

Omar Arouna Sounds Alarm Bells On Benin

-President Talon's Assault on Democracy Must Stop



Guinea: Third Term Bug and a Legacy on the line For Conde



Uganda: A Match For Museveni in Bobi Wine?



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Why Africans Must Not Ignore The Warning Signs From Benin

By Ajong Mbatndah L

In February 1990, the West African Country of Benin became one of the first in the continent to respond to the wind of change in a significant way by holding a National Conference. Chaired by the Archbishop of Cotonou Isidore De Souza, the conference was attended by representative of all social, religious, professional, and political interest groups whose common interest was democratic reforms.

General Mathieu Kerekou, who came in through a military coup and had served as President for close to two decades, sat through the conference, and watched helplessly as he was stripped of all the absolute powers he had. It is this national conference that set the stage for the flourishing democratic experience that Benin has enjoyed until current President Talon embarked on a full-blown assault of all the democratic gains.

For all the excitement generated by the wind of change of the 90s, Benin was one of the few countries, and in Francophone Africa that scored high in democratic progress. From their National Conference, came a new constitution with Presidential term limits. In practical terms, the elections of 1991 saw the defeat of President Kerekou, and unlike other leaders in the continent, he accepted defeat. In 1996, Kerekou contested for elections again and surprise of surprises, the people of Benin voted him back to the office. He completed two terms before finally leaving office in 2006.



Ajong Mbatndah L, Managing Editor

Instead of jealously guarding the democratic edifice that has been painstakingly crafted, current President Patrice Talon is undoing everything, all in a bid to consolidate his grip on power. Not content with the Presidency, Talon has embarked on a power grab mission which makes him more powerful, while making the country and its institutions weak. The recent parliamentary elections which saw just the participation of his party and two opposition parties hastily approved by his administration are a strong indication that all is not well in Benin, and the warning signs must not be ignored by Africans.

By systematically elbowing other political parties, making parliament a rubber stamp, muzzling all opposition, intimidating, and literally putting some of his predecessors under

house arrest, and so on, Talon is making Benin unrecognizable. If it were in countries like Cameroon, Chad, or Togo, it may be easy to fathom, but if Benin is joining the club of bad examples, Africa needs to be on guard.

For the problematic cases that former French colonies in Africa are when it comes to democracy, the countries in West Africa have been an exception. In addition to Benin, there is also Senegal, a country that has done well too. As Benin remains preoccupied, in Guinea, there seem to be indications that President Alpha Conde, serving what should be his second and last term, is making plans to change constitutional term limits so he could contest for elections again. Should this happen, it will be another huge setback for the continent, considering that Alpha Conde was an iconic opposition figure prior

to his election as President.

If Mr. Alpha Conde of all people could even entertain the thought of changing the constitution, then where is Africa really headed?

In our previous editorials, we have harped on the need for Africans to get more involved, ask questions, make demands and stand up to power. If one leader is allowed to get away, then others would definitely do same. When people talk about the future been bright for Africa, it is not just about its natural resources, but also its people. The people have the power to protest, they have the power to vote in leaders who meet their aspirations, who deliver on their promises, and fight hard against leaders who indulge in the kinds of ignoble acts that are fast becoming the stock in trade of President Talon in Benin.

Situations like this could have necessitated strong action or at least words of caution from sub regional and regional bodies like ECOWAS and the African Union, but as is often the case, it is always silence and indifference from them. When the African Union says it does not recognize unconstitutional forms of acceding to power, what about leaders who change constitutions to remain in power? What about those who change the rules not for the common good of the people but to suit selfish agendas? When people rise up tomorrow to say enough is enough and chase out leaders will the AU not be selling after the market with any talk of unconstitutional take

overs?

The situation in Benin and Guinea goes beyond these two countries, the success or failures of the moves of these leaders could predicate what other leaders do. Why will Faure Gnassingbe in Togo not see this, and think he can get away by destroying institutions to position himself for a life Presidency? Why would Paul Biya in Cameroon not think that it is ok to do one election stop, win in a landslide, and cage his main rival?

Africans have to permanently speak, and speak loudly until the notion of people first sinks into leaders, until the Presidents know that leadership is service, until Presidents like Paul Biya in Cameroon learn not to trivialize the will of a determined people like those in the North West and South West Regions of the country. Talking of Cameroon, after responding to legitimate demands of a determined people with a declaration of war, reality is kicking in, and the government is coming to grips with the fact that nothing can stop a determined people. Today, President Biya through the voice of his Prime Minister Dion Ngute says, he is ready for dialogue. The P M was in the volatile NW and SW Regions of the country marching with the peace plant, the same peace plants that Anglophones used to expressed their grievances at the unset of the crisis before the brutal clamp down from the government.

To make sense of all these developments and

more, Omar Arouna a and the way forward the scanner. Faced with be some form of genuine Congo, the furor with which
former Ambassador of for his country. Veteran unprecedented pressure from restive Africans are pushing
Benin to the USA, and Journalist Ben Bangoura home and abroad, we also issue also revisits the first 100 out sit tight leaders and more.
political connoisseur, puts President Alpha Conde visit the tepid efforts towards days of President Tshisekedi Happy Reading....
discusses developments, and his administration on what many hope could at the helm of the D.R.

President Talon Does Not Understand The Historic Attachment of Benin To Democracy-Ambassador Omar Arouna

By Ajong Mbapndah L

What is happening to Benin today under President Talon is pathetic says Omar Arouna, a former Ambassador of Benin to the USA. Talon is clueless about what the people of Benin went through to emerge as a democratic success story cited as an example in Africa, says Arouna. While he salutes the great resistance that the people of Benin have showed in the face of repeated assaults on its democracy by the current President, Ambassador Arouna challenges regional bodies and the wider international community to step in more forcefully before more harm is done. The rest of the world cannot just sit silently and watch as a shady businessman turns one of the best functional democracies in Africa into an autocracy, Arouna charges.

Benin has been in the news for the wrong reasons, what is going on and how did things become so ugly for one of the celebrated successes of democracy in Africa?

Allow me first to thank your magazine for inquiring about the situation in Benin and trying to make sense of it. The short answer to your question is that we are witnessing in Benin, a shady businessman turn a fully functional Democracy into an Autocracy while the rest of



President Talon does not understand what it took Benin to build its democracy says Ambassador Arouna.

the world is silently watching.

Indeed, my country The Republic of Benin, until the recent past was dubbed the cradle of democracy on the continent of Africa. However, since his election in 2016, President Patrice Talon, consistently endeavored to undermine all democratic institutions with the goal to establish an autocratic/plutocratic regime, and to remain in power beyond its constitutional term.

Twice he attempted to change the constitution within a span of two years, and was defeated in parliament due to the popular uprising. Upon his election, he seized control of all economic levers of the country such as the cotton industry, the Port,

the railroad, agricultural, and the airport through the companies he owns and operates via his children or close business associates.

The most alarming situation is on the political front where unilaterally, President Talon disqualified all opposition parties from participating in the April 28th, 2018 legislative elections to replace all 83 members of parliament. Ironically, the only two political parties that were allowed to compete in this election are the two newly created and funded parties by President Patrice Talon himself.

President Talon and his team claim the

intent is to improve the democratic experience in Benin by reducing the large number of political parties, does he have a point, should it not be of concern that a country with the size and population of Benin should have so many parties?

President Talon is a "Snake oil salesman" who has no interest in a democratic process and a free society. The argument that there are too many political parties in the country is a non-sense argument. It is well understood that Democracy is a system in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections, it is therefore up to the people to choose how to organize themselves in order to exercise that right. Despite the fact that there are a lot of political parties in Benin, during every election since 1990 those parties aggregate into major coalitions or only a handful of coalitions of parties when it's time to vote. So, the selection is happening naturally and progressively. By trying to unilaterally impose the two political parties that are supporting him, he effectively excluded the opposition from the race. This absurdity is the source of the frustration

that led to the uprising in the country on May 1st and 2nd. Protests that the government squashed by asking the security force to fire live ammunition on the protestors killing according to reports at least 4 people.

Despite the protests, the elections eventually took place, what next for Benin?

I am hard pressed to believe that, what took place on April 28th 2019 could be called an election. A legislative election where votes didn't not take place in two of the largest city in the north of the country and several other localities in the country due to violence's, an election where more than 90% of the registered voting population didn't not go to the poll to vote, an election where the constitutional court is still unable to proclaim result and for cities where vote didn't not take place an election where the government shutdown internet before and during the election... Like I said this wasn't a free, fair, transparent and inclusive election. This a dramatic and shameful coup by Talon and his partisans NOT AN ELECTION.

In fact, following the parody of election, on May 1st and 2nd, 2019, the Beninese security forces fired live ammunitions at the crowd of people in Cotonou, protesting against the results of the legislative election of which

the opposition was excluded. Two (2) people were killed according to the government while the opposition and the international press spoke of seven (7) deaths.

What next for Benin is for the people to take back their country and restore their democracy...Whatever the government will do from now on can only delay that process but will not stop the people. What legitimacy that a national assembly that was practically designated by the president has to pass laws, vote on budgets and ratify loans on behalf of the people?

There were reports that at some point, the residence of former President Yayi Boni was encircled by troops, why him in particular?

In fact, the former head of state's home is still surrounded and under surveillance by security forces two weeks after the protests ended. Since May 1st 2019, former President Dr. Thomas Boni Yayi is prevented from leaving his residence Cadjehoun in Cotonou. His home is under constant surveillance by a military force. Visiting him has become difficult if not impossible. Any visitor is subjected to a meticulous search even forbidden to visit. The police force in front of the home have prevented even the visit of his counsel. The situation is all the more worrying as the former president sent a letter to the Head of State of Nigeria in his capacity as President-in-Office of ECOWAS, asking him to not forget Benin, and protect him and his family whose life would be threatened by the regime of President Patrice Talon. If you ask me, I will say that president Dr. Thomas Boni Yayi is under house arrest.



President Talon has severely tainted the image of Benin as reference for democracy in Africa.

Talon is particularly targeting his predecessor because Boni Yayi has become the de-facto opposition leader of the Benin and lately his popularity has skyrocketed. On Monday March 29th an ultimatum was issued by two former heads of state asking the government to suspend the electoral process. The ultimatum expired Tuesday, the night of the proclamation of the results. Former President Nicéphore Soglo had invited all the opposition to his home on May 1 for a new slogan. But, Boni Yayi could not come. He dispatched his bodyguard to tell his comrades that his house was surrounded. All joined him at his home, the population spontaneously decided to form a human shield to protect the former president's house and quickly blocking by firing tire fires and throwing stones at the police who responded with tear gas.

Benin has had a history of successful elections and political transitions since 1990, what is it about President Talon that is unraveling the country?

President Talon doesn't have a moral compass,

nor does he understand the historical nature of the Country's attachment to democracy and to that effect he is at odds with the country. Furthermore, Patrice Talon did not support the idea that his project of constitutional reform was rejected twice by the Parliament. Some say he was strongly marked by his meeting with Rwandan President Paul Kagame three months after taking office. And «He wanted to focus his mandate on a charismatic political model, he found in Kagame.» But he didn't not take into account the Rwanda's context when Kagame took the reign in his country. He didn't realize that Kagame didn't have his private business interests entangled with the state, he didn't realize that to lead a country such as Benin one needs a serious dose of empathy, compassion, and a lot more of integrity and selfless ness... NO Patrice is not Paul and Benin is not Rwanda. Transforming a fully functional democracy into an autocracy will not develop the country.

Going back again to the 90s and the exciting democratic experiment that Benin has had,

what kind of institutions have been put in place to cushion the kind of overreach that we are seeing under Talon and how are those institutions working?

Several democratic institutions were put in place following the national conference in 1990. These institutions played the role of checks and balance in the country until April 2016 when President Talon took over power...then all hell break lose.

For example, the national assembly that controls the government actions and pass laws, became a rubber stamp under Talon regime. Corrupted and subdued law makers have been asked by president Talon to "vote with their eyes closed". Now with this past April 2019 legislative election and its cohort of deputies lacking the necessary legitimacy, it is highly unlikely that the new national assembly plays its institutional role of checks and balances. It is therefore anticipated that the newly formed body will become an appendix of the government.

The constitutional court which is the court of last results in our judicial systems was highjacked by President Talon when he decided to appoint his personal attorney as its president . This is another blow to Benin democracy.

Another example of a democratic institution that was beaten into submission by Talon's bulimic appetite for power grabs since 2016 is the High authority for the regulation of the Audio-Visual

media and Communication in Benin --known by its French acronym as HAAC-- The institutions mission to ensure freedom of speech and transparency in the media and promote best practice has been sacrificed. The institution lost its autonomy and is now been instrumentalized to ban independent newspapers, and Radio and Television stations with opposing views. In addition, the government has instituted a new judicial court of exception the CRIET that so far has judged opponents to the regime on trump up charges that have been overturned on appeal in international or African regional courts.

What has been the reaction of the regional bodies like ECOWAS, the AU and the wider international community?

To my dismay the regional bodies have been weak in their response to the situations in the country although they sent envoys to talk to President Talon, their approach came across as the proverbial "lips service". I think the ECOWAS, THE AU and the WIDER INTENATIONAL COMMUNITY, must take a tougher stands and notice that Benin once upon a time the cradle of democracy in Africa is no longer a flag bearer for freedom, liberty and transparency. This is not only bad for the Region, but this is also a major blow to the aspiration and dreams of all that cherish those values around the world.

President Talon is almost midway gone into his first mandate, with the power grab and



Ambassador Omar Arouna thinks that ECOWAS and the African Union must do more to call Talon to order.

immense fortune he has, could it be possible for an opposition candidate to unseat him?

Since taking over the country President Talon has unleashed an unprecedented wave of arbitrary arrests of political activists and journalists, and the crackdown on peaceful protests, have reached an alarming proportion in Benin. Many oppositions leaders are now in exile in France, the United-States, Canada, Nigeria, Togo and Ghana. The recent legislative election exclusive of all opposition parties have given "the coup-de-grace" to the democratic process in the country. The president effectively dismantled any opposition to his regime and has no intent to open up competition. I don't think anyone should expect a free, fair, transparent and inclusive election in Benin anytime soon so long as the President remains on his autocratic track. No one could unseat him under these conditions, he wouldn't allow any competition. He said so himself during an interview a year earlier when he was running for the seat and I quote: "the capacity of an incumbent to get reelected in a country such as ours, is

not so much about his past results or performance. It is essentially being able to prevent the competition; it is knowing how to subdue or dismantle the opposition and coerce the electoral college.

From your point of view, has the current President registered any positive achievements so far, and if his administration came to you for advice on how to get things back on the rails in Benin, what will you tell them?

According to a recent World Bank report "Growth accelerated from 5.6% in 2017 to 6% in 2018 (3.1% per capita GDP), driven by vibrant port activity and a sound agricultural sector buoyed by record cotton production and the emerging diversification of sectors. Growth was also driven by an increase in public investments (particularly infrastructure) and the performance of the service sector". This is an indication that on the Macroeconomic level some progress is being made. However, poverty has increased in Benin while the basic tenets of a democratic society are now dismantled.

For me democracy and development are intertwined,

robust rule of law, and inclusive economic policies that create a level playing field for everyone are essential elements of a development agenda with lasting impact and if the President and his government don't change course rapidly the country will sink further in to poverty and any timid progress observed on a macroeconomic level will be lost soon enough.

Recently your successor at the Embassy of Benin in USA was recalled under dramatic circumstances, any word on this development on this, and in follow up to that, in the light of recent developments, how are relations between Washington and Cotonou?

Yes indeed, all information I have received and verified from sources close to the situation indicate that the Ambassador was asked by the Americans to leave the country ASAP. It's also no secret to anyone close to the diplomatic community in Washington DC

and democracy has an important role to play in promoting sustainable development. Free and fair elections, independent media, accountable government, as well as other basic democratic principles, are all critical components of an environment conducive to growth. Strong democratic institutions, a rule of law, and inclusive economic policies that create a level playing field for everyone are essential elements of a development agenda with lasting impact and if the President and his government don't change course rapidly the country will sink further in to poverty and any timid progress observed on a macroeconomic level will be lost soon enough.

We end with a last question with your prediction on the future of Benin, what are your hopes and what are your fears and what other contributions is Ambassador Arouna capable or willing to make to help Benin forge ahead?

I am afraid that a country once hailed as the cradle of democracy in Africa will have

some tumultuous moments ahead for its people as the rule of law is no longer upheld, and freedom of speech and assembly are being denied and basic legal due process stomped upon. I am afraid that the immediate future for the country is one of terror that has already been installed by the regime have installed. According to Amnesty international «The repression reached disturbing levels in Benin where four people were killed during the post-election demonstrations, and the families of the victims are still struggling to recover their bodies,» Some politicians have left the country, saying they are victims of legal "persecution" and others are currently in jails. Despite all of that I remain hopeful that some of us that cherish values such as liberty, freedom, and the pursued of happiness via a democratic process will remain steadfast in our position to bring back the rule of law and democracy in our beloved country. And we hope that our American and other international friends will help us with that effort as these are shared values. —



A protestor at a rally last month holds up a sign reading Talon, let exiled citizens return to rebuild the country . AFP Yanick Folly.



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Third Term Bid Will Be Suicidal For President Alpha Conde and Guinea-Ben Bangoura

By Ajong Mbatndah L

While he may not have officially made a statement on the third term project, that President Conde or anyone in his entourage should entertain such thoughts does profound damage to iconic portrait of a change agent that brought the current President of Guinea to power, says, Washington DC based journalist and Editor of AlloAfricaNews, Ben Bangoura.

Instead of the Mr. Conde changing the system, it is the system that has changed him, and if the President gets his way with the third term bid, the consequences could be tragic for Guinea, Ben Bangoura says. The expectations of Guinean people under his current tenure have not been met as the country remains amongst the poorest in the world, Bangoura continues.

The International community can be helpful by persuading Mr. Alpha Conde to avoid the third term agenda as this is neither in his personal interest nor in that of people of Guinea, Bangoura says.

President Alpha Conde is in his second and last term, according to Guinea's constitution. How has he fared as President?

A pertinent question from a genuine journalist you have always been. Thanks again for reaching out. In a previous interview, I remember, we talked about a landmark election that culminated in



President Conde has not lived up to expectations says Washington DC Based Editor of AlloAfricaNews, Ben Bangoura.

Prof Alpha Conde, a self-declared reformer, clinching the presidency after a tumultuous transition. It was a moment of hope considered by many as the light at the end of the tunnel for Guinea, after decades of military rule which left the country in shambles.

He fought so much for democratic reforms, human rights and good governance in the country, has he lived up to the promises he made while in the opposition?

I doubt whether he succeeded or not. Key indicators are that he has not lived up to the promises he made while in the opposition. The expectations of Guinean people under his current tenure have not been met. Guinea is still one of the poorest countries in the world. The general population lacks clean water and has a little access to electricity, while the average citizen still lives below \$1 a day. That is

at odds with the country's enormous resources. Guinea has the third largest bauxite reserves in the world among its natural wealth. The question is, who or how the local content fits into this?

On political front, things are not going well either. Alpha Conde has tightened his control over all branches of the government. Meanwhile, the country has not conducted any successful elections in recent years. For instance, the term of the current National Assembly expired six months ago. Alpha Conde had to issue a presidential decree to keep it going. At the same time, local elections held in February 2018 were marred by violence and have yet to be settled across the country. The Guinean Constitution guarantees freedom of assembly, but it is currently restricted. The system of governance is highly corrupt, and the rule of law is not respected. And in an apparent attempt to

divide and conquer, Alpha Conde, an ethnic malinké, initiated a dangerous policy. Under his regime, one must be an ethnic Soussou to be eligible for the post of Prime minister in Guinea. While the chairmanship of the National Assembly is exclusively reserved for a native of the Forest region, as peulh you belong to the opposition. What kind of policy is this in a country where people, regardless of their background, have generally been living in peace and harmony for centuries like a family? I prefer to see someone holding a high position in the government because of his competence and not because of his ethnic identity.

There are talks of the constitution being changed so that he can have another mandate, where is this coming from? is it feasible and is President Conde in

support of this?

