

Somalia: Defence agreement with Turkey

Parliament has approved a comprehensive defence agreement with Turkey. As part of the ten-year agreement, Turkey will arm and train the Somali naval forces and deploy its own ships in Somali waters.

Ghana: Nuclear plans delayed

The West African country wants to put one or two nuclear power plants into operation by 2030. The government is in talks with China, France, Russia, South Korea and the USA about the construction of the nuclear power plants. Financing problems are causing delays. Ghana has a small nuclear research reactor that is used for research and educational purposes, but not for power generation. There is strong public opposition to the decision in favour of nuclear power as an alternative energy source.

On promotional tour in Africa

Brazilian President Lula has been travelling through Africa these days. As chairman of the G20 group - he had campaigned for the AU to join the G20 - he was guest of honour at the summit in Addis Ababa. He also wanted to visit Egypt and Ethiopia, which have been BRICS states since the beginning of 2024. He was already in Angola last year. Lula wants to regain lost ground and upgrade relations, but the previous trade volume has shrunk; Russia and China have taken over. Brazil is the country with the largest black population outside Africa and shares the bitter legacy of slavery.

South Africa: Elections 29 May 2024

Elections will be held in South Africa on 29 May. Ramaphosa's ruling African National Congress party is expected to face a tough challenge to retain its parliamentary majority in the country's seventh democratic elections since the end of the apartheid system in 1994. The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, is exploring the possibility of forming its own coalition agreement with numerous other smaller parties in the hope of forcing the ANC out of government altogether. South Africa's unemployment rate, which is already the highest in the world, rose to 32.1% in the fourth quarter of 2023; in the 15-24 age group, it even rose to 59.4%.

Migrants attempt to reach Spain

Morocco intercepts a boat with 141 people. African migrants are increasingly trying to reach Spain. The Canary Islands are around 100 kilometres from Morocco's Atlantic coast, but pirogues - the wooden boats that migrants often use to cross - often depart from Gambia, from where the journey can take up to ten days. The Spanish Interior Ministry reported that 11,704 migrants had arrived in the Canary Islands by 15 February - more than a six-fold increase on the previous year. Most of them came from Mauritania, which recently signed a 210-million-euro agreement with the European Union to fund migration patrols and humanitarian aid.

Eswatini: Media freedom threatened

The new Prime Minister, Russell Dlamini, has begun his term in office with a threat to regulate the media; he will enact a law to create a government-controlled media

regulator. Editors were surprised by the Prime Minister's hard line and feared for their future in a country with limited media freedom. He addressed the editors for the first time since his appointment by King Mswati III in 2023.

Microplastics in Nile fish

Scientists at the University Witwatersrand investigated the presence of microplastics in Nile tilapia. This popular African freshwater fish species forms the basis of commercial fishing. Microplastic particles were discovered in the fish caught. This means that the Nile is contaminated with microplastics, which can be ingested or consumed by tilapia and other aquatic organisms in various ways. In laboratory studies, microplastics have been shown to be toxic to animals and cells. The Nile is one of the most important rivers in the world. It is also the most important freshwater system in Africa. Around 300 million people live in the 11 countries through which it flows. Many depend on its waters to make a living from agriculture and fishing. Combating microplastic pollution is not easy. It requires technological advances and the combined efforts of consumers, manufacturers, governments and scientists.

Ghana: Government reshuffle

About 10 months before the 2024 general elections, President Akufo-Addo has relieved the finance minister and other key members of his government of their duties with immediate effect. It is the first major reshuffle of the government led by President Akufo-Addo since his victory in the 2016 general elections and the extension of his mandate. Ghana has been struggling with a severe economic crisis in recent years, characterised by high inflation and a high cost of living.

Guinea: Rising cost of living

Labour unions have threatened a nationwide strike if the government does not lower the cost of living in the country. The ruling military junta has recently increased the prices of staple food imports into the country, leading to an unprecedented price hike in markets across the country and a shortage of rice. Just before Ramadan, the prices of oil and other cooking items have skyrocketed. Guinea has been ruled by a military junta since September 2021, which deposed the country's first democratically elected president.

Israel's offensive in Gaza Strip condemned

At the African Union summit in Addis Ababa, the heads of state and government condemned the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip and called for an immediate end to it. Azali Assoumani, President of the Comoros and outgoing Chairperson of the African Union, praised South Africa's lawsuit against Israel before the International Court of Justice and condemned "the genocide that Israel is committing in Palestine before our eyes". "The international community cannot close its eyes to the atrocities that have not only caused chaos in Palestine, but also have devastating consequences for the rest of the world," Assoumani said.

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

Guinea: Military leaders dissolve government