

World



Jerusalem crisis

Iran calls on UN to condemn Israeli action in Al-Aq-sa mosque compound

Tragedy

The collapse of a Mexico overpass that left 26 dead could have been caused by defects in the steel beams, officials say

Diplomacy

Qatari envoy Mutlaq al-Qahtani appeared with message from his Emir

Suluhu visit, Somalia action improves ties

Scholar advises Mogadishu authorities to take lessons from its abrupt decision and to be 'more careful'

BY AGGREY MUTAMBO

Kenya closed the week with good news in diplomatic circles with Tanzania and Somalia pledging to strengthen bilateral relations with Nairobi. However, the fruits from the optics could take a while, observers say.

It began with the state visit of President Samia Suluhu, who vowed to improve business between the two countries.

"We have agreed to continue addressing the challenges, especially non-tariff barriers, that keep cropping up at our border points," Suluhu said.

"The challenges need to go. Our Joint Commission on Cooperation will be sitting regularly to resolve them."

Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta pledged to go "as far as strengthening our relations for the benefit of our people".

One of the immediate resolutions was harmonising Covid-19 protocols. Tanzania now requires a valid negative test for arrivals and those transiting.

However, issues on fishing rights, phytosanitary requirements on maize sales and immigration mismatches were back in play after Suluhu left Nairobi.

In the meantime, Somalia which cut relations with Kenya on December 15, 2020, said it would rescind the decision.

A statement from Villa Somalia, the official residence of the president, said the decision followed mediation by Qatar.

"In interest of good neighbourliness, the Federal Government of Somalia resumes diplomatic ties with Kenya based on mutual benefit and respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference, peaceful co-existence and equality," said President Mohamed Abdullahi Farmajo's spokesman Abdirashid M Hashi.

The statement did not say anything on the accusations against Kenya that led to the cutting of ties.

It also did not say whether am-



Tanzania President Samia Suluhu Hassan at the end of the Kenya-Tanzania business forum that was held at Serena Hotel, Nairobi, on May 5, 2021. One of the immediate resolutions was to harmonise Covid-19 protocols at the border. JEFF ANGOTEI/NATION

bassadors Lucas Tumbo of Kenya and Somalia's Muhammad Ahmed Nur Tarsan would resume duty immediately.

Because Kenya did not sever ties, it is Somalia to decide when to send the diplomat back.

Kenya said it took note of the statement and acknowledged the resumption of relations.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs looks forward to normalisation of relations by Somali authorities, including with regard to trade, communication, transport, people to people relations and cultural exchange," the government said.

However, normalisation of ties happens through official diplomatic documents known as Note Verbale.

Somalia cut ties in December in a tam statement by Information Minister Osman Dubbe, who is not a diplomat.

Official letters followed two

days later Nairobi had not received official communication by the time we went to press, an envoy familiar with the issue said.

And matters did not look better after a video emerged of Tarsan criticising his president for attempting to extend his term.

He did not immediately respond to our inquiries, but a spokesperson said he would report to duty as ambassador to Kenya.

Horn International Institute of Strategic Studies chairman Mustafa Y Ali said Somalia should take lessons from its abrupt decisions, adding that they have granted al-Shabaab an opportunity to thrive.

"Kenya should (tirelessly) continue offering Somalia assistance using its good offices as it did in the 1990s through 2000-2010, to help the country stabilise," Ali told the *Sunday Nation*.

"Most importantly, the troubled neighbour should be willing to accept and respect the country that has stood with it in the last troubled 30 years by hosting refugees, providing technical and financial support and fighting al-Shabaab. Somalia should be more careful."

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BRIEFLY

Prince Misizulu named Zulu king

PRETORIA—The eldest son of former Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini has been chosen as successor to the throne, amid a family feud. Prince Misizulu, 46, was named in the will of Queen Mantfombi Dlamini-Zulu, his mother who died last week. There were dramatic scenes as the will was read out, with some family members voicing their disapproval. Prince Misizulu had to be led away from the meeting by armed security. (BBC)

Collision claims 14 lives in Uganda

KAMPALA—Fourteen people died when a minibus and a truck collided in Masaka, Uganda on Thursday. The minibus smashed into a trailer that was overtaking at a blind spot, police said. The collision occurred in Kassigajjira village on the outskirts of Masaka around 7.30am. Most of the victims died on the spot. Red Cross volunteers, police officers and area residents cut through the wreckage to retrieve some of the bodies. (Daily Monitor)

Algeria honours massacre victims

ALGIERS—Algeria on Saturday honoured thousands killed by the French in 1945, as the country waits for Paris to apologise for colonial-era crimes. Pro-independence rioting following a demo in the final months of World War II prompted the killing of thousands of mostly unarmed civilians, a turning point in Algeria's liberation struggle. On May 8, 1945, thousands rallied in Setif as allies including France, marked victory over Germany. "Long live the victory," they shouted. The gathering turned into a march for an end to colonialism, with cries of "Long live independent Algeria!" (AFP)

The government resumes diplomatic ties with Kenya based on mutual benefit for sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful co-existence and equality.

Abdirashid M Hashi