Well, Alpha Conde has not made any official declaration in that regard. However, it looks though he is heading in that direction. A source knowledgeable on the matter stated that a new constitution has been drafted with help of experts from foreign countries, including France. This source added that the bill effectively guarantees a third term bid for Alpha Conde and that it has a good chance to pass if introduced this year in the National Assembly controlled by the RPG-Arc-en ciel, a coalition of political parties that back President Conde. But this source conceded that its fate maybe uncertain if submitted to a national referendum.

Where is this idea coming from? Of course, the idea is coming from Alpha Conde himself because of his increasing desire to remain in power until his death. He has a clan around him - arguing that he deserves an extended stay to finish his work as a «Dieu le Père». He currently has surrogates deployed in every region of the country, bribing local officials and community leaders to drum up support behind the idea.

To boost his shaky international standing, President Conde has reportedly recruited some prominent French politicians and journalists to shepherd the campaign for a third term. Countries including China and Russia, which have substantial interests in mining sectors in Guinea, have signaled their willingness to back such a

move. Alpha Condé has also assigned his Ambassador in Washington, Kerfalla Yansané, to negotiate for him an official visit in the United States that would include a White House photo op with president Trump to be used as a tool for propaganda. Well connected sources indicate that the Embassy of Guinea is currently seeking assistance from a Lobbying Firm in the nation's capital to assist in the process. But the outcome is far from certain.

Is third term doable? Maybe! Is it feasible? No! The current constitution of Guinea has two important provisions: Article 27 states that the president can only be elected to be president for a total of ten years. No more than that. The other one is article 154 which stipulates that if amendment were to occur, this should not undermine the standing of the latter. Knowing that they lack the constitutional avenue to proceed, President Condé and his cronies have apparently settled on a brand new constitution.

With regard to the opposition parties and civil society groups that could fight such a move, how organized and how serious are they?

The opposition has responded with an outright rejection of any move to change or pass a new constitution. A significant number of civil society organizations are emerging under the umbrella of the FNDC (National Front for the Defense of the Constitution). In recent weeks, high profile community leaders, including the so called

Kountigui of Basse Côte Elhadj Sékouhouna Soumah, a key ally of President Condé, have distanced themselves from it. The question now is whether the opposition has a clear strategy and a "war chest" to take on President Condé who is now very rich by all accounts. But I believe that the majority of Guinean people are opposed as well. They have witnessed democratic changes taking place in neighboring countries of Sierra Leone, Liberia, Senegal, Gambia etc., changes that resulted in a peaceful transfer of power from one government to another. They want to see such a positive change in Guinea in 2020 by electing a new head of state, no matter who that is, to ensure the continuation. They do not want to see another autocratic leader dying in power by not respecting the constitution, something that may yet trigger another painful period of transition.

What is the position of the Army in this unfolding drama?

It is hard to say right now. But in a dramatic move earlier this year, Alpha Conde issued a decree on January 8, 2019, appointing 4 high-ranking officers in the Army as Ambassadors to Angola, Cuba, Guinea Bissau and Mali. In recent weeks, the president also appointed several other army officers to civilian positions within the administration. They were mainly assigned in the remote areas of the country.

Analysts believe that this was done on purpose to weaken the army because these officers are known to



It is ironic that the historic opposition figure that Conde was should be entertaining thoughts of a changing the constitution to get a third term.

be «very experienced» and may also «harbor interest» in staging a coup if the opportunity should arise. In my view, his actions in that regard amount to a preemptive strike.

Prior to this bizarre decision late last year, President Conde removed Mr. Kelefa Sall, the presiding officer of the constitutional court, from his post. He was openly opposed to any modification of the constitution. Indeed in 2015, during the swearing in ceremony for his second and last term, which was attended by a dozen heads of state, including longtime dictators from Chad, Rwanda and Equatorial Guinea, Sall suggested that Condé should avoid any attempt to change the constitution in order to remain in power. He was very upset about that.

You are versed with developments in Africa. In Benin, it was chaotic and sham general elections. In Guinea, should President Conde succeed to change the constitution, what will this mean for democracy in west Africa and the

rest of Africa broadly speaking?

It would be a devastating blow to Democracy for the region, particularly for Guinea. It would bring chaos in a country that is already on a political and an economic downward spiral. A third term would be a lack of vision, a leadership failure of historical proportions on the part of the 84-year-old Alpha Condé whom many had once referred to as «opposant historique.»

Remember, this is a guy who once billed himself as a "reformer" and «unifier». At one point, he said he was going to be the «Mandela of Guinea». One who would deliver that change Guineans have been dreaming about for decades. We all know that Mandela was a one term president in post-apartheid South Africa who rejected the call for him to stay in power permanently. We also knew Mandela as a unifier who fought for justice and equal rights for all. Alpha Condé on the other hand seems to want to cling on to power at any cost like Mugabe. In addition, the fact of matter is that Guinea under his leadership,

is an autocratic state, a country divided along ethnic and class lines, between those who have and have not. He came in promising to change the system. Instead, it is the system that has now changed him for the worse.

If he succeeds in imposing a new constitution in Guinea, he may not be around for that long. He could be toppled by a popular uprising similar to one we have then seen in Burkina Faso, and most recently in Zimbabwe, Algeria and Sudan. Mr. Condé must understand that there is a life after the presidency, that he is going to die one day -one way or the other-. Therefore, he should focus his efforts crafting a lasting legacy for himself as a leader that has a sense of history and who was able to rebuild his country, leaving it in peace and in economic prosperity.

History tells us that no mankind has ever achieved everything he wanted to do in life. In democratic society such as the United States, each time there is alternance, the outgoing president always says to his successor: «Here is what I have accomplished, here are

the works to be done». The idea that Mr. Alpha Condé started something in Guinea he needs to carry through is foolish.

How can the international community be of help in supporting Africans fighting for democratic reforms?

The International community can be helpful by persuading Mr. Alpha Condé to stay away from such move. This is neither in his personal interest nor in that of people of Guinea. The International community can also support the grass roots organizations in the country to reinforce the institutions that are already there. As former US president

Obama rightly said: «Africa doesn't need strongmen, it needs strong institutions». We also know that the United States under President Trump is not supportive of those autocratic leaders in Africa who have failed their peoples so miserably. Alpha Condé is certainly one of those leaders today. So, such message is rather encouraging.

How has the media fared under President Conde and how much of a force is it in the political dispensation in Guinea?

Under President Condé, I must say that the media has fared very poorly because of lack of resources. Like any country under dictatorship, the state media, including the



It will be a devastating blow for Democracy in the region if President Conde of all people changes the constitution says Ben Bangoura.

National Broadcasting System (RTG), is the mouthpiece of the government. The independent media, specially the media online, tends

to do better job though limited in scope. In Guinea, Independent media is under constant attack. In recent years, several journalists were

killed in the line of duty while others are arrested, harassed, beaten or jailed.

Did DR Congo's Tshisekedi deliver in the first 100 days?

By Jean-Pierre Afadhali

More than 100 days DR Congo's President Etienne Tshisekedi who ushered in a new era in the troubled country, following historic peaceful power transfer has been praised and criticized in equal measure amid uncertainties over a new government.

The new president has made some important changes mainly political but it is still early to rate his performance as some observers believe former president Joseph Kabila still plays a role in the current government affairs after his coalition won majority in General Assembly.

More than three months the Central African country neither has a prime minister nor a new cabinet, which raised concerns over Tshisekedi's power to lead the

mineral-rich country that has experienced poor leadership and conflicts in last decades.

According to DR Congo's Constitution the prime minister comes from the party that won majority in the national assembly. Kabila's coalition, Common Front for Congo (FCC) controls the parliament, meaning the current president will choose prime minister among the coalition's candidates.

However it is not clear the reason why the president has not yet picked the prime minister three months after his swearing in.

Professor Mwayila Tshiyembe, a Congolese political expert and director of Pan-African Institute in Nancy, France said two parties must reach a consensus on the prime minister.

"We must wait negotiations



Congolese are still waiting for President Tshisekedi to make his mark.

between FCC and Tshisekedi's coalition (CASH) to find the best candidate," explained the Congolese professor in an interview with BBC.

Some are wondering the reasons why Mr. Tshisekedi has not yet found the best candidate for the prime

minister post. However the Congolese political analyst does not believe so.

"No it does not mean the president has not found the best candidate because he does not choose the candidate," Prof Tshiyembe commented.

Some observers criticized the new president saying the delay to appoint the head of cabinet is a weakness, but the professor thinks it is legitimate for two parties to consult each other's because they are in what he termed "the coalition of interests and

partnerships.”

President Tshisekedi has recently postponed several times a press conference to address the media and the country over his performance in the first 100 days.

A resident from Kinshasa was quoted by the media as saying: “It is a mixed record in the sense that Tshisekedi has made several promises. I think it is a challenge and he is struggling to implement all his promises,”

One of major actions in the last first three months was the release of 700 political prisoners; the move was welcomed by many.

The judiciary seems to be more independent than before. His predecessor was accused of interference in the judiciary by his political opponents.

Recently one of opposition politicians and businessman Moise Katumbi was acquitted on a number of charges. Last year Mr. Katumbi had several times said the charges were political motivated to prevent him from running in the presidential elections.

Katumbi, who is a former mayor of Lubumbashi city in Katanga province, has recently announced in an interview that he would return to DRC on 20 May.

On diplomatic front, the new president seems to improve the relationships between the central African country and some neighboring countries, plus Western partners.

African countries Tshisekedi visited include Kenya, Congo Brazzaville, Uganda, and neighboring Rwanda. He called upon refugees to return home.

Speaking in Kigali, Rwanda during Africa CEO forum he said: “We [Tshisekedi and Paul Kagame] are temporary actors but our countries will be neighbors forever,”

In past the relations between two Great Lakes countries were strained by wars in the East of DRC. Rwanda was several times accused of supporting rebels that destabilized the North Kivu, accusations Kigali rejected several times.

Among the western partners, The United State of America (USA) endorsed president’s political and economic reforms agenda in a working visit Tshisekedi did in USA.

Despite some positive changes on diplomatic relations, the vast country still faces insecurity in North Eastern region where rebels continue killing innocent people including health workers who are treating Ebola.

In recent weeks several times Ebola treatments centres have been attacked making it difficult to fight the deadly disease in volatile North Eastern Congo.

Over 1000 people have died of Ebola outbreak, data released in early may show.

DRC’s Ebola outbreak began in August and is the second deadliest in history.

So far there are no major economic reforms; the country was rocked by a series of civil servants strikes. Despite mineral wealth DRC is still among the poorest in the world.



Rwandan President Paul Kagame and his Congolese counterpart Felix Tshisekedi meet at the Rwandan presidential palace in Kigali for the 7th edition of the Africa CEO Forum, 25 March 2019.



President Tshisekedi with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Washington seems to have warmly embraced the new Congolese leader.



After months of waiting Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba was appointed as Prime Minister.



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Outgoing Assembly was of disservice To Nigeria-UPP Chair Chief Chekwas Okorie

By Olumide Ajayi

Chief Chekwas Okorie is the national Chairman of the United Progressive Party, UPP, in this exclusive interview, Okorie described the outgoing Assembly as the most hostile, unfriendly to president Buhari's led administration among other issues. Excerpts; On the passage of the 2019 Budget that was jerked up to the tune of N90b by the outgoing assembly.

The 8th outgoing National Assembly has been most unfriendly to this government. There is no doubt that there is no iota of a synergy of healthy communication between the two arms of government otherwise things like this can't happen without being earlier talked about. I see a large dose of blackmail that would make the president not to sign it and their tenure would come to an end and they would continue to frustrate the government but my advice is for the government is to accept it and sign the budget because they would be going out in about 30 days time. Because of the implementation. After all our budget has never achieved up to 70-75 percent of implementation. So in the course of implementation, they can make all the necessary adjustment required in terms of cash tracking and all that. But if they throw it back to them, it will now snowball into another scandalous talk of 2019 budget not signed until maybe June or July and that doesn't say well of the government we are running and that is the picture of the outgoing national assembly want to paint on this government. But my candid advice is that the government should not allow them to get away with this blackmail by signing the budget.



Outgoing Assembly was very hostile to Buhari says Chief Chekwas Okorie.

But does this not justify accusation and counter-accusation of the 8th assembly padding budget?

It does and it is a blackmail. When the government said the nation's assembly padded the budget, the government was not just mudslinging, they were talking based on verifiable evidence. Thank God that its a budget that would be spent over a year. The government can now set to win out of this blackmail by assent it and implement as the funds become available. And they can deal with that with a more friendly national assembly that is coming in the first week of June.

But after the accusation, there were throwbacks from the leadership of both the red and green chamber accusing Asiwaju Tinubu of being aware of the process as a

former senator but insist on disparaging the 8th assembly for personal aggrandizement?

There is no doubt that the 8th assembly is very corrupt, recalcitrant and unpatriotic in so many ways considering the relationship they had with the executive from the very beginning but now they are going out in about less than a month. Yes, it is obvious that the president has been contending with a hostile assembly but the comfort is that a new and more friendly national assembly will come in in less than 30 days. So I would urge him to sign it so that you can start your implementation on the basis of what is available. More so, the government would implement this budget in a more reasonable and operating national Assembly which is the incoming 9th Assembly. But the others which they have padded can

be looked at in the course of the implementation as the new national assembly can look at it because I have seen some mind-boggling figures that they want to take away from our treasury as severance allowance which should not be outrageous and everybody knows N83 billion is outrageous but they intend to go away with whatever is left in our treasury. So the president have to use wisdom to deal with this, otherwise, we may not have a new budget till July or August because it may have to hold for the new Assembly to come and pass. It means we will start all over. So it should be avoided. It's a booby-trap but the government can handle it by the suggestion I just made. As there are ways and means to make the outrageous budget conform to reality during implementation. Either through supplementary budget or through a review.

So anything can happen in the course of implementation.

What is your stand on those agitating for a per term Assembly?

That one requires a constitutional amendment and I can tell you is a tall order. Not even the 9th Assembly would amend such law that reduces their comfort zone. But there are so many things that can be done even without a per term assembly. But that is not our major problem, our major problem is the restructuring of Nigeria. And the restructuring of Nigeria is not an executive problem, it is the legislative problem. 80 percent of it is the legislative. So let have a national Assembly that we would be able to approach to thinker on critical areas of amendment like the exclusive lists and concurrent list, that is one area of devolution of power that would make a lot of difference and there are so many other areas of the constitution that would gradually introduce restructuring without accosting tension that arises each time restructuring is mentioned. So it is the National Assembly that can do that. Those who said without restructuring there won't be any election, we have had the election and what have they done? So these things are not by flexing power, you have to locate where your problem is. The problem is the National Assembly that makes the laws

that govern this country. So the restructuring that would solve Nigeria's problem is 80 percent legislative responsibility and 20 percent administrative which is the executive responsibility. So if we don't focus on the National Assembly, we are wasting our time by calling on the President to restructure or Nigeria will not exist. Nigeria will exist even if it is obviously an unfair country, it will continue to exist.

Some are of the view that agitating for restructuring is not with a unifying motive but for the ethnic and selfish motive which makes us comparable to the worst countries in the world?

Those saying so are themselves selfish. Those saying so are the one benefiting from this obnoxious 1999 constitution. The insecurity situation happening in Zamfara now and in some parts of the North has made those against restructuring to now call for state police. But we have been saying these long ago. It was in my manifestos as a presidential candidate and it is in the manifestos of UPP but it is now they are seeing that state and community policing would go a long way in curtailing the menace of insecurity at the very local level in Nigeria. Is that not part of the restructuring we are talking about? We never knew that all sort of solid minerals like gold, silver, diamond were being mined in Zamfara, Niger is entering into private pockets. But when you asked the governors of the states they say all those minerals belong to the federal government and the federal government is not monitoring these things



Chief Chekwas Okorie supported President Buhari in the last elections

and now we heard that the kingpins of those miners are the ones sponsoring the killings in the North. If we had restructured this country to introduce resource control, when they hear it, all they think and remember is crude oil. A State like Zamfara would be a very rich state. So wealthy that there would be no development that they cannot undertake. Niger state is also the same. So they are shooting themselves in the foot by wanting to stay in a structure that all their attention is focused on crude oil and crude is becoming less attractive worldwide but when crude oil becomes useless, they would now begin to talk about restructuring.

President Buhari's administration has kicked off lobbying for the leadership of the 9th Assembly is it that the opposition is not relevant in legislative matters?

In the type of democracy we are running is almost like the winner takes all and the president this time decide to run an inclusive government. It is basically out of human

kindness and of course out of the practical reality that accommodating everybody is better than exclusion. Having said that, even in the united states of America, the democratic party have control of the Congress and they have the leadership of the Congress. The Republicans have the majority of the Senate and they have the leadership of the Senate. The Vice president of the United state of America is the President of the Senate. So you don't see a party that has the majority of the seat and envy them if they want to use democratic means not by force. To control the leadership so that they would have a smoother relationship. We were in this country when the PDP controlled about 28 States and control 80 percent of the National Assembly and the House of representatives which means they could pass any law without referencing anybody. And the entire Assembly leadership were all PDP and nobody complained even when they made a mess of government. They never showed their leadership in terms of delivery of dividend of democracy to the Nigerian

people. Let them remain to be opposition as they are stepping into being an opposition for the first time. If by lobby they were able to get lesser position let them hold it because others had been on the sideline watching them for 16 long years. So instead of pursuing their matter in the tribunal, they want to fight their matters in the pages of Newspapers. I watch them, and I laugh at them because this is what the did to other people. I have been in the opposition all my life and I know what we went through under PDP so when they cry, I just laugh that so the rich can also cry.

But don't you think is too early for the presidency to be involved in endorsing and anointing preferred candidates for the leadership of the nation's Assembly?

Well the President was accused before of being aloof and that was what made the 8th Assembly be hostile and he himself knew that he didn't enjoy that relationship. So with the benefit of hindsight he wants to have played some role and when he is

expected corporation from them they would remember he also played a bit of role seeing them emerged leaders in the nation's Assembly. So the President had a tough time with the 8th Assembly if I were him, I would be more friendly and more open in my involvement. In fact, there is no PDP president you can compare to this President. Look at the elections in various states across Nigeria, it was obvious he was never interested in what happened in those

places, you couldn't see his hand in those places, and you saw APC losing in places you thought were never possible because we have a president that thinks that democracy should be given a chance. If anything happen in those places, it is the fault of those players in those are not the executives or the President at the top.

But how did we get here as a nation?

We got here very steadily, retrospectively and we continue to slide down by the time Nigeria adopted a unitary system of government, that was when we began to concentrate power in a few hands and when we were going into civilian democracy, the constitution that was produced in 1979, was fairly better constitution but by 1999 the Abdulsalami Abubakar government largely influenced by some Mafias from the North imposed this 1999 constitution on Nigerian people. It was an imposition. For instance; it was Alex Ekweme proposition for six zonal structure and rotational presidency which

that constitutional conference adopted and recommended was yanked off the recommendation by the Abdulsalami Abubakar government and so we now talk about six zones which are not in the constitution but when is convenient for them, they would remember there are six zones when is not, they would tell you is not in the constitution. So this was how we degenerate to this level and we have gotten to the point where the States governors has not motivated or creative in terms of internally

generated revenue. Its only Lagos State that is leading the way, many others are waiting at the end of the month to start going to Abuja and collect their allocation and begin to share not because of nature of the government, we have been operating with regards to centralized government and every aspect of the economy either agriculture or even education is put in the centre that is why we have as many as almost 60 items in the exclusive list while we have less than 20 in the concurrent list so that is why people are talking about devolution of power and the general term for it is true federalism. That is going back to the true federal structure so that Nigeria can grow, Nigeria can develop and every part of Nigeria would benefit from it.

Do you foresee a true federal structure in or after this administration?

Yes, I foresee it. I



Assembly speaker Yakubu Dogara left the ruling APC to support opposition challenger Atiku Abubakar during the Presidential elections.

believe that within this administration, there would be some constitutional changes that would define our federation better. I don't think the 9th assembly would not take serious the term of insecurity with regards to state police and community policing. I think they would be able to do something about it and that also require some constitutional amendment. I also believe that this 9th Assembly, have gone through the process they went through to win the election which was almost like a war, they would also look into the issue of electronic voting with very effective legislative backing that would make the votes of Nigerian people to count and to determine who win and who loses. In that regard, people who would represent their people very effectively will come to power in that, a popular candidate can win an election without being wealthy. These are some of the things that I expect the 9th Assembly to

do. But we are not going to wait for them to think it out, we are going to be making constructive contributions, including memorandum that would ensure there is an improvement. Then the subsequent government would also bring about improvement. Just like you asked earlier, we slighted down into this horrible pit, not overnight but over time so we shall recover over time.

