

AFRICA CONFIDENTIAL

SOUTH AFRICA

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Mbeki the mystery

Now centre-stage as President, Thabo Mbeki keeps South Africans guessing. Apart from the inclusion of 8 women out of 29 ministers, his new cabinet, dominated by outgoing President Mandela's appointees, shows little change in political style. But his restructured president's office is set to run the most centralised government in the country's 90 year history.

MALAWI

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Close shave

Close-run and bad-tempered, Malawi's 15 June elections have sparked off several street confrontations and plenty of litigation. President Muluzi looks set to ride the storm, helped by a marginally bigger vote in the presidential and parliamentary polls than in 1994. His first major test will be whether he can drop some of the more powerful but incompetent ministers from his cabinet.

MOZAMBIQUE

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Chissano tastes success

President Joaquim Chissano is determined to go to the polls before the end of the millennium, claiming most of the credit for his country's reputation as Africa's new success story. According to the World Bank, Mozambique has jumped from being one of the world's poorest countries to one of its fastest growing economies.

POINTERS

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Angola, Algeria, and Yugoslavia/ Africa

Gem gumshoes, bienvenue à Alger, refugee rivals.

SUDAN

The NIF goes on a charm offensive

Europe takes Khartoum's promises of dialogue and an 'oil bonanza' seriously - unlike Washington and the Sudanese themselves

Last week in Khartoum, where mixed student outings have been common for decades, 25 students who went on a picnic were publicly flogged for 'immoral' behaviour. The girls were found guilty of wearing trousers. Fines were imposed of up to 50,000 Sudanese pounds (US\$20), a large sum in today's impoverished Sudan. More seriously, government forces continue to drive Southern civilians from their homes. Hundreds were crossing into **Kenya** at Lokichoggio daily in early June, fleeing government bombing around Chukundum. In mid-June, the United Nations reported that some 2,000 Dinka people from northern Bahr el Ghazal had trudged into Khor Omer camp at Ed Daein, Southern Darfur. Government forces continue to torch Nuban villages.

Khartoum's continued abuse of human rights was well documented in the first report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights, **Leonardo Franco (Argentina)**. 'I witnessed so many cases of torture at first-hand', he told *Africa Confidential*. Yet European Union governments, at the meeting at the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva on 21 April, pushed through an enthusiastic resolution which included praise for the National Islamic Front government's 'expressed commitment to a process of democratisation with a view to establishing a representative and accountable government'.

The West is split on relations with the NIF. The **United States** usually proposes the annual motion needed to renew the Rapporteur's post. This year, the EU submitted the motion. A US official told us this was because of sensitivities over the *El Shifa* bombing last August, when his government attacked a pharmaceuticals factory suspected of preparing chemical weapons (AC Vol 39 No 17). The NIF has skilfully spread and exploited the notion that Washington hit the wrong target. One European diplomat told us the EU put the motion because the USA wanted to talk secretly to the NIF. Half of the EU countries are doing exactly that (pretty openly) as US officials note, expressing anger at the EU motion. 'They're acting as if everything's now all right', said one. 'What about the bombing of hospitals in the South?'

Paris and Rome lead the charge

France and **Italy** enthusiastically led the UN motion, with **Germany** (EU chair) and **Britain** also keen. The **Netherlands** was the only EU state to object, though not hard. In Khartoum, French Ambassador **Michel Raimbaud** is widely regarded as sympathetic to the NIF. Bonn's Ambassador is regularly seen on government television at NIF meetings with no other foreign diplomat present.

The approaching anniversary of its coup on 30 June 1989 reinforces the NIF in its conviction of its own rightness, tactically and strategically as well as ideologically. Stories are spreading again of splits in the NIF, especially between **Hassan el Turabi** and General **Omer el Beshir**. Rather than splits, there are constant tugs of war for influence between those who share the same world-view: when the crunch comes, the centre will hold. The '*emir*' is fundamental to Islamist politics and El Turabi is indeed in charge. Rumours of Turabi's decline are exaggerated. He and his group hold the purse strings, so Omer's room for manoeuvre is limited as is that of his star generation, 10-20 years younger than himself (**Ali Osman, Ghazi**, etc.) who are said to be fed up since Turabi believes that power is sustained by constantly recruiting a younger team.

Yet the NIF knows how much it is hated nationwide and how intractable is the conflict in the South. Its charm offensive reflects a pragmatic approach to both the weaknesses and the strengths of its situation. The regime aims to:

1. Divide, and where possible co-opt, the opposition.
2. Persuade Western, Arab and other African governments that Sudan is a good place to invest/trade and that its government is a stable and valid interlocutor.
3. Distract Washington from the terrorist trail and win it over.

The charm offensive isn't new. What is, is the momentum which the NIF has created, cultivating an image of real change in the offing and creating a mood of expectation among governments and businesses. Since it began preparing for power in the 1970s, the NIF has become expert at exploiting

foreign businesses. Now Arab and Western governments are jumping onto its accelerating bandwagon - and so are some Sudanese opposition leaders. Some are so keen that they ignore the fact that the NIF is in the driving seat.

The NIF's divide-to-rule successes include 'peace agreements' in 1997 and 1998, when it co-opted dissident Sudan People's Liberation Army dissident leaders **Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon** and **Lam Akol Ajawin**, plus some people dubbed faction leaders

The National Islamic Front on parade

Hassan el Turabi heads a team of sometimes quarrelling but always committed people. The key NIF people in government have been there since the 1989 coup. A number of top people are unknown to the public, particularly in the many senior security posts. 'Gatekeepers' always keep **Omer el Beshir** in and others out and monitor all. Core stalwarts include:

Abdel Rahim Mahmoud Hamdi: veteran NIF from Islamic Charter Front days; heads infant Stock Exchange; ex-Finance Minister; ex-Baraka and Faisal Islamic banks; good at cultivating World Bank and Western business.

Abdel Rahim Mohamed Hussein: Interior Minister; NIF no. 2 in armed forces pre-1985 (SPLA shot down no. 1, Col. **Mukhtar Mohamedein**, 1988); ex-airforce engineer; ex-gatekeeper; one for tough jobs.

