

# Ousted Vice President to Replace Mugabe as President



A Dec. 2014 file photo shows Emmerson Mnangagwa, left, former vice president of Zimbabwe, behind President Robert Mugabe who resigned Tuesday in Harare.

HARARE (Dispatches) -- Zimbabwe's former vice president Emmerson Mnangagwa will be sworn in as president Friday following the resignation of Robert Mugabe after nearly four decades in power, state broadcaster ZBC reported on Wednesday.

Mnangagwa, who fled for his safety after Mugabe sacked him two weeks ago, was to land at Manyame Airbase in Harare at 6pm (1600 GMT), ZBC said. Mnangagwa's

sacking prompted the military takeover that forced Mugabe out.

Mugabe's downfall came suddenly for a man once fated across Africa as a liberation hero for leading his country to independence from Britain in 1980 after a war.

The 93-year-old had clung on for a week after the army takeover, with ZANU-PF urging him to go. He finally resigned on Tuesday moments after parliament began

an impeachment process seen as the only legal way to force him out.

"The transition from Mugabe to Mnangagwa could mark a major and positive shift and put Zimbabwe back on the foreign investor radar," head of equity research at emerging market bank Exotix Capital, Hasnain Malik, said in a note.

"Many of the ingredients of a great frontier market are in place in Zimbabwe: human capital, infrastructure, natural resources and diaspora."

However, there are doubts about Mnangagwa's reform credentials, while a large section of the Zimbabwean public are hostile towards a man who stands accused of repression.

"The dark past is not going to disappear. They will be following him around like a piece of chewing gum on his shoe," International Crisis Group's southern Africa senior consultant Piers Pigou said.

"For him to really be seen to be doing the right thing, he's going to have to introduce policies that fundamentally undermine the power structures of ZANU-PF, through a shift to genuine political pluralism and a decoupling of the party and state."

Nicknamed "Ngwenya", or crocodile in the Shona language, an animal famed in Zimbabwean lore for its stealth and ruthlessness, Mnangagwa issued a statement from hiding on Tuesday calling on Zimbabweans to unite to rebuild the country.

## Egypt Detains 29 Suspected of Spying for Turkey

CAIRO (Reuters) -- Egypt's public prosecutor has ordered the detention of 29 people suspected of espionage on behalf of Turkey and joining a terrorist organization, state news agency MENA reported Wednesday.

According to the results of an investigation by the General Intelligence Service, the group has been recording phone calls and passing information to Turkish intelligence as part of a plan to bring the Muslim Brotherhood back to power in Egypt, MENA said.

The nationalities of the suspects were not specified. They are also accused of money laundering and trading currency without a license.

Ties between Ankara and Cairo have been strained since the army ousted President Muhammad Morsi of the Brotherhood following mass protests against his rule in 2013.

The Muslim Brotherhood has close ties with Turkey's ruling AK Party and many of its members have fled to Turkey since the group's activities were banned in Egypt.



A picture taken on October 21, 2017 shows an Egyptian policeman standing guard in the new city of el-Alamien, west of Alexandria.

Following Morsi's ouster, Egypt branded the Brotherhood, the world's oldest Islamist movement, a terrorist organization and most of its senior members have been arrested,

driven into exile or underground.

The Brotherhood says it is a peaceful organization and has condemned the crackdown.

## North Korea: U.S. Terror Label 'Grave Provocation'



This undated photo released by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) on November 21, 2017 shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un at the Sungri Motor Complex in South Pyongan Province.

SEOUL (Dispatches) -- North Korea responded Wednesday to U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to relist the county as a state sponsor of terrorism, calling it a "grave provocation and aggressive violation," North Korean state media reported.

Trump put North Korea back on a list of state sponsors of terrorism on Monday, a designation that allows the United States to impose more sanctions and risks inflaming tension over North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs.

KCNA, a spokesman for the North Korean foreign ministry called the decision "disgraceful behavior" by Trump and denied that North Korea engaged in any terrorism.

The Trump administration imposed new sanctions on a slew of North Korean shipping firms and Chinese trading companies Tuesday in its latest push to isolate the nation and deprive it of revenue.

The U.S. Treasury Department also designated a North Korean corporation involved in exporting workers overseas. The action came a day after the United States returned North Korea to its list of state

sponsors of terrorism.

"These designations include companies that have engaged in trade with North Korea cumulatively worth hundreds of millions of dollars," Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in a statement.

"We are also sanctioning the shipping and transportation companies, and their vessels, that facilitate North Korea's trade and its deceptive maneuvers."

Among the companies targeted were four Chinese-based companies and one Chinese individual said to have deep commercial ties with North Korea. The sanctions were imposed under a September executive order that opened the way for the U.S. to punish foreign companies dealing with the North. It bars those sanctioned from holding U.S. assets or doing business with Americans.

