

CURRENT HISTORY

May 2009

Vol. 108, No. 718

CONTENTS

- 195 Obama's Africa Agenda** *Jennifer Cooke*
The first African-American president will need to make the case to a skeptical Congress and public that the growth of US interests on the continent warrants more investment there.
- 202 In Congo's Conflict, a Surprising Twist** *Jason Stearns*
Congo in January invited former archenemy Rwanda to send troops onto its soil for joint operations. The move was a shocker—but will it bring peace to the region?
- 208 Sudan: A State on the Brink?** *John Prendergast and Colin Thomas-Jensen*
Darfur remains a catastrophe. A peace accord with southern rebels is in danger. On the plus side, the indictment of Sudan's president improves the odds of regime change.
- 214 Labor Markets in Africa:
Multiple Challenges, Limited Opportunities** *Scott D. Taylor*
One might think that labor costs would confer on African nations a comparative advantage. One would be wrong.
- 221 Civil-Military Power Struggles: The Case of Mauritania** *Dafna Hochman*
It isn't easy to manage a pluralistic parliamentary democracy—particularly one open to Islamist parties—while generals in the shadows stand ready to take back power.
- 227 Somali Piracy: A Nasty Problem,
a Web of Responses** *James Kraska and Brian Wilson*
Somali pirates, the progeny of a failed state and 50 percent unemployment, attacked 125 ships last year. The response has involved unprecedented international cooperation.

PERSPECTIVE

- 232 Africa's Leadership Vacuum** *Phillip Van Niekerk*
Muammar el-Qaddafi, the African Union's new chairman, and Jacob Zuma, South Africa's incoming president, aren't worried about a leadership deficit on the continent. But others are.

BOOKS

- 235 Hearts of Darkness** *William W. Finan Jr.*
Gérard Prunier in a new book searches for the catalyst that helped ignite eastern Congo's terrible violence. He finds the culprit in Rwanda's legacy of genocide.

THE MONTH IN REVIEW

- 238 March 2009**
An international chronology of events in March, country by country, day by day.