

## WORLD BRIEFS

### WEST AFRICA OPENS FIRST CALL CENTER TO SELL CELL PHONES TO U.S.

ACCRA, Ghana (GIN)—West Africa's first English-language call center has opened for business in the Ghanaian capital of Accra. Agents will use voice-over-Internet technology to call Americans and try to sell them cell phone plans. "In Africa I saw lots of talent and not enough opportunities to make use of it all," says Karim Morsli, the co-founder of the Accra call center and owner of Maryland-based Just in Time Technologies. New voice-over-internet technology and the low labor costs have encourage an increasing number of American companies to use foreign-based call centers to handle telemarketing and customer service. At present India is the country of choice, but Morsli says there is room for expansion in Ghana and throughout Africa. "There is no reason why Africa can't catch up with the rest of the world," says Morsli, who plans to expand his workforce from 20 to 5,000 within the next five years.

### SOMALI BANTUS TO LEAVE KENYAN CAMPS FOR NEW LIFE IN U.S.

NAIROBI (IRIN)—The first group of Somali Bantus who have been living in Kenyan refugee camps for the past decade are starting their final journey to the United States where they will be resettled, the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said. In a statement, UNHCR said this was the beginning of one of the biggest resettlement operations to take place from Africa, in which some 11,800 Somali Bantus will be resettled in the United States. After weeks of cultural orientation classes, the first batch of 74 Somalis was expected to leave Kenya last week. Another 150 are expected to travel before mid-June, the statement said. The refugees were originally scheduled to start arriving last year, but tightened security measures after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks pushed back the date. The Somali Bantus—a minority group whose physical, cultural and linguistic characteristics distinguish them from the Cushitic majority in Somalia—were considered for resettlement in the United States, because they faced difficult circumstances in their country, where they were treated as second-class citizens. In the early 1990s, during civil war in Somalia, more than 10,000 fled to refugee camps in Kenya, where discrimination against them by major Somali clans continued.

### NAMIBIAN PRESIDENT NUJOMA PLEDGES TO STEP DOWN

WINDHOEK, Namibia (GIN)—President Sam Nujoma says he will be a three-term president despite calls from some tribal leaders for him to seek a fourth term. Nujoma, 74, last year accepted a third term in office although the Namibian constitution provides for only two five-year terms, saying he had the unanimous mandate of the people. His current term expires in 2004. The ruling SWAPO party amended the country's constitution in 1999 to allow him a third term, which ends next year, arguing that his tenure between 1990 and 1995 did not fall under the constitutional limit of two five-year terms because he was not elected directly at independence in 1990. In February, Ngarikutuke Tjiriange, secretary general of the Swapo party, made it clear the party will be getting a new candidate for president. Nujoma said he will remain in the party leadership, where he is expected to serve out his term as Swapo president until 2007. Meanwhile, Ben Ulenga, president of the opposition Congress of Democrats told the U.N. news agency IRIN: "We are happy and relieved that President Nujoma has now realized the need to respect the Namibian constitution and the wishes of the Namibian people, as enshrined in the constitution... We hope that he will stand by his word because it is well known that other leaders have gone back on their word, but we will watch and we will insist," Ulenga said. "There is a time to come and a time to go, and Nujoma has played his part." The Namibian Economist newspaper quoted an analyst as saying that possible successors could be foreign affairs minister, Hidipo Hamutenya, Minister of Lands Hifikepunye Pohamba, who is also SWAPO's secretary-general, and Education Minister Nahas Angula.

# INTERNATIONAL

## U.S. urges Americans to leave Liberia

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP) - The United States urged Americans to leave the rebellion-torn West African nation of Liberia, citing the spread of fighting.

The warning comes as two rebel movements, one newly formed, press in upon President Charles Taylor's government from the north and southeast, with fighting surging ahead of scheduled peace talks.

About 500 Americans are registered with the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, the capital. Commercial flights were still traveling to and from the capital.

