

Appeal for 'fresh start' as Nile dam talks kick off in DR Congo

Author:

AFP

ID:

1617554494788366900

Sun, 2021-04-04 16:39

KINSHASA: Foreign ministers from Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan kicked off negotiations in Kinshasa on Sunday over Addis Ababa's contested giant dam on the Nile, officials said.

The dispute over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), built across the Blue Nile, has been simmering for around a decade.

Democratic Republic of Congo President Felix Tshisekedi, who became chairman of the African Union in February, urged the foreign ministers "to launch a new dynamic."

"I ask you all to make a fresh start, to open one or several windows of hope, to seize every opportunity," he said.

He welcomed the willingness of the participants "to seek African solutions for African problems together."

Egypt and Sudan this month called on Kinshasa to steer efforts to relaunch negotiations on the contested dam.

For Tshisekedi, "The human dimension must be at the heart of these tripartite negotiations."

The people of all three countries have a right to water, food and health, he stressed.

The US ambassador to the DR Congo, Mike Hammer, attended the start of the talks, which were set to wrap up on Monday.

The Nile, the world's longest river, is a lifeline supplying both water and electricity to the 10 countries it crosses.

Upstream Ethiopia says hydroelectric power produced by the GERD will be vital to meet the energy needs of its 110 million people.

Egypt, which depends on the Nile for about 97 percent of its irrigation and drinking water, sees the dam as an existential threat.

Sudan, also downstream, fears its own dams will be compromised if Ethiopia proceeds with filling the GERD before a deal is reached.

Last Tuesday, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi stressed his country's concerns, warning, "Nobody will be permitted to take a single drop of Egypt's water, otherwise the region will fall into unimaginable instability."



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Nile Dam](#)

[Egypt](#)

[Sudan](#)

[Ethiopia](#)

Egypt to receive 5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines by May
Egypt joins dam negotiations in DRC

[EU's Michel vows support to Libya's interim government](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1617554131438338800

Sun, 2021-04-04 16:33

TRIPOLI: European Council President Charles Michel offered support to Libya Sunday on a visit to Tripoli, as the North African nation seeks to end a decade of chaos following a NATO-backed 2011 revolt.

"We will work with the new government and support it," Michel said after meeting with interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, who was selected in a UN-sponsored process to lead Libya to December 24 elections.

Libya's parliament confirmed Dbeibah's new transitional government last month.

"The European Union actively supports the process of national reconciliation," Michel said.

"Economic recovery, elections, the fight against illegal immigration... are areas in which the EU can help."

Oil-rich Libya has been torn by conflict since the toppling and killing of dictator Muammar Qaddafi in 2011.

The latest unity government push is hoped to bring together rival forces, especially the two main camps in the east and west, each supported by foreign powers.

Some 20,000 mercenaries and foreign fighters remained in Libya in early December, according to the United Nations, and a January deadline for their withdrawal passed without any sign of them leaving.

Calls for them to depart have grown in recent weeks, and Michel urged "all mercenaries and foreign soldiers to quickly leave."

Foreign Minister Najla Al-Mangoush Sunday repeated Libya's call for their withdrawal.

The country is also a major route for migrants trying to reach Europe across the Mediterranean, and traffickers have thrived in the lawlessness that followed Qaddafi's overthrow.

Michel said migration was a "major theme" in the relationship between Libya and the EU.

Last month, the foreign ministers of France, Germany and Italy visited Tripoli in a show of support for the war-torn country's newly formed government.

France reopened its embassy in Libya last month, and next week Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis is expected to visit Tripoli to reopen the country's embassy there, in a visit coinciding with that of Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi.

Michel said an EU ambassador would return to the Libyan capital in the coming weeks.

He also said the EU would donate 50,000 Covid-19 vaccines, which would add to the delivery earlier Sunday of 100,000 doses of the Russian Sputnik V jab, the first batch to arrive.

Libyan authorities have officially reported over 160,000 cases of the coronavirus among its seven million population, with more than 2,700 dead.





Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

[Bodies of three Lebanese sisters wash up in Syria](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1617540286577287000

Sun, 2021-04-04 12:15

BEIRUT: The bodies of three sisters missing in Lebanon have washed up on a Syrian beach and a probe is underway to determine how they drowned, a Lebanese security official said Sunday.

The sisters went missing from a village in northern Lebanon on Monday, said the official, adding that Syrian authorities found their bodies on Friday. Their bodies had likely been transported by the current north into Syrian waters, he added.

State news agency SANA said the Lebanese foreign ministry had reached out to authorities in Damascus "to verify their identity."

The Syrian interior ministry said Saturday it had found "three young women appearing to be in their twenties or thirties" washed up on a beach in the coastal port city of Tartus.

A forensic examination determined they had drowned three days earlier, the ministry said.