Abdel Waheb Osman: Finance Minister; NIF MP 1986.

Ahmed el Dabi: General; officially replaced **Nafi'e Ali** as external security boss after the attack on President **Hosni Mubarak**; then El Dabi officially replaced by **Qutbi el Mahdi** in November 1996; still said to be in security.

Ali el Haj Mohamed: Federal Relations Minister; track record in southern accords, broken and otherwise; medic; in London during coup and admitted coup was NIF at public meetings;

Omer Bedawi Abu el Basher: booked a meeting room for Mohamed (see above) when petroleum engineering PhD student; from Kadugli; still in London in business; key contact on oil contracts.

Ali Osman Mohamed Taha: Vice-President; ex-Social Planning, then Foreign, Minister; led Khartoum University Union in 1970s; worked as lawyer, then judge; Shaigi; son of railway worker; Muslim Brotherhood MP after **Nimeiri**'s 1977-8 'reconciliation'; leader of NIF parliamentary group after 1986 elections.

Ali Mohamed Osman Yassin: Attorney General; ex-Ambassador to UK and to UN.

Amin Hassan Omer: Under-Secretary, Information; ex-gatekeeper.

Awad el Jaz: Energy and Mining Minister; crucial to charm campaign; also important in security activities.

Badr el Din Taha: Khartoum Governor; ex-Director, Agricultural Bank of Sudan.

Bakri Hassan Salih: Presidential Advisor (gatekeeper); ex-Interior Minister, ex-security chief.

Ghazi Salah el Din el Atabani: Culture & Information Minister; medical doctor; **Libyan**-trained tank driver; in 1976 anti-Nimeiri attack by National Front (MB-Umma-DUP alliance), he and **Mahdi Ibrahim** held off army at Communications building; ex-State Foreign Minister under Ali Osman; married to **Mubarek Abdullahi el Fadil**'s sister-in-law;

Hassan Osman Dahawi: Major General; overall security chief.

Hussein Khojali: veteran NIF; editor and founder '*Alwan*', Sudan's first tabloid; close to Turabi;

Ibrahim Abu Aouf: influential; formerly in charge of refugee affairs.

Ibrahim Ahmed Omer: Higher Education and Scientific Research Minister; ex-MP for NIF; long fight to set up U of K Islamic Studies Dept. in early 1980s.

Ibrahim el Senoussi: reputed to have built up NIF militias; veteran of 1976 National Front camps in Libya; background worker.

Ibrahim Shams el Din: tough major (tanks); Omer's Defence Advisor; with security buff **Fatih Erwa** (now UN Ambassador) in Juba during 1992 events.

Ibrahim Suleiman: General; Defence Minister.

Isam Siddig: junior Irrigation Minister; chemical engineer; married into **Ba Abboud** family, which built *El Shifa* plant.

Kabshur Kuku: Education Minister; Nuba.

Mahdi Ibrahim: Ambassador, **United States**; veteran NIF; ex-editor NIF paper '*El Rayah*'; ex-militia organiser.

Majzoub el Khalifa: in charge of trades unions; ex-State Minister for Khartoum, keeping tabs on the capital.

Mohamed Abdullah Jar el Nabi: entrepreneur; bought Chevron concession; praised this month by Omer for building Abu Jebra refinery and contribution to oil story.

Mohamed el Amin Khalifa: Cabinet Affairs Minister.

Moussa Abdullah Yagoub: veteran NIF with business interests; brother of respected late Vice-Chancellor Juba University, **Sammani**.

Mustafa Osman Ismail: veteran NIF; Foreign Minister, effective diplomat known as 'Mr. Smile'; post-coup, headed parallel foreign policy body Friendship Committees, e.g. Khartoum-based Sudanese-**British** Friendship Committee.

Nafi'e Ali Nafi'e: veteran NIF; Agriculture and Forests Minister; previous (and believed to be present) security supremo, officially removed in aftermath of 1995 assassination attempt on **Egyptian** President Hosni Mubarak; ex-U of K agriculture lecturer; trained in **Iran** in mid-1980s.

Nasr el Din Idriss: Ambassador, **South Africa**; career diplomat; ex-Ambassador to UN, New York; ex-gatekeeper for El-Beshir, as he was for Premier **El Gizouli Dafa'llah** in 1985.

El Nur Zarroug: business person; retired sea captain; veteran NIF and London resident, where Warm Seas Shipping company deals in strategic commodities for government.

Omer Abdel Marouf: ex-chemical engineering technician; was People's Defence Force supremo and first civilian State (junior) Defence Minister.

Omer Hassan Ahmed el Beshir: Lieutenant (formerly Brigadier) General; President; paratrooper; was NIF's no. 3 in army pre-1989; Baathist '*El Destour*' magazine in 1986 identified him as NIFer preparing coup; went to Khartoum el Gadima school as did Ali Osman; several brothers NIF, including one in Birmingham, UK, before coup.

Omer Youssef Bireedo: London Ambassador (withdrawn 1998); effective career diplomat.

Osman Khalid: colourful veteran; NIF ex-MP; businessman moving between UK and Sudan.

Qutbi el Mahdi: External Security chief; ex-Ambassador, Iran; **Canadian** nationality (AC Vol 40 No 1).

Salah el Din Karrar ('Salah Dollar'): Ambassador; ex-Cabinet Affairs Minister; ex-head Revolutionary Command Council Economic Committee; many posts.

Sherif el Din Banaga: Minister Housing and Engineering Affairs, Khartoum State; presided bulldozing of displaced people's settlements; doctorate, civil engineering, Loughborough, UK.

Taj el Sir Mustafa: veteran NIF; MP; key to security organs' funding; ex-Trade Minister; ex-Industry Minister; founded telecommunications organisation Sudatel (now part owned by *El Shifa* investor **Salah Idriss**).