But how long would Nigerians wait to enjoy the dividend of democracy?

It can be done within one tenure, it depends on how to determine we are for example; we have all these Social Political Cultural groups Afenifere, Ohanaeze, PANDEF among others these people leaving cultural things to dabble into politics are doing us a great disservice. They are not helping matters.

How do you mean?

If they are really cultural leaders, nothing should

stop them from inviting law makers represent there various areas of influence in the house of representatives and senate and having meetings with them. If we have four geopolitical zones in the National Assembly agree on the certain constitutional amendment on critical areas that would bring about a true federal structure, you already have a majority that would pass it irrespective of the party because these lawmakers are actually loyal to their own people irrespective of the party but the socio-cultural groups are not doing that. You have never had that any of these group ever had a parley with their representatives in the Assembly, all they do is hold meeting somewhere, entertain themselves, come-out and address a press conference and issue a statement. They can do that 10 times a year and achieve nothing. These were the same people who said if there was no restructuring, there won't

be an election. As if they have their own army. Then, they have started again, without restructuring, Nigeria will not survive. I don't believe in them talking and talking. There are certain things they can do if they have influence but I can tell you these people lack influence. If they invite these legislators to a meeting they won't attend because many of them have lost their leadership legitimacy. Because they know they can't invite these lawmakers, they now grandstand on the

pages of newspapers to give the impression that they are doing something. I think they should stop because all the once they did in the past, they made a caricature of themselves. Let the people from these geopolitical zones who feel that restructuring is in their best interest begin to meet and if they are four zones as these cultural group made us believe, four zones out of six are majority and we can also convince the two zones on the need to key in so it won't be a question of us versus them. But if we already have four zones, we have a good starting block. That means that the state assembly from these zones would approve when it comes to the state level because we are talking about constitutional amendment here. So these are practical steps to take not just making noise and threatening fire and brimstone.



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Museveni, "a Man of Present and Past", Bobi Wine, "a Politician with Long Future" - Political Analyst Says

By Mohammed M. Mupenda

Ugandan musician-cum politician, Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu known as Bobi Wine, is hitherto President Museveni's hot and biting critic. Following the series of the former's arrests and his popularity that enabled him to grasp Ugandans' attention and huge fan base, some people say he may be on the way to shaking the latter.

In an interview with Pan-African Visions, Doctor Frederick Mutebi Golooba, a researcher and analyst, he revealed that Bobi Wine is as yet unlikely to shake Museveni but that he has a bright future to contest and succeed him if he manages to retain his support.

"Museveni is a man of the present and the past. Ssentamu is a politician with a long future ahead of him. Museveni's best days are behind him. Ssentamu's days are likely ahead of him. That means that the way of wide open to him to impact on politics in Uganda in very significant ways," he says.

According to doctor Mutebi, Ssentamu is different from Kiiza Besigye, Museveni's longtime rival, for he's still young and has mesmerized youth which can undoubtedly lighten his journey in the future, doing what his opposition counterpart failed.

"He has a lot of support among a significant part of the population including, the youth. If he maintains that support, it will be critical to



Bobi Wine is seen by many as the biggest political threat to President Museveni.

catapulting him to greater heights in the future. As of now, however, given the context as it is, he is unlikely to shake things up in the short term," Frederick added.

He, however, doesn't anticipate that Ssentamu can defeat Museveni, if both contest in the upcoming 2021 presidential elections.

For Mutebi, Museveni may lead the votes, followed by Ssentamu while Besigye would be lagging behind the two.

"I think Museveni will win if he contests. Ssentamu will come in second," Frederick told PanAfrican Visions in an exclusive interview.

Ssentamu was elected to parliament last year and has been strong in his criticism of Museveni. The 74-year-old president has been in power for 32 years old and seems set

to rule after the constitution age limit on the presidency was removed.

Museveni recently spoke about "unprincipled politicians taking advantage of our unemployed youth to lure them into riots and demonstrations,".

Ssentamu's arrest last

month led to violent protests in the capital, Kampala and drew the attention of the international community.

Since last year on August 13, following his arrest being charged with treason after the attack to the President by unknown gunmen, Ssentamu has been arrested several

times.

The Kyadondo East MP accuses the government of endeavoring to shut him up and that he was tortured that made him board a plane to the USA to get special treatment last year.



Frequent arrests only seem to raise the political stock of Bobi Wine

From Tunis to Khartoum: Africans are toppling their sit-tight Presidents

By Amos Fofung

As Africa and Africans struggle with the implementation of democracy as prescribed by Western nations who insist it's the best form of governance, a fierce wind of change has in the last ten years swept most African sit-tight president.

From the Eastern basins of the Mediterranean Sea in Tunis, Capital of Tunisia to the confluence of the Blue Nile and White Nile rivers in Khartoum, capital of Sudan, Africans are raising up and deposing their despotic leaders.

Since 2011, some of Africa's strongest dictators and long-serving presidents with decades of leadership have been forced to leave power with all wondering who could be next.

As people-power fast topples autocratic regimes, watchers of the polity of Africa believe the continent, flowing with enormous economic



From President to prisoner, Al Bashir of Sudan is the latest high profile leader to be forced out of power.

potentials sufficient to make her a contender, is on en route towards its liberation and development.

10 African presidents who have involuntarily left power since 2011

Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia

Tunisians took to the streets and after four weeks of protests, the leader who ruled

for 23 years was deposed on January 14, 2011. He later escaped and currently on exile in Saudi Arabia. It was Prime minister Mohamed Ghannouchi who announced that he had taken over as interim president, vowing to respect the constitution and restore stability for Tunisia's 10.5 million denizens. Beji Caid Essebsi on December

2014 became the 4th and the first democratically elected president by universal suffrage and is set to take Tunisia to new heights.

Hosni Mubarak of Egypt

Seeing what happened next-door in Tunisia, Egyptians took to the streets to protest against their "strongman". Egyptians protest 30 years of injustice and oppression

under Hosani's rule. With support from the army, on February 11, 2011, Mubarak's resignation was announced at Tahrir square, which is regarded as the center of the protest that ousted him.

In 2012 he was sentenced to life imprisonment over the death of over 240 people during the protest against his rule. He was on March 2, 2017, acquitted by Egypt's appeal court and released from the Military hospital where he spent most of the six years of his incarceration due to poor health.

Muammar Gaddafi's of Libya

True, most Libyans today regret the ousting of president Muammar Gaddafi who had the vision to unite all African, establishing the United State of Africa. After spending 42 years in power the Arab spring influenza let to widespread protest from February 15, 2019, due to the said killing of human rights activist Fethi Tarbel. With support from most Western countries, it was on October



Abdelaziz Bouteflika the longest serving President of Algeria was forced to relinquish plans to seek another term.

20 announced that Gaddafi had been killed in Sirte. Today, Libya is a mockery of its former self.

Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso

After “stabbing” his friend (Thomas Sankara) in the back and taking over via a coup in 1987, Blaise Compaoré succeeded to maneuver his way, winning all presidential elections. Ruling for 27 years, his party in 2014 proposed further changes to the constitution so as to allow Compaoré stay in power.

Protest broke out forcing him to flee to Ivory Coast. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré is the current president of Burkina Faso.

Yahya Jammeh of Gambia

Yahya Abdul-Aziz Jemus Junkung Jammeh was formerly a military officer before he took over as president of The Gambia in 1994. With 22 years at the helm of the country’s supremacy, in 2017 while running for his fifth term in office, Yahya Jammeh lost to Adama Barrow. He conceded defeat but backpedal and asked for a recount of elections.

He fled to Equatorial Guinea as his unpopularity grew. Adam Barrow currently serves as president of Gambia regarded as Africa’s smallest country.

José Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola

In August of 2017, Jose Eduardo handed over power after serving as president of mineral-rich Angola for 38 years. Joao Lourenco, the new president promised to tackle corruption which has crippled the oil-rich nation.

Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe

Regarded as Africa’s oldest president, Robert Mugabe,



Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso took refuge in Ivory Coast.

95 first served as Prime Minister of Zimbabwe from 1980 to 1987 when he became president. manning the affairs of Zimbabwe for 30 years, Mugabe stepped down after parliament launched an impeachment process in November 2017 to remove him.

He had earlier that month said he wanted to relinquish power to his wife, Grace Mugabe. Analyst believe without his remarks, he could have served on as president as his ousting is not

unconnected to his desires to get his wife replace him.

Joseph Kabila of DR Congo

Joseph Kabila, born June 4, 1971, in Sud-Kivu province, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was an army official who served as president from 2001 till 2019.

Joseph Kabila is son of former president Laurent Kabila and took over 10 days after his father was assassinated. Kabila spends considerable time trying

to unite the various rebel groups in the Congos. He refused to stand for elections in 2018 and gave his support to Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary who failed to capture power.

Felix Tshisekedi, son of late veteran opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi won the presidential election and currently “works” with Joseph Kabila (since Kabila’s political party controls the legislature) to better DR Congo.

Abdelaziz Bouteflika of

Algeria

For 20 years (1999 to 2019) 82-years-old Abdelaziz Bouteflika has served as president of Algeria and despite his deteriorating health and advanced age, he refused to leave power until April of 2019 when massive protest forced him to retire.

In a brief message, he said he had “notified the president of the constitutional council of his decision to end his mandate”. Thousands swarm the streets in celebration of his decision to step down saying he was incapable to dispatch his duties.

Omar al-Bashir of Sudan

Sudan’s Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir served as president for 30 years before he was sent packing by the military. With an arrest warrant dangling over his head issued by the International Criminal Court, ICC for war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, news that he won’t be extradited by the military came as good news to him though he’s under arrest by the military. Following his arrest, General Ahmed Awad Ibn Auf, who is also Defense Minister said the military council would run the country for two years.

In a statement, the US government commended the people of Sudan for liberating themselves urging the “transitional government to follow the will of the people, work in an inclusive way with all representative parties, and commit to a speedy handover to civilian rule. We condemn the abuse of force by security services that has resulted in the death of more than 20 civilians. We call on all armed parties to show restraint, avoid conflict, and remain committed to the protection of the Sudanese people.”



Former Gambian President Yahya Jammeh is today a farmer in Equitorial Guinea.



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Vigilantism and its potential to threaten Ghana's democracy as elections approach.

By Papisdaff Abdullah Ali.

As a developing country in the sub-Saharan of Africa, Ghana is arguably one of Africa's working democracies, haven gone through seven successful elections to change hands of power from one government to another. For the past few years, the activities of political vigilante groups have become alarmingly dreadful for citizens and non-Ghanaian residents of the West African Country. The evidence of this is the seeming realization of all persons living in Ghana that the activities of vigilante groups has the potential of to lead the exemplary democratic Ghana on the path of turmoil.

Although it is illegal for political parties to nurture vigilante groups, the two major political parties in Ghana; the New Patriotic Party and the National Democratic Congress have harbored and or nurtured militia groups of different forms and sizes under the guise of party security. The emergence of such Vigilante groups can be traced to diverse sources. These political vigilante groups are recruited from and made up of the mass unemployed youth, who are directly and/or affiliated to the two major political parties in Ghana – the NPP and the NDC. These heavily built men start as personal security details for political party executives who would do every and anything, to please and



The growing influence of vigilante groups could be a threat to Ghana's democracy.

keep their masters in power, before being "rewarded" with recruitment to serve as officers of the country's law enforcement apparatus and or National Security Council (NSC) which is headed by the President of the republic. This happens when the party they serve wins political power. This practice gives credence to American Political Scientist Harold Lasswell's position that "politics is a struggle of who gets what, when and how".

In Ghana's political history, by-elections have been characterized by violence especially between the pro party militia groups from the two major parties. Chereponi, Atiwa, Akwatia, Amenfi West and recently Ayawaso West-Wogon have all had by-elections characterized by aggression inspired by the winning at all cost mentality of the dominant political parties contesting the elections. Arguably, Ayawaso West-Wogon could

pass as the deadliest, leaving scores of electorates with different degrees of injuries, some of which were caused by live bullets. This happened when gunmen who were later identified as members of the National Security SWAT team allegedly started shooting at the scores of people who had gathered at the residence of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) candidate, Kwasi Delali Berempong's house.

The activities of these militia groups are not only limited to elections, the recent exchange of fire during a meeting involving national and regional executives of the largest opposition party in the Ashanti Region is still fresh in the minds of many concerned Ghanaians. This was about two weeks after the Ayawaso incident. Misunderstandings between two party militia groups; the Hawks and one other led to the sporadic shootings, as a result, one person lost his life

while other party members suffered injuries.

Also in 2017, members of the pro NPP militia group, Delta Force allegedly stormed a Kumasi Circuit Court and freed some of their members standing trial in the Ashanti Region. They assaulted the judge and disrupted a court process. The Ghana Bar Association called on to the police to investigate the matter thoroughly but the police could not identify the suspects who invaded the court session. At the end, charges against them were dropped to discharge them due to no evidence to convict the suspects. The United Nations has bemoaned the attack on a Kumasi court by members of the Delta Force. In a statement signed by the Head of the UN Office for West Africa, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and Resident Coordinator of the UN system in Ghana, Christine Evans-Klock, the international body said "The two UN officials

outrightly denounce these reprehensible acts that are the latest in a series of similar incidents since the end of the December 2016 elections in Ghana".

This is drop in the ocean as far as the number of incidents and activities of the militia groups are concerned. The overwhelming condemnation from civil society, religious bodies and the international community left government no choice but to set up a commission to enquire into the allegations of who did what in the violence that characterized the Ayawaso bye-election.

Short

The Emile-Short Commission set up by President Akufo Addo uncovered among other revelations that political militia groups are formed and funded by leading figures of the political parties they serve. These financiers who are well connected disregard the long-term national interest and only focus making their hoodlums serve the interest of the people in the high political echelon in exchange of favors from government when they are in power. After taking statements from victims, party executives, ministers of state, the police and other witnesses including alleged members of pro-government vigilante group, Invincible Forces, the commission cited both the NDC and NPP for their continuous association



The groups work for all political shades.

with militia groups like the Azorka Boys, Invincible Forces, Delta Forces, Bamba Boys, Kandahar Boys, Aluta Boys, Eastern Mambas, Hawks, Bolga Bulldogs, Basuka Boys, Badariba, and Bindiriba among others.

Even though the committee's reported has been submitted to the Jubilee House, it has been kept under wraps. The media however intercepted excerpts of the report which says "the Commission recommends that the SWAT team of the National Security Council Secretariat should be disbanded and operatives be reassigned as appropriate." It added: "The Commission further recommends that support for special operations should be sought from the specialized units of the police directly as and when necessary."

The three-member commission chaired by Justice Emile Short also recommended "the criminal prosecution" of Double, an operative of the SWAT team of the National Security Council "for the unauthorized possession of firearms under section 192(1) of the Criminal Offences Act."

He was accused by NDC MP for Ningo-Prampram Sam George of firing shots at La Bawaleshie during the melee, but denied the allegations before the Commission. 'Double' dominated the headlines when he disclosed he went through a three-week training including crowd control and pound-to-pound combat.

Further the Commission which sat for a month, recommended that the head of the SWAT Team Colonel Mike Opoku must be reprimanded "for being ultimately responsible for the outcome of the SWAT operation at the La Bawaleshie School Polling Station."

"His liability is further reinforced by his failure to properly define the mission for which the SWAT team was sent and ensuring that the SWAT team complied with the defined mission. Further, he failed to conduct an internal inquiry into identifying the culprits of the offence when revelations became rife that there were operational lapses resulting in violations of human rights.

Also, the report recommended sanctioning

of minister of state in charge of national security at the Presidency Bryan Acheampong for unleashing masked security operatives to police an election. "The Commission recommends that Mr. Bryan Acheampong be reprimanded for his ultimate responsibility as Minister in authorizing an operation of that character and on a day of an election in a built up area," the report presented to President Akufo-Addo said.

Accusations

Between the two parties, accusations on what is bound or likely to happen in the 2020 general elections were traded despite the fragile nature of the political temperature in the first quarter of the this year. General Secretary of the largest opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) Johnson Asiedu Nketia says the violence that characterized the by-election in Ayawaso West Wuogon was the governing New Patriotic Party's (NPP) grand strategy for the 2020 elections.

The NDC chief scribe said: "They are implementing their campaign promise and that campaign promise is to

unleash violence and through violence cow everybody down... for them to impose themselves on Ghanaians and do whatever they want to do."

"The leopard will not lose his spot because it has been immersed in water. The spots are still there. The all-die-be-die spots are still there," Asiedu Nketia added. Meanwhile the Chairman of his party was reportedly captured in leaked audio plotting to unleash mayhem on key individuals including the Chairperson of the Elections Management body, Jean Mensah. The leaked voice purported to belong to Samuel Ofori Ampofo told NDC communicators that "we're going to take her [EC boss] to the cleaners."

"As for the EC chair, we must wage a relentless war on this EC chair. Me, she doesn't want to see my face," Ofori-Ampofo allegedly said at the meeting which took place after the Ayawaso by-election. As part of strategic communication plans for the NDC going into the 2020 elections, Ofori-Ampofo allegedly gave his blessings for the communicators to verbally attack the Peace Council chairman Professor Emmanuel Asante.

Threats to Democracy

The democratic achievements of Ghana over the last past two decades risks being jeopardized by the activities criminal vigilante groups. The attack on the court, disruption of events under the auspices of government to threaten Ministers, vandalizing public properties to demand job placements and physical assault of state office holders among other disorderly activities are counterproductive to democratic advancement.

Ahead of the 2016 elections, more than 5 000 electoral precincts were considered flashpoints by the Ghana Police Service, this number is likely to drastically increase considering the high stakes and win at all cost posturing by the two leading political parties.

At the British High Commission sponsored dialogue organized by the National Peace Council to find solutions to address the phenomenon of violent vigilantism, stakeholders expressed their strong sentiments against political vigilantism in Ghana, and asked for the demobilization of all such groupings. They argue that political vigilantism threatening the democracy of Ghana. Chairman of the National Peace Council Reverend Prof Emmanuel Asante said it was unfortunate that politics has brought in its wake vigilantism.

Commissioner of Police, Nathan Kofi Boakye, the Director General of Police Professional Standards Bureau, said controlling of such vigilante groups is becoming difficult since they have the blessing of the two main political parties; the incumbent New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the largest opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC). "There is danger ahead and if the vigilante groups are not controlled, by 2020, there will be more dangerous groups who will operate to destroy our democracy," he said.

He called on the state and other stakeholders to help empower the police psychologically so they would be courageous to fight acts of vigilantism that was destroying Ghana's fledgling



The groups have very fanciful names.

democracy. Sheikh Aremeyaw Shaibu, Spokesperson of the National Chief Imam, also emphasized the need for a free and fair political process devoid of intimidation, while plugging the holes of deficiencies in the process.

Director of the Faculty of Academic Affairs and Research at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre (KAIPCT) Dr. Kwesi Aning has said Ghana could seek international support to help address the issue of political party vigilantism properly. "Let's begin the process of building trust between and among those who established these groups. How do we negotiate around the difficulties in which we have placed ourselves? Are there national institutions that can play the honest broker, and I think the level of suspicion is so deep," he said.

The security expert added "We should not be shy as a nation to say probably the UN should come and help to play the honest broker, or the African Union because in disaggregating those who are members of these groups, the economic interests, their geographical location, what they used their strengths and equipment for when they are not being used [for vigilante activities], need a trust-

building process, [and] that takes quite some time."

Call to Action

The president of Ghana, Nana Addo Danquah Akufo Addo during his 2019 State of the Nations Address said that "I could have sat it out, as some did, for Akwatia, Atiwa, Chereponi, Talensi and Amenfi West, but I have decided that that would not be in the interest of the Ghanaian democracy. The time has come to put an end to this phenomenon of politically related violence." "I want to use the platform of this message to make a sincere, passionate appeal to the leaders of the two main political in our country NPP and NDC, to come together as soon as possible preferably one week, to agree on appropriate measures to bring an end to this worrying and unacceptable phenomenon of vigilantism in our body politic."