But it was not immediately clear how they ended up in the sea, the Lebanese official said.

The family of the sisters was being interrogated in Lebanon as part of a probe into their deaths, with possible explanations including attempted migration or "suicide," a security source said.

In recent months, dozens of Lebanese have boarded unsafe dinghies in a bid to flee rising poverty in Lebanon by sea, several not surviving the journey.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Lebanon](#)

[Syria](#)

Lebanon to swap medical expertise for Iraqi oil
Syria Kurds say 125 Daesh militants captured in displacement camp sweep

[Jordan says prince liaised with 'foreign parties' over plot to](#)

destabilize country

Sun, 2021-04-04 15:23

AMMAN: Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister Ayman Safadi said Sunday that the country's former crown prince, Prince Hamza, had been liaising with foreign parties over a plot to destabilize the country and had been monitored for some time.

The authorities intercepted communications between Prince Hamza and foreign parties over the timing of steps to undermine Jordan's security, Safadi said at a news conference.

Evidence showed Prince Hamza had been communicating with outside entities, the so-called Jordanian opposition, and had recorded two videos in Arabic and English in an "incitement attempt," Safadi added.

He also said the wife of Prince Hamza had also made contact with a representative of a foreign country to secure escape.

He added Jordanian intelligence had intercepted certain communications at what he called the "zero hour," adding that "it was clear they had moved from design and planning into action," □

He said some 14-16 people are under arrest in addition to senior officials whose arrest had already been announced.

Safadi confirmed that the security efforts to foil the attempt had been fully Jordanian and that all suspicious activities were now under full control.

The security services have asked for those involved in the plot to be referred to the state security court, he said.

* *With Reuters*



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Jordan](#)

Saudi, regional and international support voiced for Jordan's King Abdullah II
Former Jordanian crown prince says he is under house arrest

[Houthi massacre of African migrants should not be ignored, Black Lives Matter activist tells Arab News](#)

Sat, 2021-04-03 22:14

NEW YORK CITY / AL-MUKALLA, Yemen: The horrific deaths of scores of Ethiopian migrants in a detention center in Sanaa run by Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi militia is further proof that anti-black racism exists on every continent, according to Hawk Newsome, a founding member of Black Lives Matter (BLM) Greater New York.

Racial tensions and the deaths of black people in police custody have provoked repeated bouts of protest and unrest in the US and Europe in recent years.

Newsome played a key role in the worldwide movement that has rocked US cities since the police killing of African-American George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020.

During an exclusive interview with Arab News, Newsome said the tragedy in Yemen demonstrates the need for global, pan-African solidarity – the kind espoused by the early-20th-century New York-based black nationalist Marcus Garvey.



During an exclusive interview with Arab News, Newsome said the tragedy in Yemen demonstrates the need for global, pan-African solidarity. (Supplied)

“Racism is a worldwide practice. The demonization and vilification of black people takes place on every single continent,” Newsome said.

“So when we start talking about racism and anti-blackness, I tend to lean on the philosophies of Marcus Garvey, and I believe all black people should be unified in this struggle. Secondly, we should fight for all oppressed people.”

Hundreds of African migrants at a camp in the Houthi-occupied Yemeni capital were staging a hunger strike over maltreatment and poor conditions on March 7 when armed militiamen set their accommodation on fire, causing the deaths.

Newsome said he is shocked but not at all surprised that there has been so little outcry over the Houthi outrage. In his opinion, the response would have been entirely different had the victims been white.

“This is an issue that needs attention. This is something that can’t be ignored. This is something I won’t ignore. There are 44 people murdered and

the news isn't paying attention," he said.

"I have strong reason to believe that the news isn't paying attention because they're black people. It's my duty to fight for black people across the world."



Newly arrived Somali migrants rest in the shade on the beach of Hasn Beleid village, 230 kms east of the Red Sea port of Aden. (AFP/File Photo)

Five migrants who spoke to Human Rights Watch described the conditions in the Houthis' Immigration, Passport and Naturalization Authority Holding Facility in Sanaa as "cramped and unsanitary, with up to 550 migrants in a hangar in the facility compound."

According to these witness testimonies, Houthi guards told the migrants to say their "final prayers" before firing tear gas and what they suspect was a flashbang into the hangar where the migrants were sheltered. The resulting fire tore through the makeshift camp, killing scores and injuring many more.

Before the fire broke out, the protest ringleaders were identified by the Houthi guards, who then beat them with wooden sticks and rifle butts, according to witness testimonies.

The Houthis later returned to the hangar wearing their signature black, green and grey uniforms, equipped with military-grade weapons. One of them then climbed onto the roof and launched two projectiles into the room.



