

## **Asylpakt mit Ruanda**

The British Parliament has voted in favour of a controversial bill to deport migrants to Rwanda. The bill was passed with 313 votes in favour and 269 against. In order to deter migrants, the government in London wants to send irregular travellers to Rwanda in future without examining their asylum application and regardless of their origin. The legal basis for this was to declare Rwanda a safe third country. The plan has already cost the British government at least 300 million dollars in payments to Rwanda, which has agreed to accept and care for hundreds of asylum seekers from the UK.

## **South Africa: Expansion of nuclear power**

The government has announced plans to build new nuclear power plants. The opposition has criticised the plans, arguing that the Russian state nuclear energy agency Rosatom is the "preferred partner". The opposition Democratic Alliance's criticism is linked to a major nuclear agreement that South Africa signed with Russia in 2014 worth an estimated USD 76 billion, which was annulled by a South African court in 2017 as illegal and unconstitutional. The agreement was tainted by allegations of extensive corruption and was signed under the leadership of former South African President Jacob Zuma. The plans for the new nuclear power plants came a day after the South African government approved an agreement with Russian bank Gazprombank to restart a gas liquefaction plant on the south coast of South Africa, which has not been operational since 2020. Gazprombank is one of the many Russian financial institutions that have been sanctioned by the United States. South Africa currently has a nuclear power plant in Koeberg, around 50 kilometres north of Cape Town. It is the only one on the African continent. Numerous other African countries, including Burkina Faso, Mali, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia and Egypt, have concluded agreements with Russia on the utilisation of nuclear energy. 13.12.2023

## **Mali: UN peacekeeping mission ends after 10 years**

The United Nations Mission (MINUSMA) in Mali has officially ended its 10-year mission in the country. After 1 January, there will be a "liquidation phase" during which, among other things, the remaining equipment will be handed over to the authorities. MINUSMA has deployed around 15,000 soldiers and police officers in Mali over the past ten years. Around 180 members have been killed in hostilities. The UN troops were initially welcomed by Malians, who hoped that the foreign soldiers could help the Malian military push back the rebels who had taken over large parts of the country in the north. Mali's military government, which took power in 2020, demanded the withdrawal of the mission, cancelled the alliance with the former colonial power France, moved closer to Russia and favoured co-operation with the Wagner Group. A further takeover by the military in May 2021 strengthened the *new alliances*. 12.12.2023

## **Zimbabwe: Shocking award**

Many Zimbabweans were extremely surprised when they heard that their Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube had been named "Best African Finance Minister of the Year" by Reputation Poll International. Yet the country is going

through economic turmoil: the unemployment rate is 85% and, due to a lack of confidence in its own currency, 80% of transactions are conducted in US dollars. While Ncube basks in the recognition of his achievements, critics see the honour as an "insult" to the population, which has suffered for decades under the mismanagement of the Zanu-PF party, whose "corrupt and misguided policies" have created the "worst economy in the world". 12.12.2023

## **South Africa: Coronation of Zulu king illegal**

The Zulu royal throne is on shaky ground after the High Court in Pretoria found that President Cyril Ramaphosa failed to follow due process in recognising Misuzulu KaZwelithini as king. Ramaphosa is alleged to have ignored objections and concerns within the royal family. Misuzulu's brother, Prince Simakade Jackson Zulu, and the half-brother of the late King Zwelithini, Mbonisi Zulu, had gone to court as they challenged the process of determining and appointing Misuzulu as heir to the throne. The ongoing dispute concerns the Zulu nation, which is about land, household and leadership. 12.12.2023

## **Heatwave - Heat warnings**

South Africa is dealing with a nationwide heatwave with temperatures above 40°C in the Northern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State, and highs of 30°C in Gauteng and North West. Local weather experts warn that the intense heat is likely to continue for several months. The authorities advise avoiding direct sunlight between 11:00 and 15:00. Maximum temperatures of around 35-43 °C are also expected in Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, southern Mozambique and southern Namibia. Botswana, Eswatini, Namibia and Mozambique (for Gaza, Ihambene and Maputo) have issued heat warnings. 12.12.2023

## **Kenya: Nationwide darkness**

On Sunday evening, there was a power blackout that paralysed large parts of the country. The transport minister called for an investigation into "possible acts of sabotage and cover-up" of the third nationwide blackout in three months. The blackout began at around 8.00 pm and affected many important facilities, including the main airport in Nairobi. The state-owned power utility Kenya Power blamed the blackout on a "system malfunction" and said the problem was being fixed by technicians. During last month's blackout, it took technicians over 12 hours to restore power. However, the worst blackout was on 25 August - the longest interruption in Kenya's history.

## **Botswana extends ban on fruit and vegetable imports**

The government has announced that it will extend and expand import restrictions on certain fresh products from South Africa in order to become self-sufficient in food and reduce its import costs. President Mokgweetsi Masisi said the import ban had reduced the country's import bill for fresh commodities by 71%. Together with Namibia, Botswana extended the deadline from the end of December 2023 to 2025, and the number of products will double to 32 from July 2024. 11.12.2023

## **More Info: <https://netzwerkafrika.de/>**

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