The President's call, sparked another controversy over what form the dialogue should take. The two major political parties later put aside their differences and agreed that vigilantism must be eradicated from the democratic system since it is "inimical" to it.

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC)

came to the agreement after an "open" and "exhaustive" deliberation mediated by the National Peace Council (NPC).

The deliberation followed calls by President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo to have the two major parties meet to disband their respective vigilante groups.

Chairmen of the two parties led high-powered delegations made up of current and former ministers of state into the meeting, which was largely held behind closed doors.

A communiqué issued at the end of the meeting and signed by NPP's Freddie Blay and NDC's Samuel Ofose-Ampofo indicated that the

two parties are "committed to exploring other processes in relation to the elimination of vigilantism".

However, they disagreed on the immediate focus of the mediation.

While the ruling party is said to be calling for the eradication of "political party vigilantism in all its ramifications", the opposition party wants the eradication of "political vigilantism in all its ramifications". But they both saw eye to eye with the disbandment of vigilante groups within political parties or for political purposes, prohibiting the ownership, hiring or utilization of such groups by the political parties or members thereof and cooperating with state agencies and stakeholders to ensure the total eradication of such groups or any incidence of vigilantism.

Meanwhile the Attorney General and Minister for Justice, Ms Gloria Akufo laid before Parliament, a Legislative Instrument (LI) to deal with political party vigilantism and its notoriety in Ghana. The bill is expected to be treated under Certificate of Urgency. This follows a

directive from President Akufo Addo for a legislation on the matter.

"I believe that the parliamentary process of enactment affords sufficient space for any citizen to make an input or contribution to the enactment of a good and effective law, whose implementation will enable us rid our nation of politically-related violence, a development that can only inure to the benefit of Ghanaian democracy and to the preservation of law and order," the President said.

As Ghana prepares for another elections to change or retain the governing party, the reality of the threats to the democratic dispensation it is enjoying is not lost on Ghanaians – and, in fact, on non-Ghanaians who have an equal stake in the peace and stability of the West African nation which prides itself with being an exemplary democracy. If ongoing discussions on the disbandment of political vigilante groups continue in the manner in which they are now, there is the likelihood that the upcoming general elections in 2020 will be peaceful.



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DENNIS **JALI**

Rwandan Sankara arrest is a blow to armed groups -Dr Kayumba

By Jean d'Amour Mugabo



For over a year now, the town of Buea has religiously respected ghost towns on Mondays in support of the Anglophone struggle.

Rwanda's Foreign Minister Dr Richard Sezibera announced a fortnight ago that the country had held in custody the self-proclaimed army Major Callixte Nsabimana, also known as Sankara, for some days.

Sankara is the leader of National Liberation Forces (FLN), an armed group which claimed mid last year to have established base in Nyungwe Forest in the south of Rwanda and staging attacks in the areas around the forest. The attacks killed some people, burned vehicles and looted residents' properties, according to Rwandan government.

FLN is a military wing of Rwandan Movement for Democratic Change (RMDC) led by a humanitarian Paul Rusesabagina who is deputised by Sankara.

Sankara was reportedly arrested in Comoros islands and secretly repatriated to Rwanda but Minister Sezibera declined to reveal any details on Sankara's

arrest by sparingly saying that he was arrested and repatriated through diplomatic cooperation.

According to Dr Christopher Kayumba, an expert on regional affairs and professor at the University of Rwanda, the arrest of Sankara is a blow to the existing armed groups and a discouragement to anyone who is thinking of joining them or creating a new armed rebellion.

"Generally, for peace to prevail in this region and Rwanda in particular, the region should be devoid of armed rebellions. So, arrest of Sankara is very important in weakening the present armed groups because the region cannot have sustainable stability while there are armed groups or people who want to oust governments by means of arms," Kayumba told Pan African Visions last Monday.

"It also discourages any other person who thinks of creating an armed group, anyone who thinks of taking

power by using weapons and any person who was thinking of joining a rebel group; and a discouragement of these armed groups is good for the regional stability."

Dr Kayumba said the arrest sends a message to other rebel groups leaders that they can also be arrested any time and discourages anyone who wants to fight legitimate governments in the region.

"I recently saw comments by Rusesabagina (Sankara's boss) crying over what he called a kidnapping of their group member. The fact that he is also crying over this arrest shows that it is a blow to the group," he observed.

**I d e a l
collaboration
a m o n g
countries**

The expert remarks that countries should be

collaborating in such a way that led to Sankara arrest as international law does not allow the use of force to remove a legitimate government.

"So, ideally no one should be allowed to hide either in Europe, America or any African country when they are supporting armed groups. So, that collaboration should characterise all countries," said Kayumba.

Nsabimana alias Sankara is charged with offences committed on Rwandan territory, according to Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB). The charges include formation of an irregular armed group; complicity in committing terrorist acts; conspiracy and incitement to commit terrorist acts; taking persons hostage; murder; and looting.

For a half a century, the East-Central African region has been marked by political instability with the presence of several armed groups.

President Yoweri Museveni came to power in Uganda in 1986 through an armed rebellion. The same later

applied to Paul Kagame in Rwanda in 1994 and Laurent-Désiré Kabila in Congo in 1997 and Pierre Nkurunziza in Burundi in 2005. And currently, there are armed groups, mainly based in Congo, which are fighting Burundi, Congo, Rwanda and Uganda.

Those fighting Rwanda include Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and a new rebel group known as "P5" which is led by former Rwanda's Chief of Army, Kayumba Nyamwasa, who currently lives in South Africa.

A report by the UN Group of Experts on Democratic Republic of Congo indicated last December that P5 is a coalition of five Rwandan opposition political organisations including the Amahoro People's Congress (Amahoro-PC), the Forces Démocratiques Unifiées-Inkingi (FDU Inkingi), the People's Defence Pact-Imanzi (PDP-Imanzi), the Social Party-Imberakuri (PS Imberakuri) and the Rwanda National Congress (RNC).



Rwandan Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Richard Sezibera speaking at a presser in Kigali, in February. Photo Kigali Today.

Kidnap of US tourist in Uganda has devastating effects on the Country's Tourism. Here's why.

By Amos Fofung

Uganda, though a landlocked country in East Africa is a tourism jewel in the continent. With a diverse landscape encompasses the snow-capped Rwenzori Mountains and immense Lake Victoria, It's abundant wildlife as well as rare birds have listed the country among top touristic destination in Africa.

With 86k reviews of TripAdvisor, Uganda has been listed by CNN travel as a top tourist destination.

Scooping Gold at the just concluded Africa's premier expo, the Indaba Tourism Fair, Lilly Ajarova, the UTB Chief Executive Officer, says "Uganda is now positioning itself to take its rightful place as a leading tourist destination in Africa and the world."

His thought is shared by Uganda's Minister of Tourism, Ephraim Kamuntu who believes his country, regarded as the "pearl of Africa" is it is uniquely positioned to offer unforgettable experiences.

However, the recent kidnapping of a US tourist in the country might be a great setback for the nation which looks at expanding its tourism sector.

On April 2, 2019, Kimberley Sue Endecott, a 35-years-old US tourist was abducted at gunpoint in Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park, close to the borders with the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Days later Ugandan Military Spokesman that, Brigadier Richard Karemiri told Reuters that "She has



been located and rescued unharmed."

Ugandan government spokesman Ofwono Opondo said in a tweet that driver Jean Paul had also been rescued from Congo and that the kidnappers had escaped.

However, it has now been established that they were not rescued but that a ransom was paid before Kimberley who has since returned to California to get liberated.

Effects of the kidnap of

Uganda's Tourism

Though the Ugandan security forces announced that it has arrested at least eight in connection to the kidnapping of the US tourist, the effects of the "sad" picture of her ordeal painted by American media and other Western news organs might force Uganda tourism sector to hit a new low.

President Donald Trump has on several occasions weighed into the matter.

Last Monday, he insisted that Uganda «must find» the kidnappers of a now-freed American tourist and her tour guide «before people will feel safe» visiting the country.

In one of his regular morning tweets, he said the kidnappers must be brought to justice «openly and quickly.»

Opening up about her five days abduction on «CBS This Morning», Kimberly said she came to see the men who took

her as both her captors and her protectors.

In her first interview about she opened up about how she found humanity in the four men who took her and her tour guide hostage and their days-long journey before a ransom payment secured their release.

«I remember laying down on the ground and I remember hearing JP say, «Oh my God,» at my exhaustion. I don't know how long I laid there,» Endicott said. «At one point I'm asked to get up. And I turn and look and they've made a tent for me out of tarps and a mosquito net, which, I remember that was the moment where I thought, «Why are they taking such good care of me?»»

«I just start talking to them like I'm talking to you,» Endicott told King. «But all the while I'm watching these young men drink water, not from the river, but from a hole in the ground. But they have bottled water for me,» she said.

Though she was never hurt and treated "humanely" many fear Uganda tourism will sink as it did during the four decades of violence, political turmoil and economic collapse that started with the reign of Idi Amin who among other titles, named himself, President for Life, Conqueror of the British Empire and Last King of Scotland.

Regrettably, this is not the first-time foreign tourist are abducted or attacked in Uganda with some of them pay the ultimate.

In 1999, an American couple, four Britons and two



Murchison Falls National Park.



Kidnapped tourist and her guard after their release

New Zealanders were killed along with four Ugandan guides after being ambushed by gunmen in the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, a few kilometers south of the Queen Elizabeth Park. Survivors said the killers appeared to be Congo-based

Hutu rebels.

For a long time now, security concerns have been blamed for the dwindling stats of tourism in Africa. Following the kidnapping, several travel companies are rerouting tourist from Uganda.

Uganda's Minister of Tourism, Wildlife & Antiquities Prof. Ephraim Kamuntu has reiterated that it was an isolated happening as he responded to queries over the safety of tourist in Uganda.

Speaking, he said "this

incident, regrettable as it is, is an isolated incident. The country has been secured for the last three decades. An incident of this kind, we have not experienced in recent times.»

Uganda police force after the incident said; we "want

to reassure the country and our tourists that Uganda is safe and we shall continue to improve the security in our parks. Come and enjoy the Pearl of Africa."

The Anglophone General Conference will hold in Buea-Spokesperson Elie Smith

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The spokesperson for the All Anglophone General conference, AGC, Elie Smith says the conference that was postponed last year will definitely hold in Buea, South West Region of Cameroon. He has equally ruled out the conference holding out of the country.

According to the spokesman, there have been numerous consultations behind the scene to see to it that the conference takes place in Cameroon. Whether that will be in Buea still remains in the shadow.

It is however still uncertain if the third edition of the All Anglophone Conference will hold or not, or whether it will take place in Buea. This is due to the fact that, there are so many who are not in favour of



Elie Smith says there have been numerous consultations behind the scene to see to it that the conference takes place in Cameroon.

the conference holding in the town of Buea.

One of those opponents of the conference is the

Mayor of Buea who has time again reiterated that, the conference will not hold in Buea, and should be

taken elsewhere. It is also widely reported that some government officials are not in favour of the conference

holding, especially as it comes at a very critical time.

It was equally reported last year that the reason for the indefinite postponement of the conference was due to the fact that government was not in support as they refused to issue an authorization for the holding of the conference. This led to the conference to be postponed more than two times as the authorization letter was not forth coming.

Many are however calling for a long lasting solution to be sought whether it entails such as conference be held. According to some, the religious leaders who are behind the conference have nothing but good intentions for the Anglophone regions. "Whatever will take for the Anglophone regions to go back to the way it was prior to 2016

will be very good” explained one Buea inhabitant. “So far, the measures used by government have failed and so we should give the opportunities to others especially the religious bodies to see that we get a solution to the problem. Violence will never solve and has never solved any problem.”

Increase in kidnapping for ransom

Since late 2017 to present, there has been a spike in the rate at which individuals are kidnapping. When these individuals are kidnapped, heavy ransom are demanded before released. Many have thus questioned the reason behind such a move by the separatist, looking at the economic suffering that many have had to endure for years now.

Teachers, students and even coaches of football teams in the Anglophone regions have fallen prey to such a practice. The Head coach of YOSA Bamenda Ndoumbe Bosso, fell prey to the separatist. It is still unclear if the money demanded for his kidnapped was actually paid before he was released. Football players



His Eminence Cardinal Christian Tumi has been a key advocate of the Anglophone General Conference.

of the University of Buea were equally kidnapped and had to pay a ransom before being released.

The separatist have equally been accused of extorting money from passengers who ply the Buea-Kumba highway. Individuals are usually asked to pay extra money (about FCFA 500) to the separatist fighters before they are allowed to go to their destination. “A journey from Buea to Kumba is a different issue. 500 frs has to be paid to the boys along the stretch of road. If u don’t pay, they

will put you down and the bus will leave. So when we travel, the driver tells us to just remove the money and have it ready to give so as not to waste time” explained one inhabitant.

Separatist call for school resumption but warn against violence

The separatist leaders have equally been softening their tone with respect to school resumption. In a meeting in the USA, the leaders said they are open for school resumption in the South West and North West Regions of

the country, but however cautioned parents on violence that may follow.

The reaction to this call has been that of mixed feeling, taking into consideration that there are so many groups involve in the fight for separation and for the call to be adhered to will take time. It is also coming at the end of the present school year which raises a lot of doubt as to the reason behind the call for school resumption. Recently, many school children have been kidnapped which indicates that the call for school resumption will not be at all effective.

It should be recalled that students in the Anglophone regions in certain areas have been unable to attend school for more than two years. Areas such as Muyuka, Lebialelem, Ndian in the SWR, have not been able to attend classes. Most of the students and families are receiving shelter in Buea and neighbouring regions while some are presently hiding in the bushes.

Since October 2016, at least 170 civilians have been killed in over 220 incidents... according to media reports. The international crisis group has said the death toll since the start of the fighting has topped 500 for civilians and more than 200 for members of the security forces. Some 437,000 people have fled the fighting according to the United Nations.

The government of Cameroon has however been swift in countering the report. Minister Rene Emmanuel Sadi said “...security forces are within their sovereign role that of ensuring the protection of the Nation and the population against outlaws who mercilessly kill and sow terror and despair”.

Human Rights watch in a recent report says some 170 civilians have been killed in the crisis since October. They added that government forces have killed scores of civilians, used indiscriminate force and torched hundreds of homes over the past six months.



For over a year now, the town of Buea has religiously respected ghost towns on Mondays in support of the Anglophone struggle.

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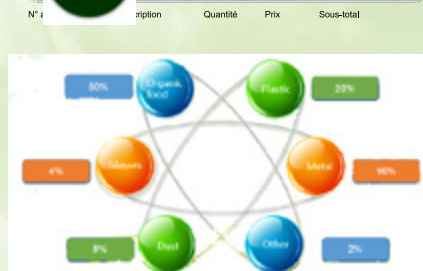


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Cameroon's amenable crisis: is Dialogue In The Horizon?

By Amos Fofung

On May 9, the newly appointed Prime Minister, Joseph Dion Ngute embarked on a working visit to the troubled North West region. His message to the denizens of Bamenda, regarded as the birth place of Cameroon's democracy and catalyst to change in the country's political status quo was that of peace.

Though from the South West region, the Premier on day one of his 4-day visit, clad in the traditional regalia of the North Westerner and wielded peace plants. A practice in Africa which signifies "I come in peace".

Upon stepping off his car at Ayaba hotel, he was greeted by grieving mothers who pleaded for an end to the crisis. He immediate response; "I have been sent by the president to dialogue with you and other groups of persons to see how together we can bring back peace in

our land".

He reiterated that the head of states is now ready to dialogue so as to proffer a solution to the crisis in the country's English-speaking regions but insisted that secession still remains "off the table".

This is however not the first time a member of the President Biya's administration or the president himself has made known his desires to dialogue so as to put and end to the crisis. In fact, he has been doing so on nearly all his public appearances since violent protest breakout in 2017.

On May 7, 2019 the president stunned Cameroonians. He took to his social media account to preach peace, love and reconciliation.

"The important thing, today, is to forgive and forget, to tender together towards a common goal. We cannot,



Prime Minister Dion Ngute in Bamenda with a peace plant. There is still skepticism on the seriousness of the government to engage in serious and sincere dialogue.

at the same time, look at the future and live in the past. Mutual forgiveness is the path that leads to sustainable peace," his widely published post reads.

Recent turn of events has left watchers of the polity

of Cameroon to question if an eminent dialogue on the Country's Anglophone crisis is around the corner?

Secessionist leaders insist "no dialogue will take place without secession"

In a prompt response to the events unfolding in Cameroon, the spokesperson of Interim government of Ambazonia, Chris Anu, took to social media to make known the separatist leaders' position on the Prime Ministers message of dialogue.

His message; No dialogue, no forgiveness, we are leaving.

Separatist leaders seem to be divided on the dialogue option. While others say they are ready to sit down in presence of a third independent party, many are those who insist that

any such gatherings must focus on establishing terms of separation. This was re-echoed during a meeting of the separatist leaders in March at Washington DC.

But far-right leaders such as Ayaba Cho Lucas has been quoted repeatedly to maintain that the "time for dialogue is way gone and now is the time for war".

Understanding the Anglophone crisis

Cameroon's Anglophone crisis started in October 2016 when English-speaking lawyers took to the streets to protest the appointment of French-speaking judges to English-oriented courts.

They were later joined by other trade unions, among them teachers, in what was at first, a peaceful protest.

Their demands centered on an end to decades of under-investment and



Opposition SDF Chairman Ni John Fru Ndi told PM Dion Ngute that a starting point of dialogue will be the release of prisoners.

discriminatory government policies against the country's English-speaking regions. Due to response from the country's octogenarian president, Paul Biya, the crisis escalated in to an armed conflict, with armed groups sprouting up throughout the English-speaking North West and South West regions.

The poor handling of the civil protest gave voice to a group of few separatist who have since the 90s been clamoring for the secession of the English-speaking regions which they want to name "Ambazonia" upon independence.

To date, over 1,000 people have been killed in the fighting, according to local human rights groups, while the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that insecurity and violence in these two regions have uprooted 437,000 people from their homes and forced over 32,000 to seek refuge in Nigeria. An estimated four million people have been affected by the conflict.

Mounting Calls for dialogue

Human rights advocate and founder of the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, Nkongho Felix Agbor-Balla insist that dialogue



Women calling for peace to return to the Anglophone regions during PM Dion Ngutes tour.

is paramount to resolving the crisis. His has been consistent on his stand on that a federated system, not secession can heal Cameroon's wounds of disunity and restore peace in the agile county.

"I think the only solution is for there to be a holistic dialogue, ceasefire by both

parties and genuine dialogue wherein other parties will be involved; those who are clamoring for separation, federation and those for unitary state," he told Pan African Visions Magazine.

"There also has to be an enabling environment, for example, the release of Sisiku Ayuk Tabe and Co.

as a stepping stone to win the minds and hearts of the people, to reconstruct some of the villages that have been destroyed and help provide aid to those who are internally displaced. This will go a long way to win the confidence of the people and it can help towards finding a solution," he added.



Enough is enough ,No dialogue, no forgiveness, we are leaving says Communications Secretary and Spokesperson of the Ambazonia Interim Government - Chris Anu

His position is shared by many who for fear of victimization have elected to stay mute. Calls for dialogue from the international community and organisations.

Cameroon's Minister of Territorial Administration (Interior) Paul Atanga Nji said last year during a visit to Buea, capital of the South West region that the government was ready to dialogue so as to bring the crisis to an end but insisted that dialogue will only be with those who are for the unity of Cameroon.

Rights movement, Crisis Group continuous to reiterate the essentiality of some form of dialogue between the government and Anglophone leaders, "with local autonomy on the table."

From the United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Tibor Nagy, the necessity of dialogue in solving the Anglophone crisis cannot be overemphasized.

While every clue indicates that the administration of President Paul Biya is ready to dialogue and restore peace in Cameroon, it remains uncertain if the much-clamored and all-inclusive dialogue will take place and when.



