**ANGOLA**

*Angola's João Lourenço addresses EU Parliament*

Angolan president João Lourenço addressed the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Wednesday. It was the first time an Angolan head of state spoke in the Chamber before Members of the EU Parliament. Maintaining democratic institutions, investing in basic care, fighting corruption and opening up to foreign investment dominated the president’s speech. “Children of Africa leave the continent as migrants, they leave voluntarily, that’s something we hear but that’s open to debate. To be honest, they are fleeing from terrible situations: war and extreme conflicts, desperate poverty, lack of jobs and perspectives, seeking a better future. That is the sad fact that many countries in Africa are going through and it is the responsibility of us all’, Lourenço said.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

*Truth Commission Required in CAR – UN*

A UN human rights official has told the Human Rights Council that the government needs to establish, without delay, a truth and reconciliation commission as a pathway to peace. Marie-Therese Keita-Bocoum welcomes progress made in institutional reforms this year. But, she says authorities in the Central African Republic have to do much, much more to repair the country's chronically troubled security and political situation. Speaking Wednesday to the U.N. Human Rights Council, she said escalating attacks by armed groups are traumatizing the population, which is losing trust in the ability of the government to protect it. She deplores the hate speech employed by several factions, which, in many cases has a dangerous religious component. All Africa

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

*7 killed in clashes between DR Congo, Ugandan navies*

Four Ugandan soldiers and three civilians were killed Thursday in clashes on Lake Edward that lies between the two countries, a senior official in the Democratic Republic of Congo said. A DR Congo naval patrol was "attacked this morning by a Ugandan patrol boat in Congolese waters," Donat Kibwana, the administrator of the Beni region in the eastern province of Nord-Kivu said. "The Ugandan boat sank and four troops and three Ugandan civilians are dead," he said."On the Congolese side, a soldier and a civilian have been injured." Daily nation

**DJIBOUTI**

*China opens free trade zone in Djibouti*

The first phase of a Chinese-built Free Trade Zone 50 sq km (31 sq miles) - billed as Africa's largest - opens today in Djibouti. It's expected to handle trade worth $7bn (£5.3bn) within two years and
create 15,000 jobs when complete. The zone forms part of China's new chain of infrastructure investments in 60 countries. – BBC

ETHIOPIA
Ethiopia removes OLF, ONLF and Ginbot 7 from terror list
Ethiopia’s parliament, which is controlled by the ruling EPRDF coalition with all 547 seats, has approved a government recommendation to take three rebel groups off the country's list of terrorists organizations on Thursday. The groups - Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) and Ginbot 7 - have each been engaged in armed struggles against the government in Addis Ababa. The cabinet had also sent a law to parliament granting amnesty to individuals and groups involved in armed struggle against the government. – AL JAZEERA

EQUATORIAL GUINEA
Equatorial Guinea declares amnesty for political prisoners
Equatorial Guinea's president has declared a general amnesty for all political prisoners. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema's decree was delivered on national television. Opposition parties had demanded the release of political detainees as one of the conditions for taking part in what the president has called a national dialogue. Earlier this year, Equatorial Guinea's main opposition party Citizens for Innovation was dissolved by the authorities and 21 of its members were given long jail sentences following what the government said was a coup attempt by mercenaries. Mr. Obiang seized power in a coup in 1979. BBC

GABON
Gabon to keep troops in UN mission in CAR
Gabon said it will keep its 444 troops in the UN peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic (CAR), reversing a decision to quit after allegations of abuse were made against the contingent. This was after several requests and appeals from CAR President Faustin-Archange Touadera and the UN Secretary General" Antonio Guterres. This was "in line with African solidarity and the excellence of the relations of friendship and brotherhood with the Central African people". Africa news

KENYA
Kenyan policemen charged with Alexander Monson murder
Alexander Monson, 28, son of Lord Nicholas Monson and heir to the family estate in Lincolnshire, was found dead in his cell after being detained during a night out after he was arrested for allegedly smoking cannabis in the Diani beach resort in May 2012. The four officers; Naftali Chege, Charles Wangombe Munyiri, John Pamba and Baraka Bulima. all denied the charge when they appeared at the High Court in Mombasa on Thursday. They have been detained until 19 July pending a ruling on their application for bail. – BBC

Police officers injured after vehicle runs over IED
Several police officers were Thursday injured after their vehicle ran over a homemade bomb, suspected to have been planted by Al-Shabaab militants, between Handaro and Sangailu on the Lamu-Garissa border. The 3am incident involved an AP Land Cruiser carrying more than 10 officers, who were escorting a bulldozer to the Sangailu AP camp in Hulugho Division. Masalani, Sangailu, Ijara and Handaro are all within the Linda Boni Operation zone. The attack came just days after Boni honey harvesters saw more than 200 heavily armed suspected Al-Shabaab militants at Belasange-Jima 2, within Boni Forest which caused fear in the neighbouring Pandanguo village. – DAILY NATION