Tayeb Ibrahim Mohamed Kheir ('Tayeb Sikha, 'iron bar'): Social Planning (known for good reason as 'Social Engineering'); ex-Darfur Governor; heads peace committee for west; Cabinet Affairs Minister post-coup; presided over civil service mass dismissals; another one for tough jobs.

for the purpose. **'Shereef' Zein el Abdin el Hindi** has taken over to the NIF the (much depleted) wing of the Democratic Unionist Party which he inherited from his respected brother, **'Shereef' Hussein el Hindi**. This enabled the Foreign Minister, on a visit to Paris this month, to present the 'Democratic Union' as partner in a two-party system. Meanwhile, the State Minister for Peace, **Hamed Abdel Karim**, was recently quoted as saying the government was negotiating with **Yussef Kuwa**, following the surrender of 12,000 SPLA-Nuba fighters. Sources close to the SPLA-Nuba commander angrily deny this improbable scenario.

Most controversially but less surprisingly, in Geneva in early June Umma Party chief **El Sadig el Sadeeg el Mahdi** met the man who in 1989 overthrew him as elected Premier, NIF leader Hassan Abdullah el Turabi; they are not, incidentally, brothers-in-law as frequently claimed. *Africa Confidential* understands that, beforehand, El Sadig did not consult either the Umma's exiled leaders or the party 'inside'. This produced ferment in the party, which has no structures for effectively challenging its leader's decisions. We hear that El Sadig's move was opposed by Party Secretary General **Omer Nur el Deim** and National Democratic Alliance Secretary General **Mubarek Abdullahi el Fadil el Mahdi** (both ministers in the government the NIF overthrew). Yet both fell swiftly into line behind their leader. Many Sudanese wonder whether Mubarek Abdullahi is positioning himself: Umma sources say he pressed his cousin not to return to Khartoum, as planned, for further talks in mid-June.

Sadig meets Turabi

The impact of Sadig's meeting on the Umma could be huge: among a multitude of protests, the leadership of the Al Medina branch, **Saudi Arabia**, sent a searing five-page memorandum to Sadig. 'There is no democracy in our party', they complained, adding that Sadig's behaviour was 'an invitation to surrender... an abandoning of the hopes and aspirations of our people'. Meanwhile, the DUP Secretary General, ex-Interior Minister **Sid Ahmed el Hussein**, again spoke out against dialogue with the NIF from his home in Khartoum. It was 'inconceivable' to talk of reconciliation without 'demanding accountability from the NIF' for the suffering it had caused, he said.

Turabi was equally scathing, albeit for other reasons: on Sudan TV after the meeting, he asked, 'When someone [the NDA] comes to you on their knees, what do you say to them?'

On 7-15 June, notwithstanding Sudan's new pact with **Eritrea**, the NDA held a meeting in Asmara, where Sadig's venture came under heavy fire. (Simultaneously Khartoum's powerful Culture and Information Minister, NIF stalwart **Ghazi Salah el Din el Atabani**, visited Asmara with a 'security delegation', staying in the same hotel, we gather, as Mubarek Abdullahi). Democratic Unionist Party leader **Mohamed Osman el Mirghani** gained much kudos from this. The NDA meeting seemed unaware that, following Mohamed Osman's May trip to **Libya**, the official Jamahiriya Arab News Agency had written on 29 May that, along with Libyan officials, he had met 'a number of Sudanese ministers' at an 'enlarged meeting' in Sirte.

The NDA's unpromising gathering was transformed into a success partly by an unusually firm and cohesive speech from the SPLA boss, Colonel **John Garang de Mabior**. He did not reject a 'peaceful solution' (a current catchphrase, along with 'political negotiation'), such as the NIF is ostensibly offering: anybody who turns that down will be accused of warmongering. But he insisted the NIF could never be reformed and that any chance of keeping

Sudan united depends on a secular constitution: all NDA parties have agreed this but the Umma and DUP constantly waver. Garang ran through the NIF's tactics for holding onto power, stressing 'divide-to-rule' and noting that the 'peace from within' policy had brought no peace and isolated its signatories, Riek Machar and Lam Akol.

The speech was more diplomatic than what Garang had to say to Sadig in a closed meeting in Kampala, **Uganda**, on 22 May. Sadig defended his meeting with Turabi but Garang apparently made it clear that the SPLA's continued membership of the NDA might depend on Northern parties' continued support for the NDA and its opposition to the NIF.

The Asmara final communique was firm and gave the impression of an NDA more united than ever. This is partly true: the NDA had frightened itself with the spectre of its own and the nation's disintegration. Few outside the Umma and DUP think those two parties can be relied on; yet minds seem more focused. Also new was a less than heartfelt welcome for Libyan and **Egyptian** involvement in mediating with the NIF. Nonetheless, the NDA is due to go to Cairo on 5 July and Tripoli three days later: expectations are that NIF people will be in both cities. Egypt's obsession now appears to be to extract the 'Sudan file' from its Africa strategy (the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development; Eritrean, **Ethiopian**, Ugandan support for the NDA) and place it firmly in the Arab camp (Libya, **Qatar**, Saudi).

Change, though, can come only from the home front, not by foreign intervention. The NDA underlined that a 'political solution' was possible only through adherence to its previous resolutions and the IGAD Declaration of Principles. These demand a secular constitution and a referendum on 'autonomy' in the South, and endorse armed struggle against the government. Military actions continue by NDA forces (especially SPLA, Brigadier Gen. **Abdel Aziz Khalid Osman**'s Sudan Alliance Forces and the Beja Congress) in the South, East, Blue Nile and Nuba Mountains.

The Ethiopian-Eritrean war has held up NDA military progress for over a year. Yet both Eritrea and Ethiopia still support the NDA, despite their agreements with the NIF to improve relations. The Ethiopian and Eritrean governments are said to have told each others' opposition movements 'not to worry too much' about the ostensible rapprochement. Addis Ababa is particularly cautious about NIF blandishments, since Ethiopia's Somali Region is under threat from *Al Itahad al Islami*, backed by both Khartoum and the **Somalian** warlord, **Hussein Mohamed Farah 'Aydeed'**. Eritrean and Ethiopian opposition sources confirm they still get support from Khartoum.

