



Africa Command Open Source Daily – 15 March**NORTH AFRICA**

Libya: Social Media, Panarab TV Report Qadhafi Warships Sunk by 'Rebel' Jets -- Facebook posts, the Qatari-backed Al-Jazirah TV, the micro-blogging site Twitter and the Benghazi-based Libyan opposition website Birniq on 15 March all reported that the Libyan rebels had struck at Libyan warships off the coast of Ajdabiyah. Al-Jazirah in Arabic at 1408 GMT carried a series of screen captions saying three Libyan warships had been attacked by aircraft loyal to the rebels, sinking two and hitting a third. Benghazi-based opposition paper Birniq quoted an officer at the Benina air base as saying two aircraft loyal to the rebels had sunk two warships of Al-Qadhafi's navy. The aircraft, a MiG-23 fighter and a helicopter which had taken off from the air base, also managed to bomb tanks in the areas of conflict near the towns of Ajdabiyah and Al-Burayqah, the report said. [GMP20110315950032]

Libya: Al-Qadhafi Says 'No Problem' Inside Country -- Libyan Leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi, in a "live" relay of a speech from Bab al-Aziziyah, Al-Qadhafi's command center in Tripoli, said, "The truth is that there is no problem inside Libya at the moment, and no events worth mentioning have happened, which is why we did not publicize it and disregarded it in the beginning." Qadhafi said that similar events had happened in the early eighties; when groups of "stray dogs" caused trouble but were "trampled" by the people. [GMP20110315950066, Tripoli Al-Jamahiriyah Television launched in 1968 by the state-owned broadcaster Libyan Jamahiriyah Broadcasting Corporation]

WEST AFRICA

RSA Report: UN Sends 2,000 More Peacekeeping Troops to Cote d'Ivoire -- Marius Fransman, RSA deputy international relations minister said that 2,000 more United Nations peacekeeping troops would be sent to the Ivory Coast. Fransman said, "Due to the escalation of violence in Cote d'Ivoire, the United Nations has begun sending in approximately 2,000 more peacekeeping troops to the existing force of 8,000, along with three attack helicopters in order to protect civilians in the face of further violence that could spiral into a bloody civil war." [AFP20110315520010, Johannesburg SAfm Radio South Africa's only national talk radio station]

Cote d'Ivoire: Pro-Gbagbo Forces Hold on to Strategic Positions in Abidjan -- Paris AFP reported that troops loyal to Ivory Coast's Laurent Gbagbo were holding key positions in Abidjan after repulsing forces of his rival Alassane Ouattara in a key battle for control of the country's economic capital. The report added that the pro-Gbagbo forces held on to strategic military barracks in the northern suburb of Adjame after the heaviest day of fighting since the disputed November election. The report quoted a police source as saying, "We are in control of the camp, we are busy carrying out a sweep of the area, but the fighting was very, very hard." [AFP20110315683004, Paris AFP independent French news agency]

Liberia: Security Forces Disarms Ivorian Armed Fighters -- On 13 March, *Monrovia Daily Observer Online* reported that Liberia's justice minister Christiana P. Tah told the Liberian Senate that several armed fighters who crossed into Liberia from crisis-ridden Ivory Coast have been disarmed by Liberian

state security forces. Tah further told the Senate that the arms given to Liberian security forces at the country's various border points have been turned over to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). [AFP20110315598001, *Monrovia Daily Observer Online* website of the independent daily observed to publish balanced information]

UN Chief, AU Observer Mission Salute Benin Presidential Elections -- Paris AFP reported that UN chief Ban Ki-moon saluted Benin's presidential elections, while an African Union observer mission said that the vote held after two earlier postponements was free and transparent. A statement from Ban said, "The secretary-general commends Benin for setting a positive example once again in having organized these polls without major incident and despite significant challenges related to the introduction of a new voter registration system." [AFP20110315683005, Paris AFP]

Nigeria: Security Agency Raises Alarm Over Political Violence Ahead of April Polls -- *Lagos This Day Online* reported that on 14 March, the Nigerian State Security Service (SSS) raised the alarm over what it called growing threats to peace and security in the country and warned politicians to desist from "acrimonious" campaigns. According to the report, the Security Service lamented the resort to violence by politicians against their opponents and warned that the action constitutes great challenge to next month's general elections. [AFP20110315581012, *Lagos This Day Online* website of the independent daily]

EAST AFRICA

Somali Leader Urges AU Troops To Continue Offensive Against Al-Shabaab -- *Mogadishu Shabeelle Media Network.net* reported that Shaykh Sharif Shaykh Ahmad, the president of the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia [TFG], met with senior armed forces and AMISOM troops in Mogadishu's Curubo hotel and asked them to continue with the operations against Al-Shabaab. The report added that the president asked AMISOM troops to double their efforts in supporting the TFG and confronting the threats, which he said were posed by Al-Shabaab. [AFP20110315950050, *Mogadishu Shabeelle Media Network.net* internet site of independent FM radio and television network based in Mogadishu]

OSC ASSESSMENTS

Report: Sudan -- North, South Tensions Increasing, Raising Risk of Instability -- Southern Sudan ruling Sudan People's Liberation Movement's (SPLM) decision to suspend postreferendum negotiations with the north over accusations that the north is conspiring to overthrow the southern government in advance of the region's anticipated independence in July, have increased north-south tensions. Recent fighting in a border state between the southern army and rebel militias as well as reports that Khartoum and Juba are reinforcing positions near the disputed Abyei region have added to the risk of instability. [AFP20110315049001]

Analysis: Sub-Saharan Africa -- Restrictive Laws Stifle Independent Media, Reduce Transparency -- An increase in repressive media legislation across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is undermining independent media's ability to increase transparency and hold governments accountable. Many authoritarian and hybrid regimes have endorsed new measures to curtail media freedom in several African countries. African governments have largely ignored repeated calls from local and international media observers to repeal repressive measures. [AFF20110315049002]