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NIGERIA

Why I Signed New Executive Order to fight Corruption – Buhari

President Muhammadu Buhari on Thursday signed an Executive Order to improve his administration's fight against corruption. The order, signed in Abuja, seeks to bar persons accused of corruption from controlling or trading in assets acquired from the allegedly corrupt act. “I have decided to issue the Executive Order No. 6 of 2018 to inter alia restrict dealings in suspicious assets subject to investigation or inquiry bordering on corruption in order to preserve such assets from dissipation, and to deprive alleged criminals of the proceeds of their illicit activities which can otherwise be employed to allure, pervert and/or intimidate the investigative and judicial processes or for acts of terrorism, financing of terrorism, kidnapping, sponsorship of ethnic or religious violence, economic sabotage and cases of economic and financial crimes, including acts contributing to the economic adversity of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and against the overall interest of justice and the welfare of the Nigerian State,” the president said in his speech read during the signing of the order. (Nigerian monitor)

Nigeria’s ruling party splits

Nigeria's governing APC party has split in two. The rift is seen as a major threat to President Muhammadu Buhari’s bid for a second term in office with presidential and parliamentary elections less than a year away. The APC came to power in 2015 and has been plagued with an internal crisis for more than a year. This worsened recently following the election of new national and local leaders as some key party members alleged they were treated unfairly. The APC’s breakaway faction, known as Reformed APC, is led by Buba Galadima, a former ally of President Buhari. It is believed to have the backing of some senior Nigerian politicians including the senate president, speaker of the lower house of parliament and some state governors. They say that President Buhari’s government is incompetent. The splinter group is likely to join forces with the opposition to challenge Mr Buhari as he seeks re-election next February. (BBC)

SOMALIA

EU slams UAE retaliatory acts against Somalia over Gulf crisis

European Parliament condemns United Arab Emirates (UAE), for cutting financial support to Somalia for its neutrality on the Gulf rift; saying the country was taking retaliatory actions against Somalia for the latter's neutral position on the Gulf crisis. "In terms of the wider confrontation between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia, on the one hand, and Qatar, on the other, the Federal Government of Somalia has sought to remain neutral; whereas, in retaliation, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have ceased their regular budgetary support payments to Somalia, which further weakens the government's ability to pay the security forces," the resolution reads. The European Parliament statement urged "the UAE to cease forthwith all acts of destabilization in Somalia and respect Somalia's sovereignty and territorial integrity." Somalia dismissed the agreement between Abu Dhabi and the northern Somali region - to train security forces and a 30-year concession to manage Berbera Port in Somaliland- as "non-existent, null and void" and called on the United Nations to take action. – AL JAZEERA

SOUTH AFRICA

ICC withdrawal: ANC says SA govt has to consult the party first before it reconsiders

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The ANC utters that the Cabinet will have to consult the party first before reconsidering the decision to withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC), head of elections Fikile Mbalula said on Thursday. International Relations Minister Lindiwe Sisulu hinted on Wednesday that the government might reconsider the controversial decision. Sisulu did not refer former president Jacob Zuma by name but told journalists that the decision under taken was by the previous administration. News 24

SUDAN

Why is Omar al-Bashir mediating South Sudan peace talks?

Last week, the warring parties; South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar agreed to a "permanent" ceasefire AND signed the landmark document in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum on June 27. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, who helped broker the deal, was also present at the signing ceremony. As part of the ceasefire agreement, entered into force on July 1, Kiir and Machar agreed to permit members of the African Union and another regional group, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, to deploy peacekeeping troops to South Sudan. – AL JAZEERA

UGANDA

Return of queue voting system in Uganda

On Tuesday Election contenders stood at the front and voters queued behind their preferred candidate with a poll officer wagging his finger as he tallied, at polling stations across the country as Uganda marked the start of a new election cycle with the vote for the women leaders in village local councils. The queuing system has not been used in Uganda in at least two decades and its re-introduction, the government says, is aimed at cutting costs of holding elections. Despite a low turnout, the electoral commission spokesman Jotham Taremwa said a five-member Women Village Executive Council were elected in 60,800 villages. – THE EAST AFRICAN

ZIMBABWE

Grace Mugabe ally calls for arrest of Mnangagwa, Chiwenga’s wife

A former minister in Zimbabwe who was in court for fraud has reportedly demanded that President Emmerson Mnangagwa also be charged as he had acted on his instruction when he contracted a communications company without the contract going to tender. The former minister stands accused of fraud after he awarded Zanu-PF lawmaker Psychology Maziwisa and former Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) news anchor Oscar Pambuka a contract without putting it out to tender. The former energy minister recently denied the charges, saying he acted on the instruction of Mnangagwa – while he was still deputy president – when he awarded Fruitful Communications the tender. He added that he complied with the directive because the "Zimbabwe Power Company (ZPC) public relations department was not performing well". News 24

ZAMBIA

Zambia planning social media clampdown

Zambia on Thursday held, it will introduce tough new laws to regulate social media use to fight cyber-crime and combat the consumption of pornography in the conservative African country. Communication Minister Brian Mushimba told parliament that some Zambians were using social media to commit identity theft, send pornographic images and spread hate speech.

"It is evident that social media in Zambia has become a catalyst for the detachment of members of the Zambian society from our cultural norms," Mushimba said. News 24