

# Sanctions push put pressure on Mugabe

HARARE - Global pressure mounted on Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe on Wednesday, with former colonial ruler Britain calling for tougher EU sanctions over his "disgraceful" crackdown on opposition leaders.

Criticism of the Zimbabwean regime's violent campaign against the opposition Movement for Democratic Change has deepened in recent days, with other African leaders joining a Western outcry over Mugabe's tactics.

Britain has been among the most vocal critics, and Prime Minister Tony Blair said recently he wanted Europe to take a tougher line with the 83-year-old head of state.

"We will press the European Union to widen the political sanctions that were introduced in 2002 and introduced very much as a result of our prompting at the time," Blair told parliament.

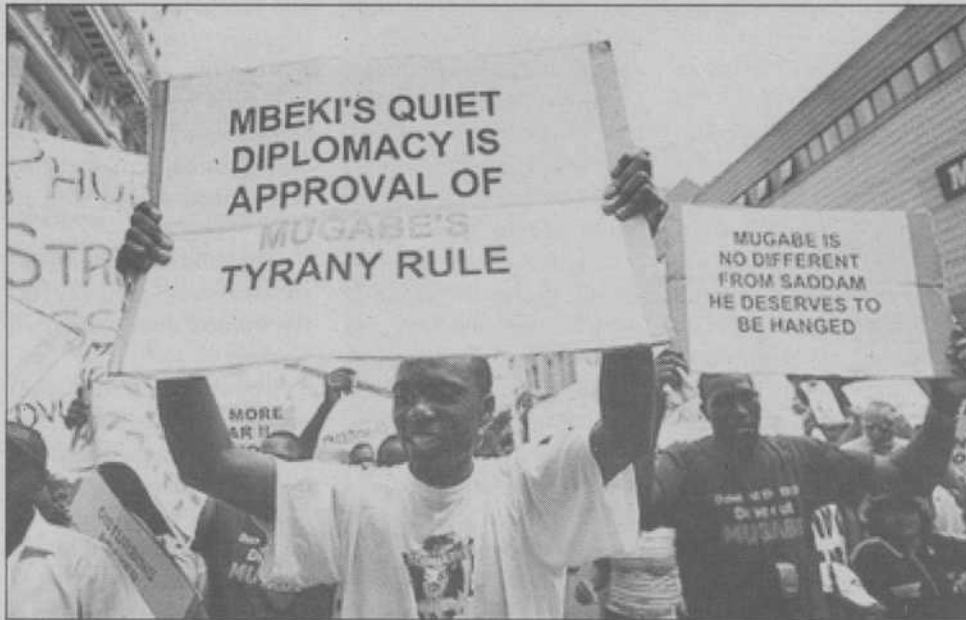
Mugabe himself and his entourage are banned from traveling to the EU under sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe in 2002 for human rights violations.

Blair echoed Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett's view that action was also needed from the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Commission.

"We will be urging partners in both those institutions to come out with strong statements against what is happening in Zimbabwe, which is appalling, disgraceful and utterly tragic for the people of Zimbabwe," he said.

Zimbabwe's ruling party however, said existing targeted sanctions had not achieved their goals, and had hurt the people of Zimbabwe despite the intention of the EU and US not to do so.

"The sanctions have not achieved what they set out to do. It's not true when they say the sanctions were limited. They were of course imposed on 126 members listed, but they (US and EU) put pressure on the IMF and



Pressure mounted on Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe on Wednesday sparked hundreds of local activists of the Social Movements Indaba to demonstrate in the streets of Durban.

World Bank not to give grants and investment capital to Zimbabwe," ZANU-PF spokesman Nathan Shamuyarira said.

"That has hurt the ordinary people. So it's not true that the sanctions only hurt the leadership."

Mugabe's government has been conducting a crackdown that has included arresting and beating opposition leaders.

Recently, the US ambassador to Zimbabwe, Christopher Dell, called the president a "desperate dictator" and suggested that his long years in power were coming to an end.

"The fact is that the man is in a corner and he knows it," Dell said. "What we are really looking at is a failing regime that is increasingly wobbly."

At the same time, Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa likened Zimbabwe to a "sinking Titanic" and said it was time to consider changing the traditional policy of "quiet diplomacy" with Harare adopted by the likes of Zambia and South Africa.

Zambia's former president Kenneth Kaunda, an historic ally of Mugabe's, urged African leaders on Wednesday to appoint a committee of eminent people to

mediate in the worsening political crisis.

Amid all the criticism, Mugabe has remained defiant, and observers said there was little chance of him stepping down voluntarily.

"I don't think this signals the end of the line for Mugabe," analyst Moeletsi Mbeki of the Johannesburg-based South African Institute of International Affairs.

"I don't think he thinks of himself being in power because of public support. He stays in power through the use of terror."

Zimbabwe's junior information minister Bright Matonga said the government "will not be intimidated by its enemies," among

whom he cited Blair and U.S. President George W. Bush.

"This is a personal vendetta they have against our president and they think we will chicken out. We are a sovereign nation," Matonga said. Following Blair's call for tougher sanctions, the African Union's representative in Brussels said there was an element of EU hypocrisy involved in approving action against Mugabe while ignoring abuses by other African leaders.

