

WORLD BRIEFS

TANZANIA FED UP, EXPEL BURUNDIAN REFUGEES

BUJUMBURA, Burundi (PANA) — Tanzania expelled nearly 200 Burundian refugees during the first week of October, an official of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees told PANA. Without explaining the reasons for the expulsions, Guy Avognon, who is in charge of refugee repatriation, conceded that "some refugees have been crossing the border for (several days) although we believe their number might be less than 200." Avognon said that Tanzanian officials were questioning the continued presence of Burundian refugees which had been in Tanzania since 1972. He said some of the newest arrivals were married to Tanzanians. These were rounded up from various towns and villages before being expelled. However, Avognon said that a large number of Burundian refugees were still living in two camps along the Tanzania-Burundi border. One of these, in Kigoma, hosts 200,000 people while the other, in Ngara, houses 100,000. The Burundi government has complained that Tanzanian officials are ignoring the political and military activities of rebels living in these camps. So, Burundi is asking Tanzania to move the camps to locations farther away from the border.

SIERRA LEONE'S EXILED FIRST LADY WANTS DEMOCRACY

The First Lady of the West African nation of Sierra Leone, in a meeting with the U.S.-based National Council of Churches' Africa Committee, appealed for international condemnation of the military junta that seized power in May and for the restoration to office of her husband's government, the country's first democratically elected government in 30 years. "The Council of Churches in Sierra Leone has asked the rebels to hand power back peacefully to the elected government," said Patricia Kabbah, wife of exiled President Tejan Kabbah. She said she came to the United States "to let a democratic people know our democratic government was taken over for reasons of greed and power and to inflict suffering." She is asking the U. S. government "to take the lead in supporting global sanctions against the junta." Hundreds of thousands of people have fled Sierra Leone to Guinea, the Gambia and Liberia. The Kabbah government-in-exile is operating from neighboring Guinea.

FRANCE PLEDGES AFRICA \$1 MILLION FOR SECURITY

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (PANA) — French Foreign Minister Hubert Verdine announced that Paris will contribute \$1 million to the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) conflict prevention and management body. He said in Addis Ababa that France also intended to give at least \$30 million in 1998, for training and equipment used by African peacekeeping troops. Verdine made these promises to African diplomats in the Ethiopian capital headquarters of the OAU. His speech centered on the new French policy towards Africa. Verdine told diplomats that his presence signaled "France's will to develop relations with all the countries of Africa" and to reaffirm its support for the OAU. He said that Paris wanted the aid of other nations to be coordinated. He noted that Britain, France and the United States have recently proposed that all aid for Africa be placed under the auspices of the United Nations and the OAU. He said that France favored cancellation of Africa's \$300-billion debt which "remains a major handicap" at a time when Africa is looking for a new momentum for development.

INTERNATIONAL

Churches see debt as critical African issue

By Ghion Hagos

Special to Sentinel-Voice
ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (PANA) — The 142-member All-Africa Conference of Churches has cited the debt burden among the critical issues it faces.

In a communiqué issued Oct. 10 in Addis Ababa, to conclude the week-long series of events included in the organization's seventh general assembly, the continental church body called for a strong lobby to cancel Africa's \$300 billion debt.

The document listed good government, alleviation of poverty and disease, including HIV/AIDS and improving the

conditions of children, youth and women, as other challenges.

In the drive to write off Africa's debt, the assembly called for collaboration "with organizations already committed to the campaign for debt cancellation."

The meeting proposed four pre-conditions which could be used in according states debt cancellation.

These conditions are: true democratization in which people participate in decision making, respect for human rights, demilitarization and the redirection of defense funds to public social projects.

Church leaders committed

themselves to working with the peoples and governments of Africa to improve education and health systems, with particular emphasis on the needs of women and children.

They also pledged to work with governments and civil societies to bring about a total ban on the manufacture, production, stockpiling, exportation, importation and distribution of land mines.

The assembly resolved to help in the demining of Angola, Mozambique and Sudan.

It also issued several recommendations, one of which read: "Those in power, in church and state, must stop

servicing their own narrow interests. They must serve the interests of all God's people."

Another calls on the elimination of denominational division in the church in Africa.

The assembly also issued an open letter urging African leaders to carry out social transformation of the continent, back the debt relief movement and respect human rights.

The main focus of the conference was the quotation from St. Paul, "Troubled, but not destroyed," which officials said reflects Africa's current problems.

Corruption could erode Japanese aid to Africa

Special to Sentinel-Voice

TOKYO, Japan — While Japan has been the major development aid donor to Africa over the past 15 years, political analysts here fear that corruption, inefficiency and political instability may hinder smooth co-operation in the near future.

Over the period, financial aid to Africa has grown from one percent of Japan's total foreign aid budget to 15 percent. But bureaucrats and politicians in Tokyo say it is difficult for them to identify the best way to help the continent.

Ryokichi Hirino, president of the Society for International Development in Japan, criticized Africa's poor economic policies, political instability and inefficient bureaucrats tasked to run key government departments. He said that the low literacy rate in many African countries contributes to scarce human resources required to pull countries from economic doldrums.

Africa's economic infrastructure is too dependent on

primary commodities, with no improvement in domestic savings over the past four years, he said.

"I blame this dependency on primary commodities and the inability of African leaders to map out a development strategy peculiar to Africa. Most follow blindly the prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank," he said.

"Most of the political leaders themselves are not fully committed to developing their human resources. Many line their pockets under the pretext of helping bring about development," Hirino said.

Because of a lack of accountability for funds donated for development projects in a number of African countries, the Japanese government this year selected only five sub-Saharan

countries it would assist on an experimental basis. They are Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. They were selected because the Japanese think they are politically stable and interested in development.

Projects are expected to center on increasing food production, broadening education, promoting a good economic climate and training civil servants.

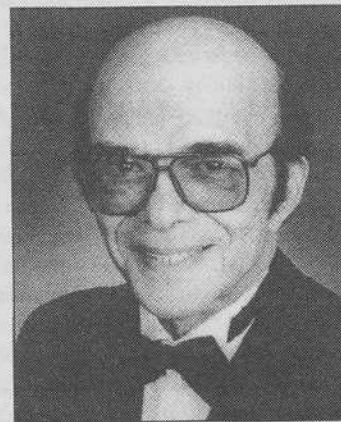
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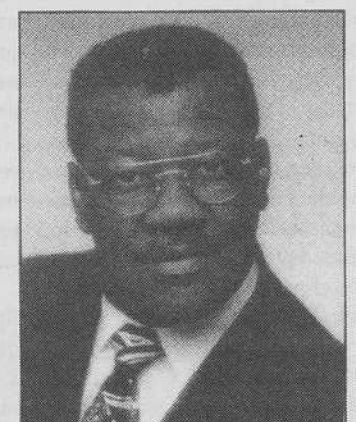
Saturday, October 25, 1997

location

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Jack "The Rapper" Gibson



Rev. Sam Roberson

6:30 pm No Host Cocktails

7:00 pm Dinner/Keynote Address

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