U.S. authorities said the move was not an evacuation and that the U.S. Embassy remained open.

A State Department travel warning noted fighting in the country "could expand to other areas without warning."

"The presence of heavily armed government security personnel can constitute a serious danger as well," the State Department said.

"Furthermore, periodic inflammatory statements in the local media regarding U.S. policies and presence in Liberia could also incite violence against American interests," the statement said.

Rebels based in the north, along the border with Guinea, are fighting an increasingly aggressive campaign against Taylor.

In recent weeks, a second rebel group also has started pressing in from the border with Ivory Coast, taking the southeastern port of Harper.

Tensions were high Monday on the eastern borders with Guinea and Ivory Coast, raised by local fears of new cross-border offensives by rebels allegedly sheltering in those countries.

Deputy National Security Minister John Yormi put out an appeal Monday to all own-

ers of single-barrel shotguns in the border region, asking them to stand ready to defend the country.

The rebels' ultimate goal is to take Monrovia and drive out Taylor, who has acquired a wide range of enemies in more than a decade of involvement in West Africa's roiling conflicts.

Fighting has increased ahead of June 4 peace talks in Accra, Ghana.

International mediators met with the northern rebels Monday in neighboring Sierra Leone, trying to talk the rebels into a cease-fire in advance of the talks.

## Security review closes U.S. Kenya embassy

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) - The U.S. Embassy, closed for Memorial Day on Monday, will stay shut for an additional day to review its security against a heightened terrorist threat.

"The move is a precaution ... based on the heightened security situation in Nairobi and Kenya over the past weeks," the embassy said in a statement sent to U.S. citizens in the country.

The closure Tuesday "also allows the embassy to review internal security measures," the statement said.

Both the U.S. and Britain, along with other European countries, have warned of possible terrorist attacks in eastern

Africa, specifically in Kenya.

Britain on May 15 also suspended British Airways flights between Nairobi and London because of a specific threat to British airlines in Kenya.

U.S. officials and Western diplomats have said that intercepted communications among al-Qaida operatives in eastern Africa and other unspecified intelligence indicate terrorists may be plotting an attack on embassies or the residences of foreign officials in Nairobi.

There have been several terrorist attacks in Kenya in the past five years.

A suicide bombing at a hotel on the Indian Ocean coast last November killed

11 Kenyans and three Israelis.

Within a few minutes of that attack, assailants tried to shoot down a chartered Israeli jet with shoulder-fired missiles as it was taking off from the airport in Mombasa, also on the coast.

The missiles narrowly missed the aircraft.

In August 1998, the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi was blown up by a car bomb, killing 219 people, including 12 Americans, and injuring several thousand others.

A nearly simultaneous car bomb attack the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, killed 12 people.

## India to take over Zambian mine abandoned by UK group

LUKASA, Zambia (GIN)—Zambia's Konkola Copper Mines will be reactivated under the management of Sterlite Industries, an Indian company based in London.

The Zambian cabinet recently decided to sell a 51 percent stake in the country's state-owned Konkola Copper Mines to Sterlite Industries.

Information Minister Newstead Zimba said Sterlite would take over the running of the mine abandoned by mining giant Anglo American last year as soon as the details over payment are settled in coming weeks.

"Sterlite has made a commitment to funding a substantial capital expenditure program thereby securing a long-term future for KCM and its workforce," Zimba said.

KCM is Zambia's biggest mining company with more than 11,000 employees and there were widespread fears of the impact of so many layoffs. The mine accounts for about two-thirds of Zambia's metals production but last year made a loss of \$159 million.

Opposition leader Anderson Mazoka, a former regional chief executive of Anglo American, criticized the sale, saying it should raise serious questions "because

Konkola is not a small entity—it's one of the biggest in the continent—and you would expect bigger and better-known players to win the bid."

Zambian officials say Sterlite has a proven track record in aluminum and zinc mining with assets in India, Australia, Russia and Canada. (See India, Page 19)

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