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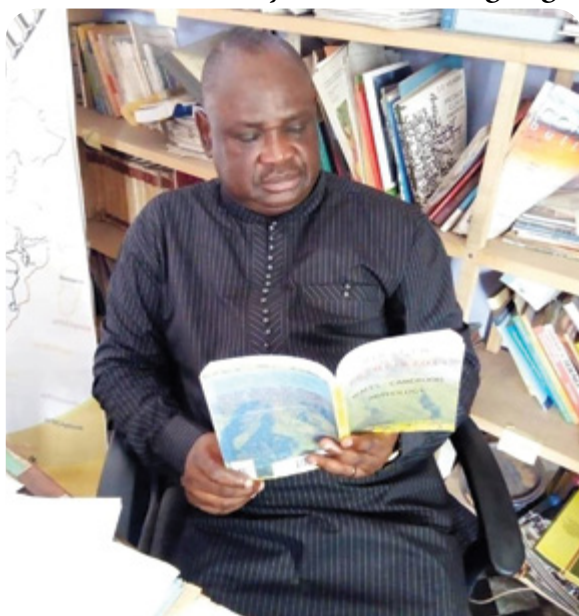
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Silencing the guns and summoning the talks

By Mwalimu George Ngwane*

In a 2015 publication by The Africa Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), Durban, South Africa, titled “Silencing the guns, owning the future”, the authors question the paradox that is Africa in terms of unprecedented levels of economic growth on one hand, and rising instability and insecurity in a number of particularly concerning regions and member states on the other. Recognizing this, and building on references to Agenda 2063 and African Union vision of ending all wars in Africa by 2020, the publication further engages collective multistakeholder deliberations on existing and emerging peace and security threats to the continent and the responses required to address these and achieve a war-free continent by 2020. Practitioners and policy-makers are well aware that Vision 2020 is immensely ambitious. They also realize that achieving the aspirations set out in this publication needs to be accompanied by concrete plans which are implementable, realistic and time bound. A major challenge in Africa’s peace and security fields is how to secure lasting resolutions to conflicts. Unlike conflict resolution, which addresses existing or current fights the aim of conflict prevention is to forestall the violence from breaking out or occurring in the first place. Conflict prevention involves preemptive measures that guard against potential



Mwalimu George Ngwane.

and possible escalations happening. For a long time, the publication concludes, the management of conflicts in Africa has been largely reactive. In most situations, it is only when they have reached severe crisis levels that interventions are mooted to resolve them” (ACCORD, 2015).

The first logical step towards “silencing the guns” is

calling for a mutual ceasefire between the belligerents for a specific duration. This may require keeping the guns but not using them as a warfare tool for a comprehensive agreed period (cessation of violence) or creating a complete disarmament programme that convinces not coerces, appeals not patronises, and compensates not humiliates the conflicting

parties to laying down their weapons. Both approaches are informed by a restorative justice process that insists on reintegrating the ex-fighters into society rather than a retributive justice process that seeks to punish and hence alienate the ex-fighters to the margins of society. Both approaches resonate with a concessional win-win strategy and not a conquest triumphalist mindset. Both approaches are relevant to our Cameroonian situation even though experts argue that the more feasible case is one of appealing to a cessation of violence as a harbinger for constructive peace talks. However both approaches only culminate in what John Galtung calls “negative peace”. Negative peace refers to the absence of violence. “When, for example, a ceasefire is enacted, negative peace will ensue. It is negative because something undesirable stopped happening, but in the absence of other criteria.

Positive peace is accomplished by desirable aspects such as restoration of relationships, creation of social systems that serve the needs of the entire population and the constructive resolution of conflicts” (Dijkema, 2007).

Positive peace emerges quite often after the setting up of targeted dialogue (summoning of the

talks) that explores all the contours of the root cause and not just proximate causes of the problem. Indeed without a clear and concrete agenda for addressing the issues that led combatants to take up arms in the first place they will often be reticent to heed to the call for a cessation to violence. If dialogue has to succeed it must follow a scientific methodology. The goal of any dialogue is to get parties with different positions or conflicting ideas to seek COMMON GROUND. While the actors are conflicting parties (often state and non-state actors), the stakeholders could range from traditional rulers, academia, religious authorities, leaders of opinion, media, civil society groups, vulnerable population caught in the cross-fire, Diplomatic services and International Community. The dialogue process is often a bilateral discussion (under the tree debate) mostly initiated by state actors (government) and in some cases non-state actors willing to create an enabling environment for their grievances to be formally addressed. Both parties observe the virtues of respect, honesty and empathy. Such discussions could also solicit a third party mediator (impartial, on-partisan and accepted by both parties). The process can take 3-6 months and reviewed periodically. As for the content of the dialogue it is important to distinguish between a National Dialogue



“Prime Minister Dion Ngute, blue shirt called for separatists to drop arms during maiden visit to the SWR.”



Women calling for urgent solutions to the crisis in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon.

with Preliminary discussions (often behind the scenes in what is called back-channel communication) between state actors and direct/indirect non-state actors, then Mutual agreement on the remote, root and trigger causes of the conflict, followed by agreement on the security of all the parties, consensus on the Agenda and venue of the dialogue or Talks,

the principle of talks or dialogue and they include firstly Open-mindedness: It is always advisable to keep an open mind during the Talks (no pre-conceived prejudices, no bitterness, no censorship to feasible ideas, no blame-game, no parochial interest, no contempt or arrogance, no naming and shaming, no revenge; Secondly Concessions: Dialogue does not come with fixed and rigid position, it goes with mutually beneficial results (win-win game not zero-sum game). If you are not ready for concessions then you are not ready for dialogue. Concessions means giving a little and taking a little, it means leaving our high grounds to meet at the middle or common ground; Thirdly Outcome: Conflicting parties should be prepared to accept the outcome of the dialogue without feeling a sense of

loss, without counting the loss and without bending to external pressure and lastly Evaluation: Dialogue is not a static event but a periodical process. There should always be room for evaluation and amendments. With regard to the conflict that continues to stain the Anglophone region with blood, it was time we began by silencing the guns and then summoning the talks, and this before the end of 2019.

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that seeks to address issues of broad general concerns related to national life and a Constitutional Dialogue that seeks to address specific grievances articulated by a segment quite often geopolitical entity of the nation. Constitutional dialogue,

which in my opinion responds to our current crisis, often dwells on the nature of statecraftship or national restructuring (decentralization, Federation, referendum, Unitary etc). Be that as it may, most dialogue platforms often begin

agreement on those to be invited to the Dialogue table (to avoid the presence of opportunists and spoilers), consensus on how, who and when the Resolutions or Outcome of the Talks shall be implemented. There are certain qualities that guide

agreement on those to be invited to the Dialogue table (to avoid the presence of opportunists and spoilers), consensus on how, who and when the Resolutions or Outcome of the Talks shall be implemented. There are certain qualities that guide

Ghana:Secessionist Arrest,Use Dialogue And Not Power -Wanep To Gov't

By Ahedor Jessica

The West Africa Network for Peace Building, WANEP has cautioned the Ghanaian government to be wary of the approach it is using in dealing with the agitating groups which want to secede from Ghana. Saying, as Peace builders, it is wrong to use an arrest when you can actually dialogue. The Caution followed government's arrest of one Mr Komi Kudzodzi and his group members over their demand to become an independent state.

Speaking to Pan African Visions in an exclusive interview, the Executive Director of WANEP Dr. Chukuemeka Eze said what



Charles Komi Kudzodzi is the 80 year old leader of Homeland Study Group.

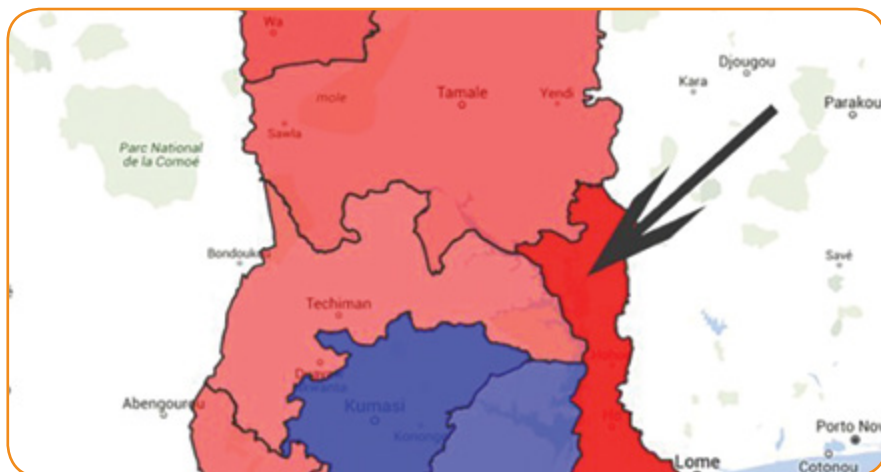
is happening is termed as an identity crisis where people could see their relations across and could not get closer to them because of one artificial border somewhere preventing them.

He lamented that, the Belin conference that released the African Map is the genesis of all these brouhaha that even the colonial master and successive governments are unable to solve. He

stated they did not seek the consent of the locals before drawing and releasing that map thereby creating a complex situation for Africa today. "Nonetheless, there are procedures in the UN

charter that those agitating for their freedom could use and get out without any confrontation that is referendum it is advisable to use the procedure than to hoist a flag in a sovereign because there cannot be two sovereign state in another, it could treated as treason" He admitted the issue at hand is a complex one but not all that difficult as compare to a religious based conflict.

The state has two options to use, the law or dialogue as peace builders we advise the state uses the dialogue because in situation like this if not handled well can escalate. Citing Nigeria as a typical where the state could



not succeed in keeping them silent from shouting and those who want to leave too have not succeeded. "The ability of the state to accommodate varied opinions and be able to overcome such agitations is what makes a nation strong but not force' he added.

The boundaries of Trans Volta Togo land

The eastern part of Ghana known as the Volta Region was part of Trans-Volta Togoland which was an integral part of the Republic of Togo. In the past, nearly half of the Volta Region, from the coast up to Kpeve area, were part and parcel of the then Gold Coast Colony under the British rule. Areas stretching from Kpeve up to Yendi in the Northern Region were under German, and hence part of the Trans-Volta Togoland. Even though the border often changed in the past, it was assumed that Kpeve was the border between the Gold Coast Colony to the South, and Trans-Volta Togoland to the north.

In 1956, after the defeat of the Germans in the Second World War, the German Colony was redesignated a Trust Colony under British and French rule. A plebiscite was held to determine which part of the Trust Colony should belong to the British and the French. A

portion decided to join the Gold Coast while the other portion decided to remain under French rule and become part of Togoland. That portion which decided to join the Gold Coast (now Ghana) became part of the Volta Region of Ghana. The main ethnic groups are Ewes occupying in the Southern section (low land areas), the Akans in the northern section and a number of Guan-speaking groups such as Likpe, Nyagbo, Tafi, Logba, Jolobi and Santrokofi. The Ewes migrated from Notsie in present-day Republic of Togo centuries ago. All these ethnic groups live within the Volta Region, in harmony until the current ruling government decided to divide the region because it claims the area is under developed. Even though the majority population kicked against the move government used its power and machineries to split the region. The voltarians have been of the view that, they always vote but when it come s to developmental projects government show little or no interest at all.

However, it is no doubt that, the ewe tribes are the elites and produces most of the big names Ghana has been using since independence till

date. Names such as Kotoka, Acheampong, Gbedemah etc during Nkrumah's era are all products of the ewe tribe. Even though the region can boast of churning out the lawyers, professors, doctors including the former president of Ghana Jerry Rawlings, Former speaker of Ghana's Parliament, Ghana's Supreme court Judge among others. But the region remains underdeveloped leaving a big question mark on the essence of their education and achievements if they are not reflective of their societies. They began to press demand for development but nothing has been done about it by successive governments. Hence their decision to secede if nothing will come out their relationship of 62 years.

The first demand for a secession according to Ewe history took place in 1975 at the durbar attended by Gen. I.K. Acheampong at Ho by some chiefs and people of the ewe tribe. The historical records even show that a legion of Ewe chiefs also went to Lomé and petitioned the Ghana

Ambassador there to initiate immediate negotiations between the two countries for a solution to the demands for the reunification of Togoland.

Now the Homeland Study Group Foundation (HSFG) based in Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana led by a retired teacher Mr Komi Kudzordzi (Papavi Hogbedetor) the chairman who has been advocating for secession since 2016 has been arrested the third time, aside the 7th march 2017, The members of the group have been arrested in similar fashion on February 23, 2019 while they were going on a health walk plus the May 4 evacuation done by government with a joint team of Military, police and National Security.

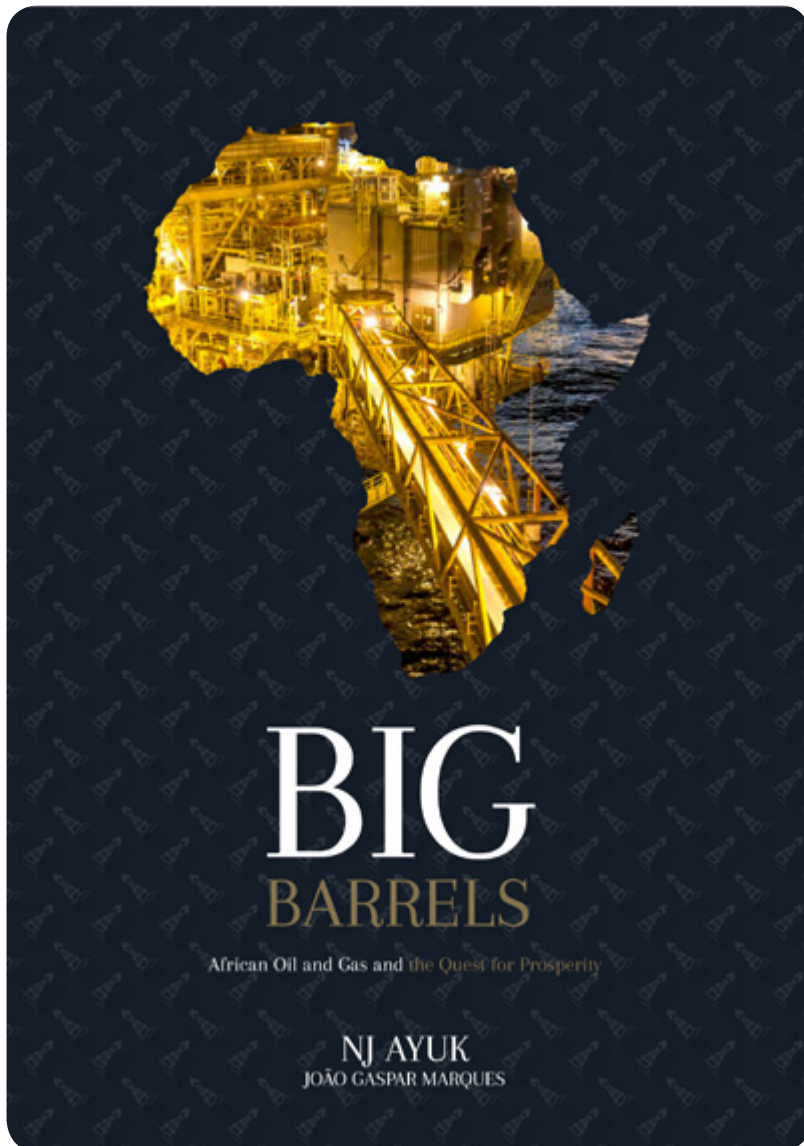
Reasons for Secession

In an exclusive interview with the over 80 years old Mr Komi Kudzordzi, after his released on Thursday, recounted how the voltarians became part of the Cold Coast now Ghana, "The Western Togoland were plebiscite citizens in Ghana and not until a declaration was on 9th May 2017, the people will remain appendix to the former Gold coast (now Ghana)". According to him, the World historical documents has revealed that western Togoland was a state and not a territory of Ghana.

British Togoland, officially the Mandated Territory of Togoland and later officially the Trust Territory of Togoland, was a territory in West Africa, under the administration of the United Kingdom he established. It was effectively formed in 1916 by the splitting of the German protectorate of Togoland into two territories, French Togoland and British Togoland, during the First World War. In 1922, British Togoland was formally placed under British rule while French Togoland, now Togo was placed under French rule. In 1954, a United Nations Visiting Team to British Togoland recommended a plebiscite to be held to decide on wishes of the Togoland people on the issues of whether the Trust Territory should be integrated into or secede from the Gold Coast. Touching on the plebiscite he was emphatic, it came about because the British government, having granted internal self-government to the Gold Coast in 1954, informed the UN it could no longer administer British Togoland separately after the Gold Coast had achieved full independence (Bening, 1983; p205). He concluded arrest or intimidation by the state cannot stop them from demanding what rightfully belong to them.



Dr. Chukuemeka Eze.



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Calls for repealing bad media laws intensify among Gambian journalists

By Adama Makasuba

Calls to Gambia government to repeal bad media laws intensify among Gambian journalists, despite new ranking of the country on the World Press Freedom Index by Reporters without Borders.

On May 9, 2017, the Supreme Court of the Gambia ruled that criminal “defamation”, “libel” and “false news online” are unconstitutional.

However, the court upheld that “false publication and broadcasting” law as constitutional, and scrap in part the coverage of “sedition” law to only protect the President of the Republic and administration of justice.

During 22-years of repressive rule under former Gambian president Yahya Jammeh, journalists were subjected arbitrary arrest and disappear without trace.

The President of Gambia Press Union, Sheriff Bojang Jnr, on World Press Freedom Day demanded that the government scrap the unfriendly media laws obstructing the work of journalists in the country.

He renewed the struggle of

the Union adding “Some laws remain the fight continues and the Gambia Press Union will not relent until these laws are all out of the way and the atmosphere and environment is conducive enough for journalists to operate.”

Mr. Bojang reiterated the continuing fight of Gambian journalists to repealing all the draconian media laws in the constitution through prolific engagement with the Gambia government.

Despite recognizing the commitment of Barrow-led government to press freedom and freedom of expression, Mr Bojnag said the commitments would be futile if “they are not implemented and put into practice.”

“What guarantee ladies and gentlemen do we have that the government and the next president who come in the future would have the same goodwill to what we do?” he asked.

As the trend of access to information remains a challenge for The Gambian journalists, Mr. Bojang expressed dismay about lack of access to information in the country, adding “State House the highest seat of the

land, when it comes to lack of access for Journalists the State House is the biggest culprit.”

He said journalist’s access to the presidency has been limited, saying “access to information in this country needs a lot to be desired” and urged the government needs to “reconsider this issue and improve on it.”

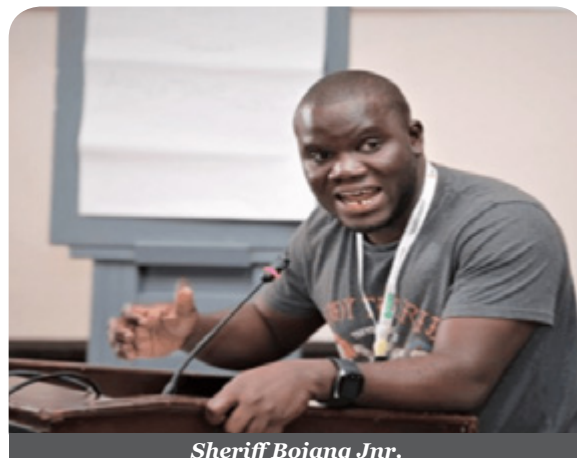
Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Abubacarr Tambedou, assured the commitment of the Gambia government to repealing the bad media laws in the statute book of the land.

Baa Tambedou described “these laws clearly have no place in a modern democracy” adding his ministry has been working closely with the Ministry of Information, Communication and Infrastructure and Article 19 on a comprehensive review process of the media law in the country.

“We have also embarked on a comprehensive amendment of the information and telecommunication act with the aim of removing all the bad and unconstitutional media laws enacted by the previous administration and also to provide for laws that will facilitate the exercise of rights to freedom of expression,” he said.

He added: “This involve the promulgation a media services act that will consolidate and modernize a variety of currently desperate and often obsolete media relate laws such as the newspaper and broadcasting station act of 1944 or the telegraph station act of 1913.”

Meanwhile, Kebba



Sheriff Bojang Jnr.

Ansu Manneh, a Gambian journalist described press freedom as verbose adding “press freedom to me is just a name, but in reality there is little or no press freedom on the ground. In the new Gambia, we have seen the state gagging press freedom.” Mr. Manneh lamented about access to information, adding “draconian media laws continues to impede the works of journalists. We still have seditious, libelious, slanderous and defamation laws, and contempt of court, which need to be removed.”