Why Europe wants to talk to the NIF

Differences within the NDA are one reason why several Western governments want to talk to the NIF. Other main factors, ably exploited by the NIF, are incumbency ('after ten years, the NIF looks to be here to stay'); a post-*Shifa* belief (though not among Sudanese) that US concern about Sudan-linked terrorism is exaggerated; and profits from oil exploration. The NIF holds out the carrot of major contracts, mainly in construction. Trade and agriculture, plus some tourism, complete an enticing package.

The Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry issued a hyperbolic brochure during the visit in June of Foreign Minister **Mustafa Osman Ismail** (AC Vol 40 No 12). In it, Minister **Abdullah Hassan Ahmed** describes Sudan as a 'breadbasket of the world'. Figures from the Sudanese Embassy imply that a vast market awaits the investor. France's credit agencies, DREE and

Coface, tersely note: 'Short term: high risk. Medium term: very high risk'. But the veteran **Michel Habib-Deloncle**, President of the Franco-Arab Chamber of Commerce, hailing plans for steelworks and a whole new industrial town to be built near Khartoum, asks if credit guarantees are really necessary: 'The Italians don't feel the need for such guarantees', he notes, encapsulating both the Sudanese government's public relations campaign and its hope that Europeans will fall over each other to invest.

Some in the French Foreign Ministry object to visits by Sudanese ministers, just as attempts to restore relations between London and Khartoum have their critics in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, chief among whom is said to be Foreign Secretary **Robin Cook**. But the Under-Secretary of Khartoum's Foreign Ministry, **Hassan Abdin**, was negotiating in London this week. **Norway**, usually seen as a friend of the South, was said to be trying not only to get the IGAD talks going again but even to include the Sudan government in a replication of the **Israel-Palestine Oslo deal**. The Hague was trying something similar. Libya and Qatar (both of which reportedly supply arms to Eritrea) were falling over each other to negotiate between the NDA and NIF (and Egypt was coming up fast). In late June, Khartoum threw another carrot onto the pile by offering to open diplomatic relations with Israel, with which it is officially at war - but only as long as there was real peace in Palestine ('real peace' is not often demanded for Sudan).

Oil is the key; Khartoum gives the impression, at home and abroad, of an imminent bonanza, with attendant money-making opportunities. The International Monetary Fund gave the NIF a boost on 3 June by issuing a cautiously enthusiastic statement on Sudan. The five-page document, packed with fiscal and monetary detail, notes only in passing the 'internal conflict which is diverting budgetary resources away from productive use...', praises the 'liberalisation' process and says that 'difficult' relations with some countries 'have undermined private sector confidence'. Nowhere does the Fund mention that the ruling party has effectively 'liberalised' the private sector into its own hands.

The IMF makes no mention of an oil bonanza, either. On 31 May, Turabi and Lieutenant General Omer Hassan Ahmed el Beshir ceremonially inaugurated the 1,600-kilometre pipeline from Heglig to the coast. The 'Salvation Revolution' has for months been declaring that oil would be exported on the anniversary of the NIF coup on 30 June but has now been forced to admit it won't. (Khartoum is still busily denying Turabi's declaration that the government would buy tanks and missiles with its oil money). Tests are now being done and oil is expected to flow next month, probably emerging in September. Government-owned Sudapet holds 5 per cent but will earn more through taxes and so on; the rest is held by the **Chinese** National Petroleum Corporation (40 per cent), **Malaysia's** state-owned Petronas (30 per cent) and **Canada's** Talisman (25 per cent).

On 20 May, the International Petroleum Corporation, which heads a consortium in an adjoining concession in the Muglad Basin, announced that an exploration well in Block 5A had given 'very significant' results. IPC and any other company with oil to pump are legally obliged to use the Greater Nile Petroleum pipeline. IPC is wholly owned by Lundin Oil, based in Stockholm and controlled by the Canadian-Swedish, Swiss-based family headed by **Adolph Lundin**, which also has mining concessions in **Congo-Kinshasa**. IPC has about 40 per cent of the 5A concession, Petronas 28.5 per cent, OMV (of **Austria**) some 26 per cent. Sudapet has 5 per cent - more oil for the wheels of the bandwagon.

SOUTH AFRICA

Mbeki the mystery

The new cabinet reveals little about the new President's political style

Now centre-stage as President, **Thabo Mbeki** still keeps South Africans guessing. His patchwork cabinet is dominated by ministers who served **Nelson Mandela**, and expanded to 29 from 26 members, despite the Presidential Review Commission's recommendation to reduce it (AC Vol 40 No 12). Some of the old cabinet's brightest stars, including **Mac Maharaj** at Transport, **Pallo Jordan** at Environment and **Derek Hanekom** at Agriculture, either jumped or were pushed.

As he gradually grasped the reins of government during the second half of Mandela's presidency, Mbeki can take credit for many of its achievements: reducing political violence in KwaZulu-Natal; the strongly liberal constitution; expanding water, electricity and health services; formulating and implementing a tough but realistic economic strategy. And Mbeki's first term will be plagued by the same grave threats which the Mandela government faced: soaring AIDS casualties, unemployment and crime.

Mbeki's strong inauguration speech on 17 June, which emphasised improving delivery by key ministries and cracking down on corruption, led people to expect new faces and new policies. Instead, the cabinet tries to balance factions, regions and personalities. The most applauded decision was to leave the respected economic team of **Trevor Manuel** at Finance and **Alec Erwin** at Trade in place; there are few new stars in the line up.

The focus of interest was the proposed deal that would have given the deputy presidency to Inkatha Freedom Party leader **Mangosuthu Buthelezi**, while the African National Congress got the premiership of KwaZulu-Natal Province. There, Inkatha has two more seats than the ANC and the parties had planned a coalition. As usual Buthelezi negotiated hard and the bargaining delayed Mbeki's cabinet announcement by half a day. Finally, Buthelezi decided that Inkatha needed its regional power bases and blocked the ANC's nominee from the provincial premiership.