"I would have preferred that there were no double standards at the European level, even for judging heads of state," AU ambassador Mahamat Annadif told reporters.

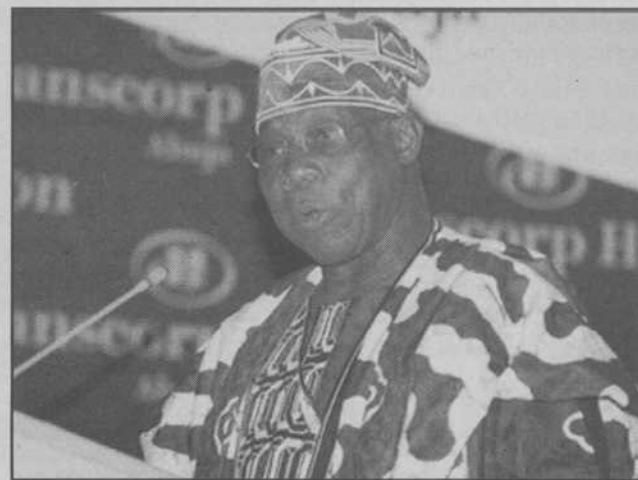
## Obasanjo criticized for oil fund

ABUJA - Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and his deputy, Atiku Abubakar, acted "illegally" in the management of a petroleum fund and recommended them for prosecution, a Senate committee ruled recently.

It is the first time a Nigerian Senate committee has directly accused Obasanjo of "illegality" in the management of a government agency.

A senate committee report, which reviewed the findings of another senate panel that investigated the management of the Petroleum Technology Development Fund or PTDF found Obasanjo and Abubakar guilty of "illegal" acts and recommended their trial before the Code of Conduct Bureau.

The government-backed bureau, set up to ensure high moral standards among public office holders, investigates allegations of wrongdoing by public servants, after which its tribunal publicly can try them for the al-



A Senate committee ruled that Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and his deputy, Atiku Abubakar, acted illegally in managing a petroleum fund. Prosecution is very likely.

leged offenses and crimes.

The tribunal, set up under the Code of Conduct Act, has the power to impose punishment, which includes removal from office of any elected or nominated official and disqualification of a convict from holding any public office for a period not exceeding 10 years.

The Code of Conduct Act came into force in January 1999.

The senate committee accused Obasanjo of giving ap-

proval to some projects commenced by the PTDF last year.

The senate panel slammed his approval as "illegal" and therefore "refers President Olusegun Obasanjo to the Code of Conduct Bureau for further action."

The panel also found Obasanjo and head of the state-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, Funsho KupoLokun, "culpable" over their "illegal approval" of maintenance of

four different accounts with the Central Bank of Nigeria in the name of the PTDF.

Abubakar, 60, who is fighting a fierce battle in court to get his name listed for the April 21 presidential poll, was accused of approving \$20 million in 2003 from the PTDF, which he managed, "without the authority of the President."

"The (senate) committee views the approval as illegal and, therefore, recommends that that Abubakar be referred to the Code of Conduct Bureau for further action."

The committee, however, cleared him over his approval of placement of \$125 million in two private banks.

The senate committee had resigned following alleged pressure from the leadership of the upper house of parliament aimed at blocking the report presentation before the April poll.

Meanwhile, the senate has begun its recess and said it would resume to consider the committee's report in May after the elections.

## Moratorium

(Continued from Page 4)

out by Virgin Islands Del. Donna Christian-Christiansen and Democratic Illinois Representative Danny K. Davis, CBC members and Pelosi asked the Black publishers to educate their readers about what the CBC is doing on the Hill.

"We can do this. But, we have to win the support of the American people.

"And we have to show that we can lead and that we're unified," said Pelosi.

"But, all that doesn't matter unless we're able to communicate the message. You're masters of communication. You insist on the truth about the conditions that exist in our country."

A bombshell announcement before the publishers was that the nearly 60 percent Black District of Columbia may finally get a voting representative in Congress. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, who was not able to attend the publishers' meeting, has no

vote.

"We are giving Utah an additional vote and we are giving the District of Columbia the opportunity to seat a voting member of Congress," said Democratic Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, a member of the Judiciary Committee. "We're fighting back all kinds of sophisticated, 'I'm not racist' amendments."

Former CBC Chairman Mel Watt, a Democrat from North Carolina, is hopeful it could pass. "I think we prob-

ably have the votes to get it out of the House. I don't know what it takes to get it out of the Senate. I don't know if anybody's focused that much on it until we can get it through the House," he said. Nevertheless, members appear heartened on all fronts. "There are some new sheriffs in town," said Clyburn. "We are now in the majority and we plan to use this majority to benefit the African-American community that sent us here."

## Boot Camp

(Continued from Page 4)

complications of sickle cell trait, a usually benign blood disorder. But after an uproar and cries of a cover-up from the boy's family, a second autopsy was conducted by another medical examiner, who concluded Anderson was suffocated by the guards' hands over his mouth and the "forced inhalation of ammonia fumes."

Anderson collapsed at the camp while doing exercises. The guards said they were trying to revive him, but his family and others were outraged at the video footage.

The guards and the nurse pleaded not guilty last month. They face up to 30 years in prison if convicted of aggravated manslaughter.