The targeting of Chinese companies is a sore point with Beijing, whose help President Donald Trump is counting on to put an economic squeeze on Pyongyang. China recently sent its highest-level envoy to North Korea in two years to discuss the tense state of affairs on the Korean Peninsula. As part of its effort to stymie North Korean transportation networks, the Treasury sanctioned North Korea's Maritime Administration and its Transport Ministry, six North Korean shipping and trading companies and 20 of their vessels, which are all North Korean-flagged.

Also sanctioned was the Korea South-South Cooperation Corporation said to have exported North Korean workers to China, Russia, Cambodia and Poland to generate revenue for the government.

## EU Turmoil Deepens Amid German Crisis



Angela Merkel seeks to win a fourth term as German chancellor.

BERLIN (Reuters) -- Half a year ago, the political stars seemed perfectly aligned for a deep reform of the European Union and its euro currency.

Emmanuel Macron had won the French presidency on a promise to relaunch Europe. And Angela Merkel, on track to win a fourth term as German chancellor, looked ready to embrace his bold vision, telling an audience in Bavaria that it was time for Europe to take its fate into its own hands.

Following the collapse of German coalition talks, however, the prospects for a meaningful leap forward in European cooperation, driven by newly minted governments in Berlin and Paris, look dimmer than ever.

"Political uncertainty has crossed the Rhine," said Jean Pisani-Ferry, an economist and academic who helped write Macron's election program. "Europe has gotten used to having a strong German government with clear positions. That is something we may not have for some time."

Germany now faces months of political limbo that will narrow an already tight window for agreeing reforms of eurozone governance and EU defense and asylum policies.

Should Germany be forced to hold new elections, its partners may have to wait until next summer for a government to take form. By then, Europe will be entering crunch time in its Brexit negotiations with Britain, preparing for sensitive discussions on a long-term EU budget and gearing up for the election of a new European Parliament.

Eurozone leaders were due to begin a six-month discussion on closer integration of their 19-nation currency bloc next month at a special summit in Brussels. Now that debate seems likely to be delayed and officials say the chances of reaching any conclusions by June 2018, as proposed by European Council President Donald Tusk, are slim.

"Things will go on hold until there is a formal acting German government," one eurozone official said. "At this stage I don't see what the leaders could take in December or June for deepening eurozone integration when there is a German government without a mandate."

Another casualty could be the completion of an EU pact on closer defense cooperation, known as PESCO. Berlin and Paris had hoped to sign it into law at a regular EU summit next month. Now diplomats involved in EU foreign policy say that may be overly ambitious. Germany has also been a driving force behind EU efforts to reform its asylum policies in the wake of the 2015 refugee crisis. Those discussions, pitting countries like Italy and Greece against Poland and Hungary, were already bogged down. Without a new government in Berlin, there is next to no hope of a breakthrough.

"We have so many things we need to do urgently that slowing us down is not good for Europe as a whole," Frans Timmermans, a former Dutch foreign minister who is deputy head of the European Commission, told CNN.

## Fleeing Rohingya 'Drained' by Trauma: UN

SEOUL (Reuters) -- Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims who fled to Bangladesh from violence in Myanmar have been "drained" by the trauma they suffered during the crisis and a struggle to overcome desperate want, the United Nations refugee chief said on Wednesday.

More than 600,000 Rohingya have fled Buddhist-majority Myanmar since late August this year for neighboring Bangladesh, driven out by a military clearance operation in Rakhine State.

The refugees' suffering has caused an international outcry, spurring appeals by aid agencies for millions of dollars in funds to tackle the crisis. "I found this was a population that had almost no response. Very passive," said Filippo Grandi, the UN high commissioner for refugees, describing his visit late in September to camps where the refugees were staying.

"You almost felt there was nothing left and that everything had been drained by this," he told Reuters in an interview in his first visit to the South Korean capital. He saw the lassitude as a symptom of trauma, he added. "We haven't seen this kind of trauma for a very long, long time," the Italian

diplomat said. "Maybe I saw it in the '90s in central Africa."

Grandi coordinated UN humanitarian activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo during its 1996-97 civil war.

The success of aid efforts by the United Nations and non-government bodies depends on the Myanmar government to defuse the hostility facing humanitarian workers in Rakhine, Grandi said.

"It's not political work, it's not to favor one community over the other," he said.

"On the contrary, it's directed to all those who are in need. And when members of the Buddhist community are in need, they certainly qualify for that. I think it's important that they stress that, they do that more," said Grandi.

Tension had been rising between the government and aid agencies even before the spasm of violence that began in late August.