Having thus ruled himself out of the deputy presidency, Buthelezi stays on as Home Affairs Minister, with two IFP colleagues keeping their previous ministries: Correctional Services (Prisons) and Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. The new Deputy President is another Zulu, **Jacob Zuma** (also Deputy President of the ANC), who spent years in exile with Mbeki after the mid-1970s when, recently released from Robben Island prison, he was smuggling arms and people into South Africa and Mbeki was the ANC representative in **Swaziland**. In the late 1980s as the ANC intelligence chief, Zuma watched Mbeki's back (mainly against rivals in the ANC) while Mbeki led the party's exiled wing into negotiations with the apartheid government. The two men remain close despite some recent tensions.

Widely welcomed was Mbeki's appointment of **Kader Asmal** as Minister of Education. As Minister of Water Affairs, Asmal overhauled the department, mercilessly bullied his civil servants and ensured that water was supplied to millions of the poorest people in outlying areas. In 29 years of exile with the ANC, he won respect as Dean of Arts at Trinity College, Dublin and head of **Ireland's** anti-apartheid movement. Despite the onset of cancer,

Asmal is among the party's brightest and hardest working. The education department was poorly handled by his predecessor, **Sibusiso Bengu**, who said several months ago that he would retire.

The appointment of **Manto Tshabalala-Msimang** at Health is also popular. She has a medical degree and other health qualifications and has chaired parliament's health committee. Married to **Mendi Msimang**, South Africa's former High Commissioner to London and now the ANC Treasurer General, she was Deputy Minister of Justice in 1996-1999.

The popular **Patrick 'Terror' Lekota**, back in favour with Mbeki and now Defence Minister, has the formidable task of cutting the armed forces by a further 20-30,000. Lekota was fired as Premier of the Free State Province in 1996 after running battles with ambitious rivals there and heading a campaign against corruption. He fought back and, in late 1997, took the ANC national chairmanship in a straight battle with Mbeki's preferred candidate, the then Sports Minister, **Steve Tshwete**.

Tshwete and Mbeki have been close since the late 1980s, when Mbeki was pitched against the ANC faction around **Chris Hani**, the *Umkhonto we Sizwe* Chief of Staff later murdered by right-wingers. At Sports, Tshwete was known for bombast and for alienating sports administrators; his ministerial talents aren't widely

admired and many doubt his ability to make a dent in the spiralling crime figures in his new job as Safety and Security Minister.

Mbeki's moving of **Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma** from Health to Foreign Affairs shows he will continue, indirectly, to run the department. He is confident that Dlamini-Zuma's popularity within the ANC will vindicate what opposition parties have dismissed as an eccentric choice but one which gives women three senior ministries: Zuma, Msimang and the impressive **Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi**, who runs civil service reform at Public Service and Administration. At Health, the blunt-talking Dlamini-Zuma was renowned for her lack of diplomacy and interpersonal skills. By insisting that South Africa continue to import cheap generic versions of drugs developed in the **United States**, she defied American claims to intellectual property rights, so her appointment may dampen jibes that South Africa has become Washington's poodle in Africa. Again, she has been a close ally of Mbeki since the mid-1970s, when, in Swaziland, he recruited her, then a young medical student and Black Consciousness activist, into the ANC.

Penuell Maduna won a poor reputation for judgment when, as Minerals and Energy Minister, he hired **Liberia's** former Finance Minister **Emmanuel Shaw II**. Yet his new Ministry for Justice and Constitutional Development, like the Ministry of Safety and

Powers behind the throne

Much more striking than the cabinet reshuffle are the big structural changes in government under President **Thabo Mbeki**. His office denies that he is creating an 'imperial presidency' but doesn't dispute that this will be the most centralised government in South Africa's 90-year history. If his ministers fail to perform, his strong new office will guide them. Mbeki sent his brother **Moeletsi** to study foreign cabinet systems, in particular the **British** Cabinet Office, which have influenced the restructuring. Mbeki says he is determined to 'deliver': on jobs, houses, education and medicare, and to make a determined onslaught on crime.

Instead of ministers submitting proposals to the cabinet as finished packages, proposals will first be scrutinised by the cabinet secretariat. Its Director General, Reverend **Frank Chikane**, says the secretariat will 'interact with other departments on any issue that is placed before the cabinet. This ensures that ministers know the issues, unlike now where each department drafts its own memorandum, which is shown to other ministers only one week before it is tabled before cabinet'. This mechanism may compensate for shortcomings among new cabinet members. **Essop Pahad**, formerly Deputy Minister in the Deputy President's Office, is now Minister in the President's office.

The key features of the new centralisation are:

- As President, **Nelson Mandela** had a staff of 60. Mbeki, combining the presidency and deputy presidency, had a staff of 316 ready for him the day after his election by parliament on 17 June;
- The new presidency will be administered by Chikane, who retains his title of Director General; of his four deputy directors general, one will be the administrator of the office of the deputy president - intended as the office of Chief **Mangosuthu Buthelezi**, if he had accepted the job; under **Jacob Zuma**, it will be largely ceremonial. The other three deputy directors general are responsible for:
 - the president's private office;
 - the cabinet secretariat;
 - policy coordination and advisory services.

Attached to these will be the Government Communication and Information Services (GCIS), with its own Director General, **Khathutshelo (Joel) Netshitenzhe**, a close associate of Mbeki's and a low-profile heavyweight. Netshitenzhe has been involved in two major controversies: his supposed co-authorship of an ANC discussion

document last year which said 'transformation' of the South African state 'entails, first and foremost, extending the power of the national liberation movement over all the levers of power: the army, the police, the bureaucracy, intelligence structures, the judiciary, parastatals and agencies such as regulatory bodies, the public broadcaster, the central bank and so on'. The GCIS was also responsible for placing a newspaper advertisement which opposition members of parliament called ANC propaganda, not government information.

Cabinet committees will be trimmed and given more focus. Chikane quotes the example of the committee on social affairs which, he says, could mean anything, since everyone, he says, wants more alignment and integrated management of government. A staff skills audit will enable individual employees to indicate their areas of expertise and preference.

The policy coordination and advisory services unit - a stronger version of the coordination and implementation unit which Mbeki created last year - will weigh up ministers' proposals before they reach the cabinet. **Pundy Pillay**, the unit's head (and an economist) says it will 'assess' ministerial proposals before they are put before Mbeki. Or they can be submitted formally to Mbeki first and then referred by him to the unit, which will consider whether they are 'wise or not.'