Juldeh Njie, a 22-year-old Gambian journalist, welcomed the ranking as commendable development saying “this is really a good move and I am happy and proud as a Gambian to know that now I don’t have any restriction to express myself.”

She said “I think they are... remember this is a

transitional government because going by our history, 22 years of dictatorship and human rights violations and for a transitional government coming on board in less than three years and the country improve on freedom of expression is really commendable.”

Another Gambian journalist, Sulayman Waan, said since the coming of Barrow-led administration that the media has freedom of expression

He lamented that “but access to information is still a challenge because the stakeholders didn’t want give information to the media.”

Director Amnesty International-West Africa Mrs Marie Petrus Barry, said despite decrement of “human rights violation” in the country, they are still “worried” about some change, adding Amnesty has shared some those issues with the Gambia government.

“We asked the government to repeal and bring in conformity with international and regional human rights obligations of the effective laws to the rights of freedom of assembly and association,” she said.

Mrs Barry added “We are the government to publicly instruct the anti crime unit the Gambia police force, army and the state intelligent agency to end unlawful arrest and detention and practically not to detain people beyond 72 hours as provided in the Gambian constitution.”



Minister of Justice and Attorney General, Abubacarr Tambedou says the Gambian government is committed to repealing bad media laws.

Malawi: Watershed polls near, Mutharika has seat to defend.

By Joseph Dumbula, Zomba Malawi

Malawians had around 1993 voted for a multiparty system of government. This saw the emergency of many political parties and having tightly contested elections such as one due this May.

The queues will yet again be elongated this 21st of May in Malawi where a second time in running tripartite poll takes place.

The country will be voting for Ward Councilors, Members of Parliament and the President.

Incumbent President Peter Mutharika of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) will have to defend the presidency against six other contestants in the poll.

His primary worry stems from the country's Vice President Saulos Chilima who founded the UTM earlier last year at the heart of disputes over a planned Mutharika's success plan to Chilima.

Mutharika won in 2014, unseating top rival Joyce Banda who apparently replaced Mutharika's brother Bingu in 2012 following his death.

Banda was at the time of Bingu's death the Vice President.

She is still part of the 2019

elections history having drummed up support and forfeited her candidature for Malawi Congress Party (MCP) torchbearer Lazarus Chakwera.

But avid follower of politics and University of Malawi Communication and Cultural Studies student Geoffrey Kawanga believes the election will be so tricky and even more difficult to predict given its intensity and twists.

«All things being equal indications show that the MCP stand a better chance to win this election than any frontrunners. Of course the spliff votes among the opposition block may help the DPP to win with the incumbency factor but this DPP is not as strong as it used to be. UTM faction has made the DPP even weaker and some of the DPP hunting ground such as Ntcheu district, some urban areas and some parts of the northern region are under threat. « Said Kawanga in an interview with Pan African Visions Magazine.

He added: «The battle may still narrow down to DPP and MCP albeit MCP with a narrow exit vote lead. But one thing for sure is that no



President Mutharika is facing stiff competition from very ambitious candidates.

party will emerge with a clear majority in terms of members of parliaments due to the stiff competition and some irregularities which marred the primary elections which bred several disgruntled independent spirants.»

Political commentator Wonderful Mkhutche told this reporter that he sees the winner not landing a majority. This he argued will raise the arguments about the need for the 50+1 electoral threshold which apparently was shot down in Parliament a year ago.

But should Mutharika lose, Mkhutche says he will be remembered for the political tolerance under his reign as well as the notion of community colleges, some of which have already started offering training to youths in Malawi.

« The President has also kept a lean cabinet as he promised, which is good. There has also been political tolerance from him as a person. So much has been said and done against him, but he

acts like a democrat despite some of his party members acting otherwise.»he says.

At the other end, Mkhutche says Mutharika will still have strenuous work to do.

«If he (Mutharika) wins he needs to concentrate on this one thing: Strengthening the democratic institutions in Malawi. This country being a democracy it means both social and economic progress depends on the democratic institutions which are currently weak. We may think we are developing but with weak institutions this country is going nowhere and our so-called development will not be sustainable.»the commentator added.

For Kawanga however, the reign of Mutharika donned mud due to corruption.

Mutharika was directly feared to have had a hand in a corruption scandal involving purchase of food items to the police. He was the sole signatory to an account that received the corruption.

The Civil Society was on his neck in a series of protests

apparently demanding that he steps down, something which Kawanga says is the ultimate task Mutharika is posited with should he win the elections.

« The issue of corruption has dented his leadership. If there is an area which he needs to improve is the issue of handling corruption, worse still, he has also been allegedly been involved in the malpractice which made it possible to act. This is an area which he will need to zero in and act if wins the forthcoming election.»

The other candidates in the poll are incumbent Health Minister Atupele Muluzi son to former leader Bakili. He leads the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Professor John Chisi of the Umodzi Party will be contesting for the second time with Independent candidate Hadwick Kaliya and Peter Kuwani of the Mbakuwaku Movement for Development squaring up the list.



2019 May elections

Photo credit Malawi Voice.

Centurion advises on Block B2 EPSA in South Sudan and Confirms its Place as Africa's Leading Law Firm in Booming Oil Industry



Juba, 7 May 2019: Centurion Law Group ("Centurion"), Africa's leading energy law firm, drafted, negotiated and advised on the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement (EPSA) for the B2 Block signed this week between South Sudan and South Africa.

This is the second EPSA negotiated by Centurion in South Sudan since the country's independence. Back in 2017, Centurion had advised and negotiated the EPSA of Oranto Petroleum for Block B3, currently under exploration.

Under the agreement signed on Monday in Juba, South Africa's state-owned Strategic Fuel Fund ("SFF") has taken operatorship of the highly-prospective B2 Block with a 90% participating interest while South Sudan's state-owned company Nilepet is now holding the remaining 10%. Including an exploration period of six years, the agreement will see the SFF conducting a 10,000km² aero gravity survey across what is believed to be South Sudan's most promising oil block. The



The deal is what Centurion is all about, it is what we are geared for and it is what makes us tick, says Centurion CEO NJ Ayuk.

120,000km² B Block was split into three in 2012 and is likely to yield world-class discoveries in the near future. Signed in presence of Hon. Jeff Radebe, Energy Minister of South Africa and Hon. Amb. Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, Minister of Petroleum of South Sudan, the EPSA demonstrates the success of South Sudan's reforms to provide an enabling environment for oil investors and will be an additional pillar for the country to build long-lasting peace and prosperity for its people. Production is

resuming fast in the country which currently produces 160,000 bopd and targets a production of 270,000 bopd by the end of the year.

Speaking at the ceremony, Hon. Amb. Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth highlighted the role played by Centurion in brokering this landmark deal for both countries, saluting all parties involved for the signing of an all-African deal set to transform South Sudan's petroleum sector.

"We have believed in South Sudan's potential from day one and our work on this

EPSA highlights the deep expertise that Centurion lawyers and advisors have built on one of Africa's hottest onshore oil & gas frontier," declared CEO NJ Ayuk. "As South Sudan boosts exploration and resumes production from its fields, Centurion will continue to advise investors on doing business in the country. The potential for more projects in South Sudan's upstream sector but also in pipeline and refining infrastructure is considerable and we look forward to keep assisting all

committed investors to come and do business in South Sudan."

"The interest for the acreages of Block B is considerable," added Centurion's Senior Associate Zion Adeoye. "We truly believe that further exploration of the Muglad Basin will yield results set to propel South Sudan's oil industry towards new heights. The strategic importance of this agreement for South Africa's energy security and South Sudan's oil sector cannot be underestimated."

To advise on this agreement, Centurion mobilized a core team of attorneys and advisors led by CEO NJ Ayuk, including Senior Associate Zion Adeoye, Head of Trade & Commodities Zwelakhe Gila, and Associate Orisetsolaye Popo. The project will lead to investment into domestic capacity building and job creation for South Sudanese and is part of an integrated plan that also comprises the building of a pipeline and a refinery.

Ghana's superfood Waakye cures Oxidative Stress cancer and others.

By Jessica Ahedor



Prepared from rice and beans cooked together with sorghum red leaves, waakye, undoubtedly is one of the favorite delicacies in Ghana. For many waakye lovers, location and cost is no barrier, so far as the taste of the food is satisfying.

The Sorghum red leaves which is usually employed as flavoring and coloring additive, gives the attractive distinctive reddish-brown color, which consumers say is an integral feature of waakye.

Waakye on wheels is a popular waakye venture in Ghana, well packaged with modern techniques but with the same primitive methods of cooking.

It is targeted at the corporate world, and busy scheduled people upon request. Kafui Adzah, a waakye lover, who has sold waakye since 2014 agrees

waakye is a balanced meal and "the leaves add the color, but I have no idea whether the leaves contain any nutritive value. 'Waakye is waakye, all I did was to give it an appealing look and deliver on orders. I didn't do any research or heard of any benefits about the leaves'".

According to Department of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Health and Allied Sciences in Ho, the use of sorghum leaves in waakye preparation may potentially fortify the final product with essential antioxidants to provide protection against the development of diseases caused by oxidative stress, such as cancer, coronary heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension and cataract. These phytochemicals, especially antioxidants, according to the paper is the first line

of defense against free radical damage critical for maintaining optimum health and wellbeing.

However, the antioxidant levels and activity of plants, herbs, spices and other food products can be affected by cooking methods. But speaking to Edward Essuman a food scientist at the University of Health and Allied Sciences in Ho and a co-author of the paper, saltpeter helps retains the entire nutrient in the sorghum leaves when it is cooked together with the rice and beans. "when you cook the sorghum leaves and saltpeter together with the rice and beans we realize that the saltpeter help retains all the nutrients in the food as compared to cooking without it he cautioned".

The aim of the research was to find out if the sorghum

leaves are just used as flavor or coloring agent. surprisingly, it has a great health benefits. The findings reveal it has even anti-aging agents, and antioxidants that fight against cancer. Also according to the lead author of the research paper Laura Sena Tugli the leaves contain an appreciable amount of protein, omega 3 fatty acid, flavonoid and antioxidants that fight against non-communicable diseases. "All those nutrients are natural as such they are far better than the artificial foods or processed ones that contains antioxidants that fight diabetes, hypertension among other diseases", cautioning that it must be used in moderation since it gives heartburns and stomach up-set to some people.

The leaves are preserved wholesomely by open air drying Edward and his

colleague asserts.

Dr. Reginald Annan a lecturer in Nutrition at the department of biochemistry and biotechnology, collage of sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of science and Technology in Kumasi, says they have seen some bioactive constituents of the sorghum leaves into the waakye as well as some ferulic, tannic, p-coumaric acids, flavonoid and good antioxidants activities. These active ingredients prevent oxidative stress and cell damage. "apart from feeding livestock with the leaves, there has not been any other known food, so it is time for us to research into alternative use of the leaves so that those who don't patronize waakye can also have access to the nutrients in other foods".

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Global Warming And Climate Change, Africa's hugest threat to Food-Security.

By Nevson Mpofu*

In the world of 7 and half billion people we are living in today, no one would argue that the adversity of natural phenomenon and artificial challenges are affecting more on Sub Saharan Africa. A fundamentalist with similar notion concludes with the truth that countries in Sub Saharan Africa with 1 billion population are reeling under the adverse effects of Climate Change .Apart from that El-Nino, La- Nina, Economic challenges, Global Crisis, HIV and AIDS I and 2 are mostly affect developing nations.

Drought resulting from El-Nino and La-Nina, the two are triggered by Climate Change .El-Nino is a warm air current from the eastern and central Tropical Pacific Ocean which result in changes in temperatures which can lead to drought mostly in some parts of the Southern Region .The warm current brings low rainfall. The opposite of it is La-Nina, a result of cool currents which cause heavy rainfall resulting in floods .This is more of effect mostly in Southern Africa.

It is pathetic to note that yearly each either of the two occurs at the expense of the Region's food security. Most of the countries in the Southern African Region either receive low to above normal rainfall or high to above normal. Sometimes there are dry to warm spells which cause metrological drought.

Then comes with some years excess and incessant rains which cause Hydrological drought. Sometimes they experience dry spells which



Dr Amos Makarau , Director of the Meteorological Department in Zimbabwe.

result in meteorological drought .Agricultural drought becomes a blow at a time low income families are hit seriously by lack of Inputs. These are like seeds, fertilizers and processing machine like tractors and sundry farming equipment. The above statements comes in the wake of Cyclone Danai the current threat to Southern African countries, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Dr Amos Makarau , Director of the Meteorological Department in Zimbabwe gives a comment to encourage farmers to stay vigilant as they approach seasons . He advises farmers to resort to drought resistant crops like soghum [mapfunde , millet [rukewza] and rapoko . He comes again with the education and knowledge of mitigation and adaptation to rural farmers mostly,

"We annually inform farmers about the weather and rainfall outlook, they give blind ears, look sideways.

Farmers must be reminded that climate change is there and here to stay around. The need to promote food and nutrition security remains vital. Farmers are always advised to stick to growing crops which are drought resistant. These are sorghum, rapoko , millet and pulses" .

The small grains like groundnuts, round nuts and beans legumes takes a short season. We have to work towards food security programs education to fight extreme and absolute poverty, starvation in families and famine at national and regional level. This moves us towards winning on sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

The most disturbing factor of drought is the outcome of food in-security resulting in Food-In Efficiency. This leads to Nutrition Security. Management strategies and deficiency arise due to lack of sufficient food storage and safety. Lack of balanced diet leads to chronic, dietary

and protein deficiency malnutrition, marasmus, under-nourishment and kwashiorkor respectively in older people, Infants and children.

Chronic Poverty and Under-Nourishment..

Chronic under-nourishment Prevalence Rate is high as 990,7% in the African Region and almost 7,95 million people are under -nourished . Gross Domestic Product [GDP] fall and economic decline compromises on food shortage issues .Decline from the phenomenon of famine is prevailing in 25 countries in the African Region. At least 40 million people are in need of food and humanitarian aid worth US\$160 million of Funding.

Have you ever observed that when sowing seeds we take measure of the smallest and package every drop of seed .At harvesting, we do the same but at last we waste food after cooking and feeding ourselves .The fact on the

ground is ,one third of food production World -wide is for human consumption .At the same time, it is disturbing to note that 1,3 billion tons is lost and wasted . Food loss and waste amounts to US \$680 billion in industrialized countries and US \$310 billion in developing countries.

The highest waste according to recent studies comprise of fruits, vegetables, tubers and roots. Global food losses which are 30% cereal is a problem causing bit of situational poverty and seasonal poverty in countries where Food Management remains a challenge. This is because of lack of knowledge on Food recycling systems. Lack of refrigeration in absolute poverty stricken families that is more impacted families lacking three basic needs is a problem leading to food salmonella and poisoning due to decay and decomposition. According to Abraham Maslow these needs basically are food, shelter and clothing.

The fact on ground is manifested by Zimbabwe's economic situation .El-Nino resulted in loss of income from crops, livestock value chains as well as income generating opportunities for people that provide Human resources for the sector .The most devastating effect lies along the fact that 70% of Zimbabweans rely on Agriculture .It is beyond doubt, its farming sector has been hard hit, hence the reason why the country has 3,4 million people in need of food aid .

I intend to agree with Experts on some points

that though El-Nino has been experienced in many Southern African countries, its better with other countries as compared to Zimbabwe which received low maize tonnage capacity in 2015. Other countries are argued to have done better in maize tonnage capacity. The Expert who is a University of Zimbabwe Lecturer in Agriculture blamed Zimbabwe for its policies not in line with high Agricultural crop production for food security.

The Expert I would like to take for anonymity was quoted in many publications of Southern Africa. She expressed that,

"Although Southern African countries have been hard hit by El-Nino and La-nina over the past years up to 2016 harvest, its better with other countries in the Region which produced more food than Zimbabwe. The impact in the country has been worsened by its policies. Still this year because of floods in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, famine is a huge blow", she expressed.

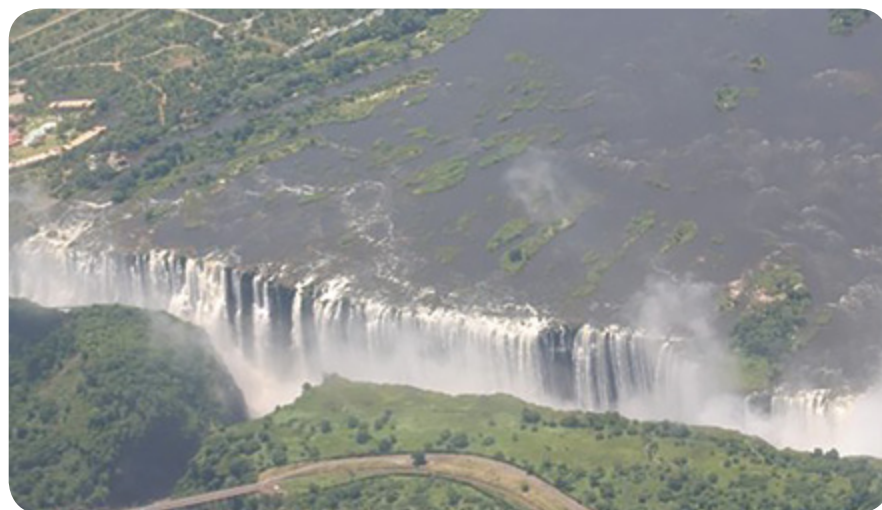
Countries which were compared to are Botswana, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi,

Namibia, Lesotho and South Africa. It is true and a fact, Zimbabwe needs to re-visit its policies like on Land, food production, storage, marketing and supply. Secondly, there is need to create Global Food relationships intervening in Agriculture, Agro-Technology and Mechanization for Food and Industrial Development.

The country in 2016 launched a blue print called Command Agriculture

which is expected to restore the Economy which used to boast on Agriculture as one of its 4 sectors of the Economy together with Mining, Manufacturing and Tourism. Despite this idea meant to push its ZIMASSET agenda, Economic Experts are pessimistic if the country is to increase in its Gross Domestic Product. However a number of them resides on the fact that its policies were not Investor friendly over the recent years. On Land, policies are not fostering Economic growth. The 99 year lease is such an issue to go by.

From Land we own as part of Economic emancipation, we get out of it three basic needs created by Abraham



Maslow's Theory of human basic needs, food, clothing and shelter. In the age of Modern world we are living in, political independence without economic independence is yet not Emancipation since Food production is linked to Economic growth. However, Experts in food production foresee a situation of Economic decline and ultimate food in-security in countries which switch on to support African Land Redistribution policies.

On a World scale, the African Academic would click wise with the Theories crafted back in the 18th century that the world population which by then was 1 billion would be

7 billion by the 21th century. The Theorist might have not succeeded in his theories since he gave no solutions to the escalating problems we face but his population figure and estimations stand truth on the ground in relation to Food production.

Theories On Economy and the Environment.

The Theorist, Thomas Malthus pointed it right that more world population would not consummate scarce natural and artificial resources, a scenario which will result in food shortage. The wealth of the natural resource we use compared to the total population, the balance is out of control. It goes well in the same linear pattern with the artificial human made food resources we are generating from the Environmental resources like Aquatic life and Agricultural cereal production for Industrial Value Chain.

I quote Thomas Malthus the 18th century Economist and Demographer. 'In the coming 200 years from today, the increasing population will not match the existing resources in the world. This will lead to the decline of many Economies of the

World, resource depreciation and food insecurity."

A crucial point to note is "Climate is Changing, food and Agriculture must too". Climate Change adverse impacts are compromising on low food production triggering on Nutrition, resulting in health consequences like malnutrition in children. Mainly those below the age of five get affected by stunting which is loss of nutritional weight. This scenario resonates to affect more adversely on those affected by HIV and AIDS since they need high nutritious and Vitamin enriched food intake.

Global acute Malnutrition rose to 5,7% ever in 15 years, World Food Program confirmed. It clears the air on the issue of Drought and food in-security in many African countries. This drives to the fact that as <>climate is changing, food and Agriculture must change too. This calls for strategies and modalities in mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation is lessening the effects. Adaptation is on how we adapt to changes in order to cope up with Climate Change and capacitate food



Floods in Malawi.

production.

