

INTERNATIONAL

Kenya expresses fear of Horn of Africa's instability

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)— President Daniel arap Moi called a rare news conference last Thursday to express Kenya's concern that instability in the Horn of Africa poses a serious threat to peace and security in the region.

"The crisis has implications well beyond the borders of the conflict areas, due to the circulation of illegal arms and refugees into neighboring countries," said

the 75-year-old politician, Kenya's president since 1978. It was not immediately clear why conflicts like the one between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which began in 1998, or the 17-year civil war in southern Sudan or the decade of lawlessness in Somalia, would occasion a news conference now.

But a diplomatic official close to Moi said later that the point of his message was to express backing for a peace

plan for Somalia set forth by Djibouti President Ismael Omar Guelleh at the U.N. General Assembly last September.

The proposal, one of half a dozen floated since 1991, calls for Somali warlords to turn their factions into political parties, to disarm and to submit to the primacy of law as well as the inclusion of women and intellectuals in the process.

Djibouti, a tiny former

French colony in the crook of the Horn, is the headquarters of the seven-nation Intergovernmental Authority on Development, or IGAD, under whose auspices the Guelleh plan is being discussed.

Since the ouster of Somali President Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991, neighboring Kenya has received hundreds of thousands of Somali refugees, and the flow of small arms and semiauto-

matic weapons into Kenya is fueling a growing tide of violent cattle rustling and armed robbery.

Moi called on the United States and Europe to do something to halt the flow of arms into the region and Africa as a whole because "they certainly do not come from Africa."

The diplomatic official said Kenya, the only country in the region that has not suffered from full scale

internal strife, wanted to avoid the proliferation of peace initiatives for Somalia.

Both Ethiopia and Egypt — traditional rivals for influence in Somalia — have undertaken peace initiatives for the wishbone-shaped nation, but none has prospered. Ethiopia now backs the Guelleh plan.

Egypt, together with Libya, has offered its offices as an alternative to IGAD for both Somalia and Sudan.

South Africa to test children for HIV

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) — South Africa's Department of Health said it plans to start testing schoolchildren for HIV in an effort to gauge how quickly the disease is spreading.

The tests would be voluntary and require parental permission, the Saturday Star newspaper of Johannesburg reported.

Nearly 10 percent of the country's 42 million people are estimated to be infected with the AIDS virus.

But so far, HIV surveys have tested only pregnant women, giving an incomplete picture of the epidemic.

Pilot HIV testing on schoolchildren, non-pregnant women and men is set to start this year, Rose Mulumba of the health

department told the paper.

The department intends to test pupils at chosen schools yearly to track how HIV spreads.

But before the testing starts, a study will be performed to see whether communities would accept the project, Mulumba said.

Previous surveys of pregnant teen-agers indicate teens in South Africa are contracting HIV at an increasing rate.

A 1998 survey performed at prenatal clinics showed that 21 percent of pregnant 15- to 19-year olds were infected — up from nearly 13 percent a year earlier.

The same survey showed that almost 23 percent of pregnant women of all ages were infected.

United States, Namibia OK aviation treaty

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States has reached agreement with Namibia on an aviation treaty that opens the way for unrestricted commercial air service between the two countries.

The "open skies" agreement, following two days of meetings in Windhoek, Namibia, was signed Friday by F.W. Poolman, Namibia's under secretary for transportation, and Thomas J. White, acting deputy assistant secretary of state for transportation affairs.

"Although Namibia is a developing country, it has a strong economy, a well-maintained domestic transportation infrastructure and abundant natural attractions and resources," White said in a statement. "It could become an attractive option for American tourists and business in the near

future." Namibia, which gained independence in 1990, is a sparsely populated nation of less than 2 million people in southern Africa.

Air Namibia, the country's national carrier, has expressed interest in joining with a major international carrier to provide service to the United States. One U.S. carrier, United Airlines, already offers some service to Namibia via Europe.

An open skies agreement allows unrestricted air service by airlines of both countries, eliminating restrictions on how often carriers can fly, the kind of aircraft they use and the prices they can charge.

The United States has 42 such agreements with partners in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East.

The 2nd International Islamic Conference

February 24-27, 2000

Hosted by the Nation of Islam in conjunction with The World Islamic Peoples Leadership

Theme: *"Living Up To Our Responsibility As Muslims in Establishing Islam in the New Millennium"*

Open to All Islamic Schools of Thought

Keynote Address

Minister Louis Farrakhan

Sunday — February 27

Chicago, IL

For registration information, call (702) 647-0414 or (773) 324-1981