When a proposal involves more than one department it will be driven by the unit, which will advise rather than direct what needs to be done. Because the unit is 'detached', it should be better able than individual departments to assess what is 'feasible and do-able'. Pillay says: 'We certainly won't be high in the popularity stakes but we will operate in the spirit of cooperative government'.

Centralisation will also affect the seven provinces under ANC control, where the party's Executive Committee will determine who is to be provincial premier. Once elected, premiers must consult the executive on the selection of their cabinets (called 'executive councils'). It was feared that the ANC would use a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly to change the constitution and reduce provincial powers. This missed the point. The ANC can diminish those powers indirectly through its control over its provincial party structures. And as South Africa creates its 'megacities' (Durban is among the ten fastest growing cities in the world), provincial powers will automatically move to the urban centres.

Security, desperately needs major surgery. Senior South African lawyers speak openly of the 'collapse of the criminal justice system'. Maduna and Tshwete will have short honeymoons in their new jobs.

The appointment of **Jeff Radebe** as Public Enterprises Minister is novel, bringing in a leading light of the South African Communist Party to oversee the already sluggish privatisation programme. Few expect Radebe, who did a competent job at Public Works (to which the former Public Enterprises Minister, **Stella Sigcau**, has been reassigned), to push the programme along much faster.

Mbeki's appointment of **Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge** as Deputy Defence Minister is equally original. She is a Quaker, a Christian pacifist, lacking any background in security or defence matters and has the unnerving habit, when teased by her ANC colleagues in parliament, of bursting into tears. Almost as odd was Mbeki's decision to place the gung-ho former Deputy Defence Minister, **Ronnie Kasrils**, in charge of flora and fauna as Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry.

Perhaps the biggest promotion goes to **Essop Pahad**, who becomes Minister in the Office of the President, having been Deputy Minister in Mbeki's office. In the President's Office, as restructured by Mbeki (see Box) Pahad will coordinate over 300 staff, with oversight of other ministries and control of various directorates under the presidency. Pahad studied with Mbeki at Sussex University, **Britain**, and is perhaps his best and oldest friend. ANC insiders say that the new government's real character will become clear among those 300 presidential staffers. Under the new system, power will be centralised and the checks on ministerial authority may even include ministers having to sign performance-related contracts. This will be government by apparatchiks, not by the political frontsmen and women behind the ministerial desks.

MALAWI

Close shave

After narrowly winning a second term, President Muluzi faces tough opponents

Close-run and bad-tempered, Malawi's 15 June elections have sparked off several street confrontations and plenty of litigation. However, President **Bakili Muluzi** looks set to ride the storm, helped by a marginally bigger vote in the presidential and parliamentary polls than in 1994. Muluzi got 51 per cent of the presidential vote compared to runner-up **Gwanda Chakuamba**'s 43 per cent. And in parliament Muluzi's United Democratic Front has an effective two seat majority over the opposition alliance. Opposition parties and some long-term foreign observers said the elections were a sham but the mainstream international monitors and the Organisation of African Unity declared them 'largely free and fair'.

The opposition is planning to challenge the vote and Muluzi's inauguration in a series of court actions. The vote took place two weeks later than planned, after two extensions of the registration period, the ousting of the Electoral Commission's two most senior officials, an emergency sitting of parliament (to change the election date) and repeated complaints about irregularities by opposition parties and the National Consultative Group (NCG) formed by several non-governmental organisations (AC Vol 40 No 11).

The most serious constitutional point, raised by **Bazuka Mhango** for the opposition Alliance on the day after the count, was that Muluzi did not win the 'majority of the electorate' laid down by the 1995 Constitution, which may be taken to mean more than half of the registered voters. But the Law Commissioner and Parliament had looked at that provision last year and decided not to amend it. In fact Muluzi won 48 per cent of all registered voters and 51 per cent of votes cast. His vice-presidential candidate was **Justin Malewezi** of the ruling United Democratic Front. The main opposition was an electoral alliance between the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) whose Gwanda Chakuamba was the presidential nominee, and the Alliance for Democracy (Aford), with **Chakufwa Chihana** standing for Vice-President.

The main complaints came from the remote and sparsely populated north, Aford's stronghold. There, election materials arrived only on the last day of registration, so that many voters failed to get onto the electoral roll. Some oppositionists claim that the UDF government carefully selected a new Electoral Commission last year and schemed with it this year to ensure that northerners could not vote against the UDF.

Muluzi broadcasting corporation

Weightier grievances were felt against the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, whose television service, started last year, was heavily pro-government; **Joseph Kubwalo**, Defence Minister and the UDF's campaign director, said: 'It was him who started it and he has all the right to make use of the television.' But only a few thousand homes in Blantyre and Lilongwe can receive TV.

Less than a week before the poll, the High Court ruled that the MBC's coverage did not comply with its duty to be impartial. That made little difference; Information Minister **Sam Mpasu** (who is also the UDF Secretary General) insisted that the radio was open to all parties, each of which was assigned its small slice of time. Many had hoped that the Communications Act, passed last year, would separate the public media from government control. The MBC does not yet seem to be free, though.

There was some post-election violence in the north and in the capital, Blantyre. In Mzuzu, the north's largest city, angry mobs ransacked the home and business of the UDF (ex-Aford) candidate, **Chenda Mkandawire**, and some members of Muluzi's southern Yao people were chased from their homes by local Tumbuka and Tonga. Local sources say that several mosques were burned in the north to protest against Muluzi, a Muslim.

In Blantyre, frustrated Alliance supporters rallied at the High Court, where they scuffled with UDF stalwarts and attacked official vehicles. Some demonstrators called on the police and army to mount a coup against Muluzi. Perhaps MCP activists wanted to stir the forces' resentment of the government but diplomats regard the security forces as highly professional and apolitical.