The capacity building notion is, farmers need to take resilient move to resort to drought resistant seeds like soghum, millet, rapoko and pulses which take short time to harvest like legumes to name a few ,beans, peas and groundnuts .This is response to Drought .The link goes with mitigation and adaptation in drought stricken areas which are leeward slopes or rain shadow regions .Also in the African Region Food and Agriculture [FAO] is supporting Communal Farmers to focus on Pulses since they are nutritious, adaptable to Climate and of short season.

An Expert from the University of Zimbabwe Professor Emmanuel Mushonjowa Head of Department and Consultant in Bio-systems engineering and Agricultural Meteorology said in an era of Climate change, for farmers, under mitigation and adaptation, changing crops may help.

"Climate is changing, Food and Agriculture must too". Probably, this can sustain farming in hard hit El-Nino countries". It is vice-verse also , when we experience La -Nina ,we adapt to applicable conditions and situations and resort to growing more maize .Despite heavy rains, drought resistant seeds and pulses needs careful timing during such periods", he said .

Community Technology Development Trust Director, Andrew Mwashita also advise farmers to focus more on drought resistant crops like millet, sorghum and rapoko .

"Focusing on maize at a time climate is changing may be risk to farmers. At least let us turn to other crops like drought resistant ones like sorghum and PULSES like beans , peas and legumes" ,he

pointed out".

Stakeholders in drought response are committing themselves in increasing the impact of drought response in provinces in the country .Eddie Rowe-----
----- World Food Program Zimbabwe Representative and Country Director Comments that Community accountability is key for World Food Program's food assistance program.

' C O M M U N I T Y
ACCOUNTABILITY IS
KEY FOR WORLD FOOD
PROGRAM'S FOOD
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.
WE ARE CURRENTLY
DEVELOPING STANDARD
OPERATING PROCEDURES
FOR THE TOLL FREE
HOTLINE SYSTEM IN
EFFORT TO RESPOND TO
DROUGHT .THIS WILL
BE REPLICATED BY ALL
STAKEHOLDERS IN AN
EFFORT TO COME OUT
WITH ZERO HUNGER."

CLIMATE CHANGE continues to hit the World's poorest nations of which 75% rely on Agriculture as Subsistence farmers who grow food for family consumption as part of their livelihoods. However , the question still remains hanging in air .Will the World achieve zero hunger by 2030?The World through the United Nations looks at the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals .Goal 2 is on Ending hunger, achieving Food Security and improved Nutrition and promote Sustainable Agriculture .

United Nations Agencies on Humanitarian response efforts first look at the four principles of humanitarianism which are humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

Above to what Bishow Parajuli , United Nations Country Co-coordinator



Drone footage of Cyclone Idai in Mozambique.

proposes apart from the four Universal principles, Partnership in drought response calls for multi-faceted commitments . Monitoring and evaluation of mitigation and adaptation of the effects of climate change is done for oriented results.

Farmers need capacity building , advocacy and Environmental science education on issues related to how they can learn more, inculcate knowledge to others and working as trainers of other people in the community . Orientation and Integration graduates them in Food productive farming value chain systems for Livelihoods..

The Response Plan of the United Nations Agencies, Government Ministries and Non- Governmental Organizations which protects and saves livelihoods has so far reached 2,8 Zimbabweans which is 30% of the total population .The total number of people in need of food aid in Zimbabwe is 4,3 million. The largest number is in the rural areas where livelihoods base capacities have been destroyed by effects of Climate Change.

The Human Response Plan targets the vulnerable, those affected by HIV and AIDS and climate change. Double

orphans left in the open by HIV and AIDS from 2005 up to 2016 are the vulnerable who are now victims of El-Nino, a factor which affects and impacts more on food production and Nutrition Security in Southern Africa .In Zimbabwe , this is done focusing on the National Food and Nutrition policy of Food and Nutrition Council . According to Famine Early Warning Systems Network [FEWSNET], increased humanitarian assistance is needed in most of the drought affected Southern region of Matebeleland provinces, Masvingo , parts of Manicaland and Midlands.

In Zimbabwe, there are 48,000 households of child headed families and 13 000 double orphans according to 2007 reports by United Nations Development Programs [UNDP]. Biting challenges of El-Nino in the region have over the past years exposed those children to extreme poverty and hunger .Southern Africa alone with a total population of 230 million people has a total of 28 million people in need of food aid.

It stands to tell a story that climate change mitigation and adaptation measures and drought master plans must be discussed at Regional

level. The theme of Regional Integration linking with Global Partnership for Development strategies in order to get financial aid must take the lead.

Zimbabwe recently received a total of US 25 million from USAID and UN described under the Flash Appeal. In 2015 it received US 25 million under the Zimbabwe Resilient Building Fund. This was meant for rural vulnerable and marginalized -communities. It received as well \$ 55,6 million from the UK Department for International Development [DFID] for vulnerable children under the Zimbabwe Vulnerable Children Rural Livelihood Assessment .An additional \$10 is for prevention and treatment of acute nutrition .Access to nutritional food is important since 160 million children will be screened for Malnutrition and 12 ,000 will receive treatment .

*Nevson- Mpofu is a multi-Award winning Journalist and published Poet. Currently, he is a Community Development, HIV and AIDS Lecturer @ Career Management Centre .Contact :nmnevsonmpofu755@gmail. com

Kenya: Deaths in the name of love

By Samuel Ouma |@journalist_27

A string of sensational gruesome and senseless killings of estranged lovers, wives, husbands, boyfriends and girlfriends has shaken the country with women, girls and young men's security in jeopardy.

Cases of homicides dominating Kenyan media day in day out have sparked debate in homes, offices, streets. Groups of concerned people have established platforms aiming to assuage the vice by offering mentorship programme and counseling services, however, the trends seem to be getting out of hands.

Institutions of higher learning are the bedrock of killings. Cases of students being killed in love triangle have become a norm. Homes are no longer safe, domestic squabble in families has led to deaths of thousands.

In most cases women are the casualties while men

are the aggressors. People in high authorities have also been mentioned in some of the mysterious murders which are yet to be resolved. Detectives' synonymous statement 'we are doing investigations and soon we will arraign suspects in court' sounds like a song to the ordinary citizens.

Pan African Visions has compiled a list of heart-wrenching stories of cold blood murders in the past eight years. Almost all of the victims found themselves at the wrong side of fate.

Horrific deaths

The latest is Ivy Wangeci, a sixth year medical student who was hacked on a broad daylight to death by her jilted lover. The suspect claimed that he took the action out of frustrations after the deceased failed to reciprocate his love towards her despite investing much in her. The incident took place on April 9, 2019.



Ivy Wangeci, a sixth year medical student who was hacked on a broad daylight to death by her jilted lover.

"The girl, according to the suspect, had told him that she was organizing her birthday party, which would happen soon. He said he sent her money to arrange the event. Since then, the woman refused to pick his calls, said the suspect," according to police.

Beryl Adhiambo Ouma lost her life on February 27 after a domestic squabble with her husband. Autopsy examination report found that she was strangled while sleeping.

A Technical Training Institute student, Faith Chepkeria was stabbed to death by her boyfriend after alleged differences over relationships.

Alvina Maracha, 17, a form 4 candidate was lured out of her father's house and her body was found inside a fish pond the following day. Her former boyfriend, a motorcycle operator was the main suspect.

In September 2018, Sharon Otieno, who was seven months pregnant, was found murdered in a thicket few hours after her alleged

abduction by a Governor's aide. Sharon, a second year Medical Records and Information student was said to be a lover of Migori Governor Okoth Obado.

Postmortem results showed that she was raped and stabbed several times on the stomach, back and neck.

"I have never seen anything like this in my life. It is very disturbing," revealed one of the homicides detectives.

In the same month, Monica Nyawira Kimani, a businesswoman, was found slaughtered in her house in Nairobi. She was found with her hands tied, her throat slit and her body dipped in the bathtub with the water running. Her lover is the chief suspect. He was arrested and charged with murder.

The assault, rape and smothering with acid of Lucy Njambi, ex-wife to a former Member of County Assembly is still fresh in the minds of Kenyans. She was abducted from her house, killed and her body thrown in a coffee plantation.

In September 2017, Anne Wanjohi, 23-year-old, was

shot five times by a constable after he turned down his marriage proposal. The two had known each other for three months.

Miss Endinal Nyainda, a university graduate, died a mysterious death in July 2017. Her lover stabbed her after she attempted to walk out of their relationship.

In February 2012, Careen Chepchumba was brutally murdered in her apartment. An autopsy revealed that he died as a result of strangulation. Former TV personality Louis Otieno was linked with her murder.

"There was bleeding in the left eye, there was also bleeding on the neck muscles. We formed the opinion that death was due to lack of oxygen due to manual strangulation," said Chief government pathologist Dr. Jahansen Oduor.

We cannot forget to mention the gruesome murder of Mercy Keino in 2012. She was killed and her body dumped along the road where it had been run over by vehicles. Her mysterious death remains unsolved



Sharon Otieno was seven months pregnant, was found murdered in a thicket few hours after her alleged abduction by an Aide to a Governor.

despite a lengthy court process to unravel her killers. Former Governor William Kabogo was mentioned in her murder but was absolved from the case by the Nairobi High court.

A handful of men have also fallen victims of homicide. It is perceived that women kill as a reaction to severe domestic violence, cheating and selfish interest in inheritance.

Maria Wanjia, 30, was nabbed on May 2, 2019 after butchering her husband with an axe so that she can marry another man.

In April 2019, a 47-year-old woman was reported to have hacked her husband to death using machete after a domestic dispute before setting his body on fire.

The list of horrors goes on and on, before the country recover from a ghastly murder, another one hits the news headlines.

United Nations 2018 report The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2018 report mentioned Kenya as among countries with high cases of female homicide.

The report further revealed that women in Africa are likely to meet their deaths in the hands of those known to them such as intimate partners or family members.

The UNODC disclosed that 38.5 per cent of girls and women between 15 to

49 have experienced physical violence at least once in their lifetime while 24 per cent have experienced it in the last 12 months.

"More than two-thirds of all women killed in Africa in 2017 were murdered by intimate partners or family members," said the report.

The report attributed the killings to fear of abandonment and jealousy as the main factors.

Economic Survey 2019 report

The number of homicide cases in 2018 increased by 82 compared to the previous year. In 2014, 2649 cases were reported, 2648 in 2015, 2774 in 2017 and 2856 in 2018.

Causes of the killings

Different experts and associations of leaders have aired their opinions on the ferocious murders. The Kenya Women Senators Association have raised an alarm over the increasing cases of violence against young women and girls.

"Parents should take up their roles in guiding and counseling girls to be careful on the relationships they engage in to avoid falling into dangerous hands," said Mary Yiane, chairperson.

Federation of Women lawyers in Kenya (FIDA) have condemned the killings and expressed concern at how first the vice is gaining



Beryl Adhiambo Ouma lost her life in February after a domestic squabble with her husband.

ground.

"FIDA Kenya strongly condemns the increasing number of killings of young women. Inspector of General Police and the Directorate of Criminal Investigations must conduct thorough investigations to bring the culprits to book," read the statement.

Josephine Kinya, a counseling psychologist, has attributed rising cases of murders to moral decay.

"There is a problem facing the current generation and unless all society act, we are yet to witness the worst," she reiterated.

The same was echoed by the Nairobi chapter of the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya Peter Njao.

"We no longer promote values like we used to before. Vices like killing innocent people and rape have unfortunately become the new norm," he noted.

Devaluation of human life, poor courtship, stress and frustrations of marital life are also contributing to the manslaughter.

"Many couples are so frustrated in their marriages but cannot leave because of children or fear of social stigma. One day they will reach a breaking point, pick a knife and kill the spouse," noted Ken Ouko, Sociology lecturer.

Mental health disorders are other suspected factors leading to brutal murders.

"Mental orders from

chronic alcohol and drug abuse, schizophrenia and a delusional disorder may all predispose a person to homicide acts," said an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Nairobi Dr. Mary Kuria.

Mwenda Mbiijiwe, a criminology expert and security analyst cited poverty as a result of unemployment and cultic engagement.

"The harsh economic realities that have gripped the country in recent years too are perpetuating homicides considerably," said Mwenda.

Other factors are hopelessness, failed dreams, misplaced priorities, masculine possessiveness and sexual jealousy.

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UN faulted on shielding former Rwandan employee Mbarushimana on genocide crimes

By Jean d'Amour Mugabo

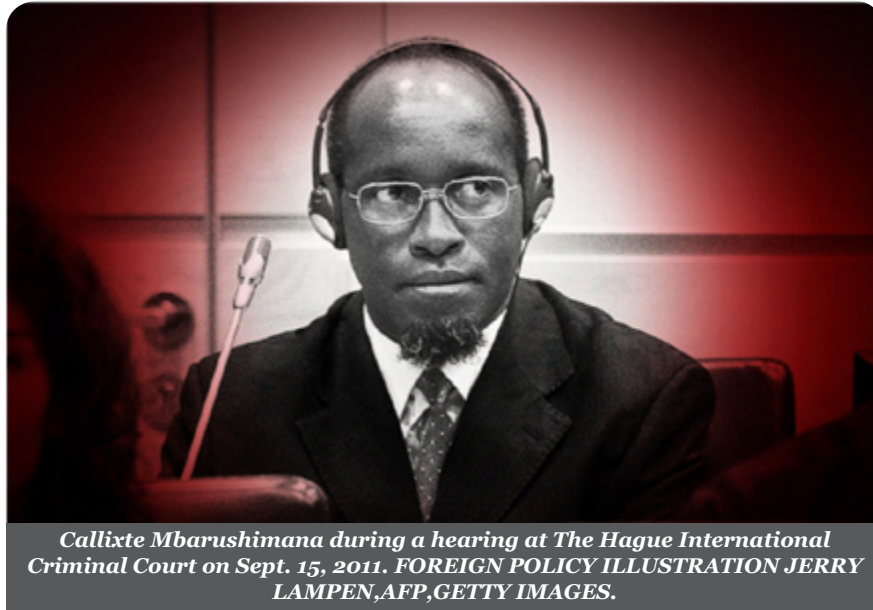
The United Nations' retired senior official Charles Petrie has, for the last 25 years, been pushing for the arrest of former Rwandan staff member Callixte Mbarushimana for allegedly overseeing the murder of 32 people including three other UN workers during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

Charles Petrie is a former assistant Secretary-General of the UN and was the UN deputy humanitarian coordinator in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide whereas Callixte Mbarushimana was a computer technician with the UN Development Program (UNDP) in Rwanda.

In line with the 25th anniversary of the genocide, Petrie sent a letter dated of March 25 to the Secretary-General António Guterres reminding him of a scandal that has largely remained within the UN walls for a quarter of a century, alleging that UN officials failed to pursue one of their own employees in the aftermath of the slaughter and even kept him on the payroll for years.

Foreign Policy reported last week that in his letter, Petrie prodded the UN chief to support a long-standing attempt by Rwandan survivors in France to bring Mbarushimana and other alleged Rwandan mass murderers to account.

Petrie claims the UN shares the blame for Mbarushimana's flight from justice, charging that it failed to conduct a proper investigation into the killings 25 years ago and subsequently



Callixte Mbarushimana during a hearing at The Hague International Criminal Court on Sept. 15, 2011. FOREIGN POLICY ILLUSTRATION JERRY LAMPEN, AFP, GETTY IMAGES.

suppressed a critical internal review commissioned by Mbarushimana's then employer, the UNDP.

"Surprisingly, when asked for a copy of the internal investigation that was undertaken by UNDP in November-December 2004, the Office of Legal Affairs denied that such a report existed," Petrie wrote to the UN Chief.

Petrie asked the UN Chief to collaborate with the French judge by releasing all documents in the possession of UNDP and the rest of the UN system, protect and support UN staff who have

information that could be of value for Mbarushimana's case and consider constituting itself as a plaintiff.

"Not only were the charges against him never properly investigated, but he was never held accountable for his actions," wrote Petrie.

Speaking to Pan African Visions on Monday, Rwanda's prosecution Spokesperson Faustin Nkusi said that Rwanda sent Mbarushimana's arrest warrant to France in 2008 but awaits still his arrest as of over 1000 other fugitives on genocide crimes.

Nkusi said the charges

against Mbarushimana are genocide and crimes against humanity that he committed in different parts of the capital Kigali.

How Mbarushimana allegedly committed genocide

When the UN withdrew most of its force of 2,500, Mbarushimana, then the UNDP's computer technician, declared himself the agency's officer-in-chief, according to an indictment by a prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

The indictment alleged that Mbarushimana then seized control of UNDP's assets, including Motorola radio handsets, and more than 25 UN vehicles and handed them to the Rwandan military which used them to hunt down Tutsi victims.

It also charged Mbarushimana with overseeing the murder of 32 people in all as he also pointed the military to the homes of several UN employees who were later killed. In different

reports, Mbarushimana denied any role in killing UN employees or anyone else during the genocide.

The indictment was never signed by the tribunal's chief prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, who ultimately dropped the case in 2002 amid pressure from the UN Security Council to wind down all but the most serious cases of mass killing.

He later eluded prosecution by the ICTR and dodged extradition to Rwanda from Kosovo, where he continued to work for the UN. He has been arrested in Germany and France on war crimes charges he allegedly committed as the Executive Secretary of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), a rebel group which mainly consists of genocidal regime's soldiers and militia.

In 2010, the International Criminal Court (ICC) prosecutor charged Mbarushimana with eight counts of war crimes and five counts of crimes against humanity for alleged atrocities in Democratic Republic of Congo, but the case was dropped by judges from the ICC pre-trial chamber, and Mbarushimana was released in December 2011.

"One would say that Callixte Mbarushimana was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. How else to explain the way he has been able to escape all attempts to get him to account for his actions," Petrie said. "It is just incomprehensible how lucky this guy has been. Or is it really only a case of luck?"



Kigali Genocidal Memorial.



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Olam offers Dangote NGN 130 billion (US\$ 361 million) transaction for 100% equity ownership of flour mill.

By Teslim Olawore



Aliko Dangote, Africa's richest man, is selling a business unit of his conglomerates, Dangote Flour Mills Plc, to Olam International at a value worth N130 billion, an equivalent of \$361.11 million.

Olam International Limited, a Singaporean agro-allied company, made this known in a press release that was released on the company's official website dated 23rd of April 2019.

Olam, through its subsidiary, Crown Flour Mills Limited, currently owns about 5.1 million shares in the issued share capital of DFM.

K.C.Suresh, the Managing Director, and Chief Executive Officer, Olam Grains and

Animal Feed, said that the acquisition of Dangote Flour Mills Plc supports the strategy of the Grain and Animal Feed business, one of its prioritized platforms for growth in Nigeria.

"We are confident about the growth prospects in this country and this acquisition, doubling our installed capacity here, is evidence of our long-term commitment to the Nigerian economy," K.C.Suresh said.

Dangote Flour Mills, in a notice to the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), said that the total consideration offered by Olam to acquire its five billion shares was N130 billion.

The notice which was signed by a director of the

DFM, Thabo Mabe, said Olam's bid is to acquire all the outstanding and issued shares of DFM that are not presently owned by Crown Flour Mills limited.

The transaction according to the notice would be on a debt-free basis, payable in cash at the closing of the proposed transaction which will be adjusted to account for net borrowing.

It said, "The total consideration offered by Olam and being considered by the Board of DFM for the entire 5,000,000,000 issued shares of the company is N130bn. The proposal represents the enterprise value on a debt-free, cash-free basis, payable in cash at

the closing of the proposed transaction.

"This consideration will be adjusted for the net working capital and net debt as of March 31, 2019, or any other later date that may be agreed by Olam and the Board of DFM to arrive at the final price payable to equity shareholders. The final price to be paid to the shareholders of the company would be adjusted downwards to exclude shares held by Olam through its subsidiary."

It, however, stated that the offer was subjective to the approval of shareholders, regulatory approvals and the sanction of the Federal High Court.

Upon meeting with the

terms and conditions, the company would be delisted from the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

Olam, one of the world's largest suppliers of cocoa beans and products, coffee, cotton, and rice, was founded in Nigeria as an exporter of cashew nuts about 30 years ago. It has grown over time, operating in more than 60 countries with a market value of \$4.5 billion.

