994, after the latter had made unguarded though private comments about the ANC. Ramaphosa rejected a ministerial job and went into business.

Some believed he wanted to build a financial base to return to politics. Many saw Ramaphosa, ten years younger than Mbeki, as his natural successor; that looks problematic. Mbeki's office dismissed as 'outrageous lies' reports that Motlana, Moseneke and Sisulu had conspired on behalf of Mbeki's camp to weaken Ramaphosa's black empowerment base and remove his influence over TML publications, lest he use them to further his political career.

Ramaphosa insists he isn't interested in politics, describing it as 'much nastier than business'. For now, he has strong support in the NEC but that could change: some NEC partners are indebted to cash-rich NAIL for their stakes in Johnnic; they found it hard to pay the inflated prices Anglo charged for Johnnic shares and so borrowed from NAIL.

Editorial independence is a highly sensitive issue at TML. *Business Day* and the *Financial Mail* are tied into a 50-50 shareholding with Pearsons, owners of **Britain's** *Financial Times*, with clear guarantees on independence. While TML journalists have vigorously contested political pressures, some fear a change in policy

on senior editorial appointments if Ramaphosa is pushed out. The mass circulation *Sunday Times*, currently edited by **Mike Robertson**, looks vulnerable. It faces a tough challenge this month from the *Sunday World*, to be jointly launched by TML and the *Sowetan* group (in which Motlana also has an interest).

## AFRICA

### Conference calls

Amsterdam and Geneva have become favoured cities for conference organisers seeking high-ranking African delegates. An impressive array of ministers and power company managers is on the guest list for the 'Power 2000 Africa Energy Forum', due in May in Amsterdam. Most speakers are regulars on the Southern and East Africa circuit, with major projects in the pipeline at home.

Exceptions are **Sierra Leone's** Energy and Works Minister, **Thaimu Bangura**, and electricity corporation Chairperson, **Mustapha Kargbo**. While Sierra Leone badly needs investment in power, it has little hope of attracting foreign capital in the present security climate. One industry source half-humorously suggested that the Freetown delegates may exploit Amsterdam's proximity to the diamond-buying centre of Antwerp, should they wish to 'make a downpayment' on a contract.

Geneva also has its attractions, especially for delegates needing to confer with their **Swiss** bankers. Conference organisers CWC report a brisk trade, having lined up a phalanx of **Libyan** officials to speak in Geneva in April: Energy Secretary **Abdalla el Badri**, **Abdulhafiz Zleitini** (Economy and Commerce) and three senior National Oil Corporation managers: Chairperson **Hammouda el Aswad**, Head of Exploration **Ibrahim Baggari** and Crude Oil Sales Department Manager **Mohamed Abani**.

## ANGOLA

### Francophone fronts

Luanda is sharpening up its diplomatic tactics after a string of military successes by the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* in the north-west. Key to UNITA's success has been the retraining of officers in **Morocco** (several hundred Moroccan soldiers are said to be helping with logistics and communications in the north-east following meetings in 1998 between **Jonas Savimbi** and King **Hassan II**) and help from Francophone sympathisers, such as **Togo's** **Gnassingbé Eyadéma** and **Burkina Faso's** **Blaise Compaoré**, with arms procurement and transshipment.

So Luanda wants to put pressure on **France**: President **Jacques Chirac** has close ties with Hassan and Compaoré. In mid-February, new Angolan Foreign Minister **João Bernardo de Miranda** penned a tough note to his counterpart

**Hubert Védrine** demanding that Paris end its ambiguous attitude to Luanda. Within days, Védrine had ordered the expulsion of UNITA's Paris representative, the highly regarded Brigadier **Isaias Samakuva**.

Whether Védrine will go much further and start leaning on Compaoré and Hassan is more questionable. Tipped to lead Luanda's Francophone campaign is its current Ambassador to Lisbon, **Hipolito Patricio**. Formerly Press Secretary to President **José Eduardo dos Santos**. Patricio was Luanda's first Ambassador to Washington and is well connected in the Presidency at *Futungo de Belas*.

## LANDMINES

### Banned, still deadly

The campaign against anti-personnel mines (APM) has grown fast. The Ottawa Convention banning them came into force on 1 March, when 134 governments had signed and 65 ratified it. The latest signatory was **Ukraine**, a big arms exporter said to have over a million mines in stock. Yet in many countries, mines are still laid faster than they are removed. **Angola** and **Sudan**, both signatories, lead the minefield: both increasingly lay mines and so do their armed opponents (AC Vol 39 No 1).

Angola, where our sources recently saw mines being placed, became a test-case after the late Princess **Diana's** much publicised visit in 1997. The National Islamic Front government has lately given the Sudan Campaign to Ban Landmines generous television time. The language at least has changed: combatants depict opponents as beyond the pale if they use mines.

**Egypt** is now the only African producer but seems not to be exporting. It claims to be the world's most heavily mined country, with 17.5 million World War II devices in the Western Desert (plus others left over from wars with **Israel**) and that clearing them would cost US\$200 mn. Egypt and **Libya** use the 'polluter pays' principle, saying they will sign up to Ottawa only if compensated for mine-clearing. The anti-tank mines in the desert, which can be set off by civilian vehicles, are not covered by Ottawa.

Africa's leading arms manufacturer, **South Africa**, led the call for the ban. **China** and **Russia** say they no longer export but many think they do; an *Africa Confidential* source saw Russian mines at a Paris arms fair in 1998. African customers often buy second-hand mines from government arsenals, through dealers. Both **Ethiopia**, which has signed, and **Eritrea**, which hasn't, have mined their disputed border. The eight other African non-signatories are **Central African Republic**, **Comoros**, **Congo-Brazzaville**, **Congo-Kinshasa**, **Liberia**, **Morocco**, **Nigeria** and **Somalia**. **Guinea-Bissau** has laid mines since signing. Rebels have laid mines recently in **Djibouti** and, it seems, **Sierra Leone**.