This time, the government is less likely to form a coalition with one of the opposition parties, even though it has just a two seat majority in parliament if it relies on the four 'independent' candidates; in 1994, it brought Aford's Chihana in as Vice-President. Some Malawians are calling for Muluzi to appoint a cabinet of national unity, even if this means dumping some of the UDF's more abrasive (and powerful) leaders, such as Education Minister **Brown Mpinganjira**, Mines Minister **Dumbo Lemani** and Information Minister Mpasu. Whether Muluzi will be prepared to sack such figures - Mpinganjira's southern base of Malange is the most populous district in the country will be an early test of his determination to lower the political temperature.

MOZAMBIQUE

Chissano tastes success

As elections approach, the President is far more popular than his party

President **Joaquim Chissano** is determined to go to the polls before the end of the millennium, claiming most of the credit for Mozambique's reputation as Africa's new success story. According to the World Bank, Mozambique has jumped from being the world's poorest country to one of its fastest growing economies. Sound management has a good deal to do with that success - and so does the developing Pande gas field.

The Pande project seems to be on track again, after some contractual wrangles with **United States'** energy conglomerate Enron. The initial aim was to export gas to **South Africa** and involved the construction of a steel works with an investment by Billiton of some US\$2.5 billion. An agreement in April seems to have secured the Maputo Iron and Steel Project. Now the government wants Enron to explore other potential fields and Enron's man in Maputo, **Agostinho Zacarias**, is negotiating new contracts.

Chissano, whose term ends in December, is set to win the presidency. He remains more popular than his own *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (Frelimo), which faces a tough parliamentary contest. On 9 June, the President of the independent National Electoral Commission (CNE), **Jamisse Taimo**, confirmed that the elections would happen this year, in November or December. The weather will not help: November is usually rainy, December always is, turning rural roads into quagmires.

In 1994, *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (Renamo) won 112 seats in the 1994 parliamentary elections against Frelimo's 129, and its strength is growing in the centre and in parts of the north as memories fade of its atrocities in the war of the 1980s. It may also benefit because an entirely new electoral roll will result from the registration of some eight million voters between 20 July and 17 September. Moreover, despite Chissano's overwhelming popularity, Mozambicans seem to want some check on Frelimo's untrammelled power.

Frelimo has been getting ready for months. Many government budgets have been frozen, apparently to save money for the party's election campaign. Local opinion polls show that the President, although strong in the south, has an approval rating of just 25 per cent in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Zambézia and Nampula. Densely populated Zambézia and Nampula hold the greatest weight of votes. Since the last voter registration five years ago, many displaced people have returned to Nampula from temporary homes in Zambézia. This could give Nampula four extra seats and the province's ethnic and religious politics will add to Frelimo's headaches. **Mateus Kathupa**, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, could have played an important role in northern Nampula but Chissano has dropped him from Frelimo's Central Committee and he will probably leave the government after the elections. Minister of Health **Aurelio Zilhão** is also unlikely to survive into the next government.

The polls showed growing support for the strong anti-corruption and anti-bureaucracy stance of Cabo Delgado Governor **José Pacheco**. Finance Minister **Tomás Salomão** was well supported,

and Interior Minister **Amerindo Manhenje** won approval for his attempts to curb police excesses. Energy Minister **John Kachamila** has suffered from his failure to establish strong anti-corruption credentials.

One of Mozambique's most powerful men is still **Armando Guebuza**, Frelimo's veteran parliamentary leader, whose independent financial means give him confidence to challenge even Chissano. His effective parliamentary performance makes him a strong contender for the presidency after Chissano's next term. In May, Chissano visited Sofala Province to boost Frelimo. There's a growing gulf between the President and the Provincial Governor, **Felisberto Tomás**, but support from the **Indian** community is fostered by **Zaid Aly**, a Beira-based businessman who sits on Frelimo's Central Committee and is close to Chissano. Religion is gaining importance in local politics. Christians and Muslims are suspicious of Chissano's fascination with transcendental meditation (TM) and raised a minor fuss earlier this year when Chissano sent a minister to a TM shrine in India.

Islam's growing popularity in northern Mozambique and along the coast may translate into votes, which worries some Western diplomats, and church leaders including Beira's Catholic Bishop, **Jaime Gonçalves**. **Iran** has invested in a \$1.2 billion oil refinery project in Beira and in May, the **United Arab Emirates** announced it was opening an embassy in Maputo.

Meanwhile, the US Central Intelligence Agency believes that its arch-enemy, **Afghanistan**-based **Usama bin Laden's** *Al Qaida* organisation, is preparing a strike to follow the embassy bombings in **Kenya** and **Tanzania** last August (AC Vol 39 No 17). On 17 June, the US Embassy in Maputo went on alert after police officers chased off, at high speed, some unidentified men who were videotaping the embassy from a car.

Renamo expects gains in the northern provinces and to hold its support in central Mozambique. Its first peacetime congress, on 26-29 July in Chimoio, will discuss a new programme and party statutes, and consider possible coalitions. This year, Renamo has promoted two parliamentary bills to keep faith with its core supporters: one to hand back nationalised property formerly owned by 'social organisations, associations and religious denominations', another to establish a provident and pension fund for its ex-combatants. Both bills were defeated but the stature of Renamo's parliamentary leader, **Raúl Domingos**, is growing, overshadowing that of party President **Afonso Dhlakama**. Five years after the war, Renamo has mostly demobilised, although it still refuses to transfer 150 armed men in Inhamitanga, Sofala Province, to the national police force.

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Administration: **Clare Tauben**.

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Pointers

ANGOLA

Gem gumshoes

The United Nations is at last getting serious about the massive diamond-smuggling operations which nourish the rebellion of **Jonas Savimbi's União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola**. It proposes to cut the trade at source, by placing civilian monitors on the ground at key points, and watching Angola's airspace. After two intense weeks there and in neighbouring states, **Robert Fowler, Canada's** Ambassador to the UN and head of the Angola sanctions committee, won promises of support - and denials of involvement - from politicians and diamond dealers alike.

