

Africa: 3 withdrawals from ECOWAS, NAM Summit at Uganda

January 28, 2024

Please read on page 3, a much-delayed regret about traumatic and painful treatment meted out to Indians in 1972.

Please read a BACKGROUNDER on ECOWAS and on FIGHTING the JEHADIS through G5, G5 Sahel Joint Force and Alliance of Sahel States from pages 4-6. EDITORIAL COMMENTS on page 6.

January 28, 2024: On Sunday, three land-locked Sahelian neighbors – **Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger** – announced their withdrawal from ECOOWAS. All the three have had military coups. These three along with_ have been suspended by ECOWAS and African Union due to military coups in the countries.



Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Estd. May 28, 1975

References: <https://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cmj34zmwme4t/uganda>,
<https://www.pulse.ug/news>

Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger, three of ECOWAS's member states, have been suspended from the organization, due to the overthrow of their democratically elected governments by military coups. Despite **suspension from the bloc, sanctions, negotiations and threats of military intervention**, the three military juntas have provided no clear paths to democratic rule.

France had been helping train the armed forces of the three countries. When the military coup occurred in any of the three countries, France had been urging the military regime of the respective country to restore back its democratic regime. The three military leaders have argued that they want to restore security before organizing elections as they were struggling to contain **jihadist insurgencies** linked to **al Qaeda and Islamic State**.

The military leaders of the three countries have expelled the French troops from their soil and have blamed France for being 'behind the instability in the region.'

January 26, 2024: Kampala, Uganda: 'The TRAUMATIC RACIAL EXPULSION of INDIANS by UGANDA in 1972 was a **mistake** by the then Ugandan dictator **Idi Amin**," said **Yoweri Museveni**, President of Uganda. President **Museveni** expressed gratitude to the Indian community of Uganda for their contribution to Uganda's economic development over the decades.



Yoweri Kaguta Museveni Tibuhaburw, President, Uganda (from 29 Jan 1986)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_Uganda

President Museveni's comment, which came at the **19th NAM Summit** held in **Kampala**, was a rare expression of regret about an event that had hit the Indian diaspora 52 years back. Nearly 80,000 Indians and thousands of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, **who were an integral part of the Ugandan life till that point**, were expelled from Uganda, forcing them to seek refuge in other countries, including U.K., Canada, Kenya and India. *(The former U.K. Home Secretary **Priti Patel** traced her roots to one of the families, which suffered a forced and painful relocation in 1972 due to the idiosyncratic **Idi Amin**.)*

When "we came into government, we gave back the properties of our Asian citizens and non-citizens that Amin had taken from them," said President **Yoweri Museveni**. Since their return to the country in the 1980s and 1990s, Asians from the Indian subcontinent have once again become a pillar of the country's economy by building 900 factories.

Commending the great contribution of the Indian community to Uganda, the President recalled that the **Convention Centre**, located on the shore of **Lake Victoria**, was also built by **Sudhir Ruparelia**, an Indian businessman based in Uganda. His family had also left Uganda, along with all the Indians in 1972. The 19th NAM summit was held at the **Ruparelia** Convention Centre.

January 15-20, 2024: Kampala, Uganda: 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM): President **Yoweri Museveni**, hosted the NAM Summit in Kampala. The summit was attended by leaders from the 120-member bloc, who met amid deep division globally, including **rising geopolitical tensions, climate catastrophe, widespread poverty, and raging conflict in Sudan, Ukraine, and Gaza.**

South Africa's President **Cyril Ramaphosa** Iran's First Vice President **Mohammad Mokhber**, India's Minister for External Affairs **Dr. S. Jaishankar** and UN Secretary-General **António Guterres** were some of the participants.

The summit began with the theme "**Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence**" and ended by adopting three key documents: **The Outcome Document of the 19th Summit of NAM**, the **Kampala Declaration**, reaffirming NAM's principles and values and the **Political Declaration on Palestine**. (Reference: <https://www.msn.com/en-xl/africa/kenya/museveni-elected-chair-of-non-aligned-movement/ar-BB1gXoIH>)

Dr. S. Jaishankar said that as global affluence depends on peace, the world requires institutions that reflect today’s world and can be effective. He said that there is a need to reform bodies such as the UN Security Council, which is today “paralyzed by geopolitical divisions that block effective solutions”.