African migrants who were reportedly smuggled by sea into Yemen, sit on the back of a vehicle on the outskirts of the city of Aden. (AFP/File Photo)

Witnesses inside the hangar say the first projectile produced a lot of smoke and made their eyes water and sting.

The second, which the witnesses referred to as a “bomb,” went off with a loud bang, igniting the fire.

Newsome said he is appalled by the lack of public outrage, even among the ranks of BLM chapters in the US and UK.

“I strongly contend that if this were a group of white people who were placed inside a hangar and there were missiles and projectiles fired into that building and 44 people died and people who were trying to escape were stepping over dead bodies, this would be a matter of international concern,” he said.

“But the racism in the news media and on the world stage renders this a non-issue. Where is the national attention?”



African migrants receive food and water inside a football stadium in the Red Sea port city of Aden in Yemen, on April 23, 2019. (AFP/File Photo)

Newsome, who is a lawyer by training, draws a direct parallel between the racist attitudes that have allowed US policemen and Houthi militiamen alike to kill black people in their custody.

“Innocent black people seeking asylum, innocent black people who are simply looking for work, are being murdered ... for asking for better treatment. That is what I have a problem with, and that’s what the world should have a problem with too,” he said.

“When I think of people in a small space being attacked with military-grade weapons and having the inability to fight back and struggling to survive, that breaks my heart. That should break anyone’s heart.”

The BLM movement first emerged as a Twitter hashtag in 2013 following the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of African-American teenager Trayvon Martin.



African illegal immigrants sit on a boat in the southern port city of Aden on September 26, 2016, before being deported to Somalia. (AFP/File Photo)

Since then, local chapters of the group have sprung up worldwide to monitor police violence against black communities and to support grassroots empowerment.

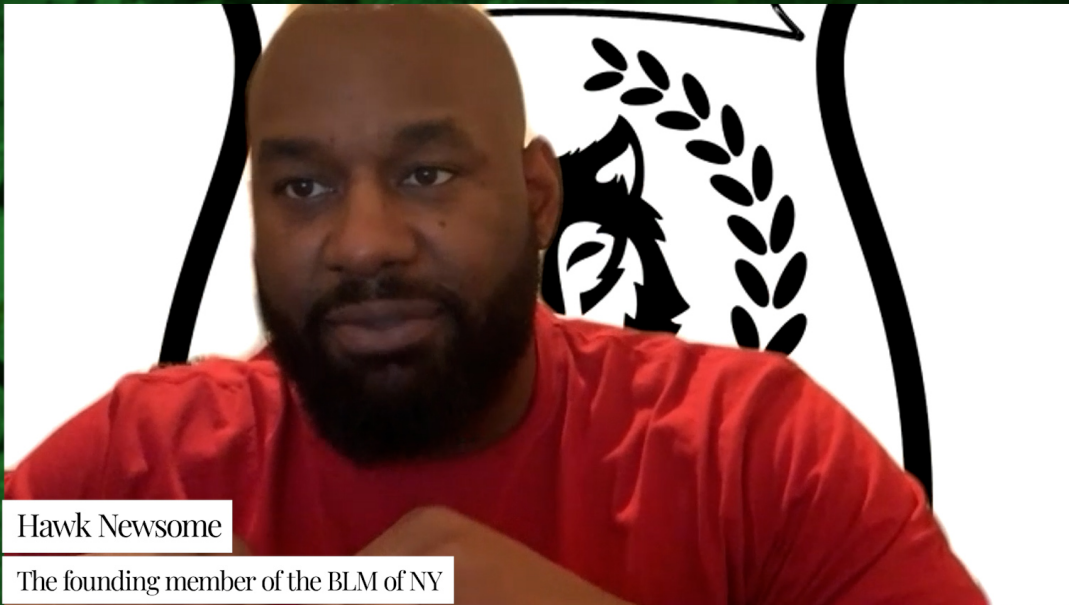
Among its achievements, the Greater New York chapter has opened a new school in the Bronx, fed thousands of needy people during the coronavirus pandemic, and introduced five bills that became state law supporting the rights of black people and minorities.

The group is also crafting an educational curriculum to showcase the advances of black people in America and around the world.

The movement found fresh impetus in 2020 after Floyd's death. Former police officer Derek Chauvin, who is accused of killing Floyd by kneeling on his neck for more than nine minutes during his arrest, is currently standing trial. Chauvin denies charges of murder and manslaughter.

Twitter: [@rayhanania](https://twitter.com/rayhanania)

[@saeedalBatati](https://twitter.com/saeedalBatati)



Hawk Newsome

The founding member of the BLM of NY

Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Yemen](#)

[Houthis](#)

[Ethiopian migrants](#)

[Black Lives Matter](#)

[Editor's Choice](#)

When black lives don't matter: World silent on Houthi 'Holocaust' of African migrants 'Black Lives Matter' protests for US racial justice reach new dimension