It is now proposed that all diamonds should carry certificates of origin. Lobbying by Canadian mining companies, several of which work in Angola, played its part. Crucially, Fowler was promised cooperation by De Beers and its Central Selling Organisation cartel, which ultimately fix the world price of the gems by buying up surplus stones; some two-thirds of the world's diamonds pass through De Beers' headquarters in Holborn, London. Much criticised by Angolan government officials and non-governmental organisations for not doing more to curb gem smuggling, De Beers insists that it hasn't bought any UNITA diamonds (even through third parties) since last July, when UN sanctions on the trade belatedly came into effect.

Fowler was also promised cooperation by Angola's diamond parastatal, Endiama. Several of its senior figures have recently been sacked by President **José Eduardo dos Santos**. Endiama's new head, General **Agostinho Dias Gaspar**, trained as a lawyer and previously on the staff of Gen. **João de Matos**, says that Endiama's Certificate of Origin scheme has been run so as to hide illegal sales - even to UNITA surrogates.

Nobody believes the UN investigation can stop the diamond traffic altogether, only that it can be made much more difficult. Two panels of experts will investigate the traffic, hoping to identify private companies that help UNITA, with or without state complicity. One panel will investigate not only diamonds but all UNITA's business activities, including its big foreign bank accounts; the second panel will investigate arms purchases, largely through brokers from Eastern Europe and African states.

Savimbi himself is threatened by these changes in the diamond trade. For years, dealers from **Belgium** or **Israel** have been flying into his territory with millions of dollars and flying out with diamonds. They dealt with Savimbi's own agents, often young men from families that are close to him, who faced death if disobedient. For a long time, a key operator was **Jorge**

Chimbili, a Lisbon-trained pilot based in Kinshasa, where he liaised with **Lebanese** traders and arms dealers. He and his brother **Job**, who works in Savimbi's office, were discovered to be taking unauthorised commissions, deposited in Europe through friends. Savimbi jailed several of the conspirators but freed them after pleas from Ovimbundu elders.

Another route for illicit exports was via **Portuguese** business people, some of whom owned aircraft based in **South Africa**. They ran huge risks to fly arms or fuel into Angola; Savimbi came to trust them and asked them to procure weapons. These trusted traders have made off with millions of UNITA dollars, seeing small prospect of future business since UN sanctions began to bite. The Pretoria government says it won't tolerate sanctions-busting and the **United States** has put pressure on UNITA's friends **Burkina Faso, Morocco, Côte d'Ivoire** and **Togo** to block flights into UNITA territory. Many smugglers now say the risks are so great that they outweigh the huge potential profits - many but not all.

ALGERIA

Bienvenue à Alger

After some tense weeks following the controversial elections, President **Abdelaziz Bouteflika** is promising a peace deal facilitated by an improbable alliance between radical Islamists and senior security officers. He hopes this will outflank his domestic opponents, still angry about the 15 April polls, and improve conditions in Algiers, which hosts the Organisation of African Unity summit on 12-15 July - its biggest international event since the *Front Islamique du Salut* went underground in 1992 and the terror campaign started.

On the agenda is a release of former FIS leaders to coincide with Independence day on 5 July, permission for them to form a new political party and potentially to sit at a future national reconciliation conference. **Benazzouz Zebda**, a former FIS Vice-President, has already applied to form a party. Parliament is expected to sit beyond 2 July to vote a new *rahma* (amnesty) law, formalising the ceasefire called by the FIS military wing, the *Armée Islamique du Salut*.

After secret trysts with government, FIS President **Abbasi Madani**, still under house arrest, has made public overtures to Bouteflika and called on all underground groups to lay down arms. Madani says he wants to leave politics for younger politicians, such as FIS spokesperson-in-exile **Rabah Kebir**.

Madani's deputy, **Ali Belhadj**, remains in gaol but in better conditions than before. A proposed plan to let him out of prison and into house arrest suggests the government may treat with even more radical elements, such as the *Groupe Islamique Armé* and especially, the *Salafiya* groups led by disaffected GIA commanders, including **Hassan Hattab (Abou**

Hamza). Hattab wants peace while his deadliest rival, GIA chief **Antar Zouabri**, fights on.

Meanwhile, the military in alliance with AIS commander **Madani Mezrag** will continue to crack down on the GIA though 'secular' Algerians are uneasy. The Algiers daily *Le Matin* criticised Bouteflika and allies for handing victory on a 'silver plate' to the terrorists.

Such moves show a more confident Bouteflika as he welcomed **French** Interior Minister **Jean-Pierre Chevènement** for a Mediterranean ministers' meeting. Boutef's moves are sidelining establishment opposition leaders such as **Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi** and **Mouloud Hamrouche**, who took the moral high ground at the polls. But Bouteflika could not be confident without military backing and may try to play off rival factions jostling for senior posts in the security establishment. He may appoint a defence minister and a chief of staff will be needed when Lieutenant Gen. **Mohamed Lamari** soon retires. Military types are watching closely the fast rising number two in the security establishment, Gen. **Smaïn Lamari**, also involved in talks with the FIS and AIS.

AFRICA/YUGOSLAVIA

Rival refugees

Those in Africa who'd hoped the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's bombing of former **Yugoslavia** presaged a tougher line on rogue states and human rights abusers are disappointed. The most obvious effect so far appears to be to divert resources from Africa's desperate crisis states, such as **Angola, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Congo-Brazzaville** and **Congo-Kinshasa**. There are more than 7 million refugees in Africa and organisations such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees worry that emergency funds earmarked for Africa are being diverted to Kosovo. UNHCR figures say 15 times more money (US\$1.60) is spent daily on each Kosovo refugee than on African refugees, who get just 11 cents a day. Although about half of the UNHCR budget goes to Africa.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, **Sadako Ogata**, started a ten-country tour of war-torn states in central Africa on 21 June, the day after Africa Refugee Day.

Ogata, who had been planning to stay on as Commissioner till December 2000 after her mandate was extended last year, is again the subject of a whispering campaign within the organisation, accusing her of failing to rectify the financial mismanagement much criticised in the **British** press last year. Tipped as a replacement is her former deputy **Sergio Vieira de Mello**. De Mello is now Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs at the UN in New York. However, he would be well equipped to answer questions about the diversion of resources to the Balkans: he is currently Secretary General **Kofi Annan's** special envoy to Kosovo.