UN Secretary-General **António Guterres** repeated his call for a **humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza** and the **unconditional release of all hostages**. He noted that the **UN has also been affected as 152 staff have been killed**. (Reference: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145732>)

---- A BACKGROUNDER on **ECOWAS** and on **FIGHTING the JEHADIS**----
G5, G5 Sahel Joint Force and Alliance of Sahel States (AES)

Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is the Chairman of the Authority of ECOWAS (Estd. 1975) Heads of State and Government. The 15 Member States are as follows:

BENIN	GHANA	NIGER
BURKINA FASO	GUINEA	NIGERIA
CABO VERDE	GUINEA BISSAU	SENEGAL
CÔTE D’IVOIRE	LIBERIA	SIERRA LEONE
THE GAMBIA	MALI	TOGO

Reference: <https://www.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Revised-treaty-1.pdf>

ECOWAS had played a key role in resolving the civil war in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the 1990s. It has also been involved in peacekeeping efforts in Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and The Gambia.

ECOWAS has been working to promote **economic integration** among its member states. The organization has implemented several initiatives to achieve this goal, including the **establishment of a common market, a customs union, and a single currency**. The organization has also been working **to improve infrastructure and transportation links between member states**. These efforts have helped to increase trade and investment in the region.

Two more ORGANIZATIONS for FIGHTING the JEHADIS: **The G5 Sahel Joint Force** is a partnership among five states in Africa’s Sahel region that have been hard hit by al

Qaeda– and Islamic State–linked terrorist attacks. The member states are **Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger** and **Chad**. The force was authorized by the **African Union Peace and Security Council in April 2017** and was strengthened by the adoption of **UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2359 in June 2017**. The G5 Sahel Joint Force launched its first regional operation in November 2017 to improve security along their shared borders, through improved cooperation and deployment of joint patrols to interdict the flow of terror groups and traffickers that currently cross these porous national boundaries with ease. The force has had the strong backing of France. The United States has pledged \$60 million in support of the initiative. **Burkina Faso, Mali** and **Niger** have withdrawn from G5, since they want to focus on the **Alliance of Sahel States (AES)**.

The **Alliance of Sahel States (AES)** is an institutional framework that aims to facilitate effective cooperation for helping **60 Mn** people of **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger** on 1) **defense and security**, including the fight **against terrorism and organized crime** in the five countries; 2) **resilience and human development**; 3) **infrastructure**; and 4) **governance**.

These four main missions are complemented by intense sub-regional diplomatic activity and several “structuring projects”, including the creation of a **G5 Sahel Joint Force** to combat terrorism and cross-border crime throughout the Sahel. The **G5 Sahel Joint Force** has struggled with funding and equipment shortages, and there have been reports of human rights abuses by some of its members . The force has also been criticized for its lack of coordination with other regional security initiatives, such as the **Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF)** and the French-led **Operation Barkhane**. Despite these challenges, the G5 Sahel Joint Force remains an important initiative in the fight against jihadist terrorism in the Sahel.

Reference: <https://www.alliance-sahel.org/en/news/the-g5-sahel-enhanced-cooperation-for-security-and-development/>

The Sahel region has been plagued by jihadist violence since 2012, when Islamist militants took over northern Mali. The violence has since spread to Burkina Faso, Niger, and Chad, with the number of attacks and fatalities increasing each year



Republic of Uganda: Population: 47.73 Mn (31st), Area: 241,038 Km²(79th)
GDP: \$46.38 Bn (90th), GDP per capita: \$1,060 (196th)

Note: Please read “Uganda: Opposition leader arrested upon landing at national airport” dated October 5, 2023 at <https://diginews360.com/uganda-opposition-leader-arrested-at-airport/> .

EDITORIAL COMMENTS: www.DiGiNews360.com applauds President for expressing regrets in 2024 for the cruelty shown to Indians in 1972. We also encourage the Government of Uganda in its war against the terrorist groups in Uganda.

*www.DiGiNews360.com calls upon President **Yoweri Museveni** to conduct elections through a fair and transparent process and transfer power peacefully. Let President **Museveni**, after six terms, now think of leaving a **legacy, which strengthens democracy in Uganda.***