Longstanding antipathy among ethnic Rakhine Buddhists - who say the UN and nongovernment bodies favor the Rohingya with aid deliveries - spiked in August, with protesters demanding that aid agencies leave and the UN warning staff against rising hostility.



TOKYO (AFP) -- Japanese and American forces scrambled to reach the downed C-2A "Greyhound" aircraft in waters off the remote uninhabited Japanese reef of Okinotori Wednesday.

The U.S. Navy said the rescued personnel were being transferred to USS Ronald Reagan for medical evaluation and were in good condition.

U.S. authorities told Japan that engine trouble was the suspected cause of the accident.

The aircraft carrier was in the Philippine Sea as part of an exercise with Japanese forces, it said.

The U.S. military has a heavy presence in the western Pacific, with tens of thousands of troops and billions of dollars' worth of hardware stationed throughout Japan and South Korea.

But recent months have taken their toll on the Seventh Fleet, which is headquartered at Yokosuka, near Tokyo, and U.S. military vessels have been involved in a number of accidents.

The USS John S. McCain collided with a tanker off Singapore in August, killing 10 sailors and injuring five others. Two months earlier in June, the USS Fitzgerald and a cargo ship smashed into each other off Japan, leaving seven sailors dead.

There were also two more, lesser-known incidents. In January USS Antietam ran aground near its base in Japan, and in May, USS Lake Champlain collided with a South Korean fishing vessel.

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WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- U.S. forces conducted an airstrike against the al-Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabab group in Somalia Tuesday, killing more than 100 jihadists, military officials claimed Wednesday.

The operation occurred 200 kilometers northwest of the capital, Mogadishu.

The U.S. military has in recent months upped the tempo of its operations in Somalia, conducting a growing number of drone strikes.

On November 13, the Pentagon claimed U.S. forces had killed 40 al-Shabab and Daesh fighters in a series of Somalia strikes over several days.

The surge in U.S. operations came after President Donald Trump in March loosened the constraints on the U.S. military to take actions against alleged terrorists when they judge it is needed, without seeking specific White House approval.

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WASHINGTON (AP) -- The United States is declaring that the violence against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar constitutes "ethnic cleansing."

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson says that "no provocation can justify the horrendous atrocities that have ensued." He's blaming Myanmar's forces and "local vigilantes."

Tillerson says those responsible "must be held accountable."

U.S. lawmakers and rights groups have been urging the Trump administration to call it ethnic cleansing. Tillerson acted on a recent recommendation from the State Department.

The declaration is likely to increase pressure on the Trump administration and Congress to move toward new sanctions on Myanmar. Sanctions on the Southeast Asian nation were eased in recent years as the country made steps toward transitioning to democracy.

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SINGAPORE (AFP) -- Driverless buses will appear on some roads in Singapore from 2022 as part of plans to improve mobility in the land-scarce city-state, its transport minister said Wednesday.

Singapore has so far avoided the massive traffic jams that choke other Asian cities like Manila and Jakarta by imposing road tolls, spending massively on public transport and becoming one of the world's most expensive places to own a car.

It now plans to embrace self-driving technology to further reduce reliance on cars and improve how people get around.

Driverless buses will be deployed during off-peak traffic hours in three new suburban towns designed to accommodate the vehicles in a pilot project, said Transport Minister Khaw Boon Wan.

"The autonomous vehicles will greatly enhance the accessibility and connectivity of our public transport system, particularly for the elderly families with young children and the less mobile," he said at the launch of a test centre for self-driving vehicles.

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NAIROBI (Reuters) -- In a heist reminiscent of a Hollywood movie, Kenyan robbers spent months tunneling into the bowels of a bank located opposite a police station and stole the equivalent of half a million dollars.

Police said they had arrested two men and one woman over the robbery but had not recovered the 50 million Kenyan shillings, reported missing by staff at the branch of Kenya Commercial Bank Monday when they showed up to work.

"We have not recovered the stolen money," said Simba Willy, sub-county police commander in the town of Thika, northeast of Nairobi, where the heist took place.

"We suspect the robbers hired one of the shops near the bank (while digging their tunnel)," he told Reuters. The robbers were able to remove the earth during their monthslong excavations without arousing suspicion by concealing it in boxes, the Daily Nation newspaper quoted local traders as saying.

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NANTERRE/PARIS (Reuters) -- French far-right leader Marine Le Pen accused banks Wednesday of closing accounts that belong to her and her party, saying she has been the victim of a "banking fatwa" meant to silence her National Front.

The 49-year-old is smarting from defeat in presidential and parliamentary elections this year, during which she already accused French banks of being politically biased for not giving loans to finance her campaign.

"This is an attempt to suffocate an opposition party and no democrat should accept that," Le Pen told a news conference, calling on President Emmanuel Macron and other political parties to back the National Front.