The deal will allow it to build on a country workforce of almost 3,000 while tapping local demand for bakery, snacks and pasta products.

Ethiopia entice investors at Ethiopian-Partnership Forum in Washington DC

By Amos Fofung



Ethiopia is opened for business; Ambassador Fitsum Arega.

As the Ethiopia Partnership Forum, hosted by U.S. Department of State roundoffs, hopes are high for a new dawn as the country located at the horn of Africa opens its doors to foreign direct investments.

The two-day conclave took place at the Loy Henderson Auditorium of the U.S. Department of State in Washington, with dozens of potential investors and top business leaders answering present with one mission – have firsthand information of Ethiopia investment potentials, so as to better direct their investments in the country.

Discussions on investment opportunities in Ethiopia as well as on the political and economic reform measures spearheaded by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed were held with Fitsum Arega, Ambassador of Ethiopia to U.S brandishing his country's potentials and readiness to boost foreign direct investments in the country reputed globally for its airline carrier, the Ethiopia Airlines, rated among the best in the world.

With talks centered on Ethiopia's economic outlook and increasing U.S. Foreign Direct Investment, stakeholders from Ethiopia led by their newly assigned Ambassador to the US, Fitsum Arega presented the countries opportunities in infrastructure; telecom, power and

transportation and agriculture among others.

During presentations with included a question and answer session, a segment was dedicated to examination methods of boosting startup in the Country which are categorized as an engine to economic growth.

In his keynote address, the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Tibor Nagy commended the efforts and strides put in place by the new ambassador and his team for such a historic forum.

Congratulating Ethiopia for sealing a peace agreement with Eritrea, the statesman affirmed his commitment to support the country by engaging



Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Tibor Nagy during his address at the #EPF2019.

US companies on the need to invest in Ethiopia.

"Why Ethiopia; because of the remarkable changes that has taken place in Ethiopia over the last years. Both what Prime Minister Abiy has done in the region and also what the new Ethiopian government is doing to open political and economic space for outside investment," Tibor Nagy said as he responded to questions from journalists.

"As we all know, Ethiopia's population just like the rest of Africa is growing dramatically, the continent is full of young people and what all young people want is jobs; so what the governments has to do if they want to take the continent forward in

a positive direction is to find ways to provide jobs and those jobs will not come from development assistance, they are going to come from foreign direct investment. I will like to do everything possible to dynamize American businesses and direct them to counties like Ethiopia cause they provide just the type of investment that Africa needs; ethical, technology transfer and providing medium and high paying jobs that Africa needs," he added.

The two-day gathering featured a partnership networking forum geared at accelerate American investment and engagement in Ethiopia and contribute to transformational change of Ethiopia's economic and commercial landscape took place as the EU-Ethiopia Business Forum runs in Brussels.

The DC forum hosted by the U.S Department of State Secretary's Office of Global Partnership and Bureau of African Affairs brought together a number of U.S. and Ethiopian business leaders and investors, corporations, philanthropists, impact investors, and others.

With this, Ethiopia has demonstrating a clear intent to engage more actively with the private sector as the country strives to maintain its growth and meet its goal of reaching lower-middle income status by 2025.



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After Cyclone Kenneth, humanitarian aid paralyzed by extremist attacks in northern Mozambique

By Alexandre Nhampossa

Northern Mozambique was hit by a devastating cyclone, a month after Cyclone Idai hit the center of the country, leaving behind 603 deaths and destruction of various public and private infrastructures.

The last Cyclone, named Kenneth, made its landfall around 4 pm on April 25, in the far north of the province of Cabo Delgado, between the districts of Mocimboa da Praia and Macomia.

According to the National Institute of Meteorology, Tropical Cyclone, category 3, was formed in northwest Madagascar on April 21, reaching Mozambique with estimated winds of around 140km / h, with gusts of wind which were up to 160km / h, accompanied by heavy rains (more than 100mm).

45 deaths is the current balance of the impact of the cyclone. Data of the main damages also point to the destruction of 19 sanitary units, 477 classrooms, 913 energy poles and 45,382 houses. Tropical cyclone Kenneth also devastated 55,488 hectares of diverse crops and 28,189 hectares were completely lost.

The situation caused to the affected people to lose everything and depend completely on government aid and their partners. The local houses constituted mainly by precarious material were completely destroyed and several goods were taken by the currents of the waters provoked by the heavy rains.

State buildings such as schools, hospitals, local



Macomia district after Kenneth. by Saviano Abreu od OCHA

administrators' houses, made of masonry, lost their roofs and some walls collapsed.

The districts of Ibo, Quissanga and Macomia were the most affected. In this last district the cyclone also removed the roof of the local penitentiary, act that made many inmates considered dangerous take advantage of the event to escape.

In Ibo district, 80 percent of houses were destroyed

and several people were left without place to sleep, according to information provided by the National Emergency Operations Center, CENOE.

These are also districts that have been suffering from the phenomenon of armed attacks by unknown masked men since October 2017. If before the cyclone local populations did not

their own precarious homes, the situation is worse now.

The small farms have been completely destroyed, making populations need even more humanitarian aid. The small boats they used for fishing purposes also sank and disappeared. "Populations need all kinds of help" CENOE said. But how to proceed if the zones are risky?

Humanitarian Aid in the

context of extremist attacks

With the destruction left by Kenneth the international organizations had yet another mission to begin, since before the storm they had been assisting the displaced local populations of their zones of origins due to the armed attacks.

Ilha do Ibo, the Quirimbas archipelago, in Ibo district, for example, had some shelters with more than 2,000 people from the districts of Macomia and Quissanga because of the strengthening of these attacks that consists on burning houses and killing people.

The World Food Program continued its food assistance program on the back foot due to a wave of threats to the attacks. The central government order indicated that lorries distributing food products should only continue if they had a military escort.

But even under these conditions, the expected happened. At least six people were killed in attacks on villages around Macomia on 3 May. In Nacate, the voter registration post was vandalized but the operators fled and were not hurt. It appears the insurgents wanted to take food that had been delivered for Cyclone Kenneth victims by aid agencies, but the raids may also have been a response to the visit of President Filipe Nyusi to Macomia two days earlier, according to the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin.

Days after the World Food Program said it was not stolen in an attack on the village of



WFP in Macomia for assistance.

Nacate.

On 4 May, the armed group has killed seven people in northern Mozambique in which they have put aid at risk and paralyzed voter registration. «Armed men invaded the district of Meluco, specifically the village of Minhanha, killed three people, and burned about 100 houses on Sunday night,» a local source, who did not want to be identified as fearing retaliation, told AFP.

The villagers, who were settling scores with the insurgents who had attacked the villages of Nakate and Ntapuala, said there were seven people in the insurgent group, and none of them came from the attacked villages. The clash between the villagers and the insurgents left two of the villagers seriously injured, one of whom is being treated in Pemba hospital.

On 10 May the group killed two villagers, between Palma and Mocimboa da Praia. The victims were heading from their village to sell goods in Mocimboa. Another person was shot on the road between Mocimboa and Palma, other sources said, and receiving medical treatment.

On 11 May, they attacked and burned two vehicles



Poles down in Macomia.

traveling between Palma and the Tanzanian border - one minibus bringing passengers from Tanzania, and the other a truck carrying various goods including food. The people in the vehicles were allowed to flee before the vehicles were burned, according to Carta de Mocambique sources.

This wave of armed attacks is paralyzing the humanitarian aid that was to be carried out in the districts devastated by Cyclone Kenneth, as well as calling into question the voter registration process for the general elections scheduled for 15 October.

President Nyusi demands explanations from attackers Mozambique has made

some secret incursions to protect its citizens from the attackers. However, the plans have failed. The attackers seem to be more informed and have made their successful inroads.

In parallel to the actions, the Commander in Chief of the Defense Forces of Mozambique and President of the Republic, Filipe Nyusi, has sent several messages to the unknown groups asking them to tell who they are and what they really want.

On May 10, Nyusi once again asked for explanations from the attackers group that, even after Cyclone Kenneth, continues to perpetrate murdering innocent citizens.

«Somebody have sent

them. They have a purpose. Let them say what is their goal. Don't tell us «I am a Muslim»,» Nyusi said during a popular rally on 10 May.

He said that in the country, there are many Muslims who live quietly and in harmony with other people in the communities in which they are inserted, which is why the motivations of these armed groups can not have Islamic foundations. Therefore, it advises the evildoers to show their real motivations.

«They camouflage themselves as if they were Muslims. We think this is a mask they are putting on,» Nyusi said, who described the actions of the insurgents as terrorist acts because

they «arrive in villages, burn houses and kill innocent populations in cold blood»

On 24 April the Cabo Delgado provincial court has sentenced 37 people to prison for between 12 and 40 years, for their involvement in the attacks. The court acquitted 137 defendants on the grounds of lack of evidence of their involvement. The trial started in October last year and was held behind closed doors.

However, some of the alleged insurgents who were acquitted by the court have already returned to the ranks of the armed groups - thus demotivating the members of the defense forces who are risking everything to keep the province's inhabitants safe, President Nyusi told Frelimo delegates at the opening ceremony of the Central Committee on 4 May.

However, as long as humanitarian aid is not enough, and the attacks continue, populations are still in need of assistance. The United Nations estimates more than 400,000 people affected by Cyclone Kenneth. However, the response to food aid so far is only 100,000.

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The African Perspective of Democracy Dialogue---Will Africa Be Spared For Economic Growth and Development?

By Nevson Mpofu*



AFRICA's post-humous Fathers of Democracy could be with answers to challenges currently faced. They would sniff the true African story of how Democracy is trampled in many countries. It is not only in Africa where Democracy is trampled and has failed. Africa leads the way because of its Political linked colonial up-bringing, upsurge of conflicts, avarice and Dictatorship culture of Leadership.

The political definition displays in denotative meaning of Democracy as the Government of the People that has at heart the concerns, grievances and feelings of the general population. Democracy is usually displayed on table as countries talk of the people and elections, , suffrage , rule of Law , freedom , mass media and decision making positions. In extension to the word, there is more to it for the general public in view.

Larry Diamond an American

Political Scientist takes Democracy from all angles. He concludes that, without it Development, Social Change, Economic and political changes could be a problem in the World.

The question that hangs in hovering air assembles the attention of millions if not billions of people. There are a plethora of those unrheterical questions like...

1] What is Democracy in the African Context of the Media and those watching eyes on it.
[2] Which countries have got Democracy, if so, how Democratic are they like .How did they do it. Is there ample evidence that they are Democratic? Media is still on the edges of trampled Democracy. National Elections are always a Problem in Africa.

KEY TEST FOR SADC.. Five African countries vie for intense elections in 2019. These are Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa.

Mozambique

President Fillipe Nyuchi has shown a negative response to the Media by cracking down on Media Freedom. Two Journalists Amade Abubacar and Germano Daniel Adriano spent 107 days and 65 days in pre-trial detention respectively. They were set free on April 23, 2009, June in the city of Pemba when a Judge granted bail to the duo. This has shown dissent on the voice of the Media.

South Africa.

Political Parties disapproved reportage deemed harmful to their political aspirations. Party supporters and citizens have been incited by Political Party leaders pushing their agenda. There have been 'silent signs of threat to the Media'.

Botswana.

The country that has been placed on the right side as Democratic is now being tainted by the Minister of Communications who announced a controversial MassMedia Bill to Parliament. The Bill was rejected by

Media Practitioners. Over the past years Botswana has been praised for peace in Africa.

Malawi

State entities are reluctant to adhere to the Law. State Media is biased. It is in favour of ruling Democratic Progressive Party under President Peter Mutharika . Malawi Broadcasting Services is in defiance of Electoral Laws. It declined to air Opposition parties. These are Malawi Congress Party and UTM.

Namibia.

It came 1st in Africa on the Reporters without Borders 2019 Ranking 23 out of 180 countries. It has still to pass the Access to Information Law to guarantee citizens and the Media access to Information held by the State for Informal Decision Making. Namibia Central Intelligence Services attempted to gag the Media house. The Patriot on reportage on corruption arguing the report would gag State Security. Court dismissed this. The decision

for the Newspaper to publish was upheld in April 2019.

In action to this, MISA demanded minimum conditions to AU and SADC .These were related to police to deal with Lawlessness. The need for Education for Civil servants to be aware of Law issues pertaining to Media Freedom. The need to end inflammatory statements by all parties. SADC has to adhere to Principles of fair, credible Elections. There is call for free distribution of newspapers and no closing or barring of Internet during or after elections.

In my Research Studies, Base-Line Surveys and Investigative Journalism, several Questions linger and vibrates the flocculent air. Is the United States of America Democratic? Why are African countries said not to be Democratic like Western Powers. The great Question is Political and Economic.

Do Countries attain Economic Growth and Development because they are Democratic?

In precise what is the nodal nexus between Economic Growth, Development and Democracy? Do countries go down in their Gross Domestic Products because of lack of Democracy? If attained like the Pre-Democratic stage of some African countries like Zimbabwe, DRC, Mozambique, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, then, is Development likely to be achieved? Are there any new signs of growing Gross Domestic Product and Growth Per-Capita because of new rising Democracy in these countries?

New wave of Democracy swept through Gambia, Tunisia, Angola and Zimbabwe in recent years. Are these likely to be in the Economic Growth and Development Stage? Zimbabwe's Minister of Finance and Economic Development, former Deputy Director of the African Development Bank talks of the effects of Global Democracy on Macro-Economics. His sentiments echo on the need for success. He points fingers on post-colonial gaps in economic growth and development. "Let us not forget, Democratisation from Non-Democratic Regimes leads to Gross Domestic Product Fall"

"However, There are gaps we failed to close in Africa since the time we attained Independence. As we kept on failing. Massive Grant Corruption was rising as a culture. There are policy gaps ranging from social, economic to political and Democracy itself. All in All, Within the African context lack of some forms of Democracy has contributed to low Gross Domestic Product because we are still to stand and walk like

a baby. We later need wheels from those who monitor how we do in terms of Democracy yet themselves they are said not to be fully Democratic.

There is wave of New Democracy in recent years in countries like Gambia, Angola, Tunisia and Zimbabwe. People may think the attainment of Growth and Development could be as early as yesterday, but its not really how we take it. It takes time as countries come up with new Economic policies, strategies, Laws, Partnerships and try to lure Investments.", he adds.

AFRICA DAY-25 May. What has Africa in Store?..

On the Day of 25 May every year, Africa celebrates itself being Independent from White Colonial Masters. There are Questions still to be asked, comments to be made, and closing gaps of In-Equalities. There is urgent need for Africa to close

Post-Colonial Conflicts gaps Come up with Everlasting Agreements of Peace

Economic Liberalisation of African States

Transition move towards Democratic Constitution

Consolidation period characterised by regular elections, development of civil culture and society..

Spending more time with an Ambassador Colleague Mwana-Nanga-Mwana-Wanga Former Dean of Ambassadors of Africa who is DRC Ambassador to Zimbabwe is honeymoon gain of more information. He has that flair for the love of Africa. Speaking on Democracy he touches on the positive and negative side on all parties that deserve criticism, be it direct or in-direct comment.

"There are political, social and Economic challenges to be addressed as we approach

Africa Day on 25 May. Africa has had Political challenges since the early 18th Century during Industrialisation in Europe. The Scramble and Partitioning of African States was in itself some form of Tyranny Colonial system of despotism. The control was under the Colonial masters'. In that true sense we can -not say there was a form of Democracy exercised to Africans.

"In fact, this was political hegemony in the sense that total control of our resources like land and minerals was under the White Colonial masters like the British, French, Germans and the Portuguese. Western Powers can- not boast of Democracy in the face of Africans who up to now are reeling in poverty, economic challenges, political up-heaves like the ones we see in countries like Sudan, Cameroon and DRC. They are the ones who caused it. Now, what I can say is that it's time for Africa to address its gaps of colonial challenges rather than fight."

Several Experts doubt the concept of Democratic rule of Western Powers owing attention to post colonialism which created unbalanced power, politics and lack of economic emancipation in the hands of White colonial masters. One such Pan-African genius Expert Patrick Lumumba casts a strong critical piece of mind.

"Africa is under blame of criticism from Western powers but remember, they forget that the relics of all the problems Africa has experienced were born out of White Supremacy and totalitarian rule. Grant and petty corruption itself is partly a mind which was created by the Whites. Take for instant actions of White

missionaries bribing powerful African Chiefs and Kings for the sake of being greedy for land. Look also at how slaves were taken to America. They were bought from Chiefs. Some of these became very rich. This in some way was massive corruption.

"Despite this corruption being our culture from the line-up of tradition in thanks giving, Colonial White masters played a role in escalating corrupt activities. "Democracy is hard to exercise in Africa because the continent is a dinner plate on top of the white men's table. They purport to have Democracy in their own countries but remember they ignited fire for us. Therefore African Economies cannot stand up because of other reasons pertaining to how the continent is like in terms of Democracy attainment failure. For African countries to attain economic growth, Democracy is needed. Why because.

1=Africa is judged by the West in terms of its Democracy Index.

2=Africa thrives on Donor multi-lateral funding, therefore, it is under control.

3=Africa is home of conflicts, Dictatorship, therefore, it is tracked down for its mistakes.

4=Africa is the last to have countries coming out of the cold shiver of wars. Definitely it is monitored in terms of crimes of terrorism. But look at countries believed to be super powers. Are they in the tracking system of the camera? Obviously, NO." he snarls as he concludes.

In Africa, the true story is that Representative and Participatory Democracy has increased rapidly in countries like South Africa a post -Apartheid State, in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi

, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana and a few others. The form of DEMOCRACY lacking is Presidential Democracy. It tells a story why African countries fail to grow and develop.

The Nodal Nexus between Democracy And Economic Growth.

African Development Bank Country Director in Zimbabwe Damon Kitabire raises a strong point of the link between Democracy and Economic Growth in the Region. He points out clearly that a number of African Economies failed to grow up from the beginning because most of them if not all were tidied by lack of political, economic and social participation in Human and Economic Growth and Development.

"Ordinary people having power in Africa has been a long term problem. Then, how do you expect Africa to grow and develop. There is a link here and there between Democracy and Economic Growth and Development. If there is no Democracy do you expect to get Humanitarian Aid?

"Most countries which later switched on to Representative, Liberal and Participatory Democracy later began to be realised by Donors and International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Just think of it. How many countries have been punished by America for failure to recognise Democracy? Its food for thought," he concludes with a contorted smile.

The African Union came up with the African Charter for popular participation in Development and Transformation. The Charter defends the rights of all African people to work

towards regenerating their communities for Economic growth and development. In other words, it is a move towards Economic Reforms. Democratic Participation calls as well the voice of women participation. In what is Feministic Democracy in countries like Britain, Canada, USA and Australia? Women participation increases growth and development. This has been the case in Southern Africa where 30% of women have followed principles of the SADC protocol on Gender. A Leading Human Rights Defender, Ms Netty Musanhu Director of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission of Zimbabwe applause the work done by International Organisations in promoting and supporting women of the World become Leaders in their own respect. "Women participation has built up on growth and development in the World. You can easily note it down. Notice it, organisations run by women haven't yet been pointed out to be in corrupt activities. Women support development of the nation. This has risen the Democracy Index .Look at where countries once ruled by women Presidents are today". Its food for thoughts ", she says.

Why African Countries Fail Democracy, Economic Growth and Development. The British Economic Intelligence Unit...

The only country that once passed Democracy in AFRICA is Botswana.. It is different from others in that the Tswana Tribes / people and UK Representatives worked together to support growth of the economy, maintaining peace internally and externally. It has never tasted rebellions, , no tribal conflicts and politically motivated violence . It creates good neighbourly relations in the Region. Lastly, it joined Deburrs to form the Setswana Merger for Diamond mining and equal share. They split profits of Mining, 50/50%. All of the African countries have failed to emulate this.

Mauritius is the only country in Africa with visible Democracy as of 2017 and 2018. It is a FULL DEMOCRACY. It is among the 19 countries with Full Democracy in the World .Mauritius gained Independence in 1992. It observes Parliamentary Democracy. The President and Vice are elected by the National Assembly for five year term.

According to the Unit, 7 countries are of flawed Democracy. 13 are under Hybrid Regime. 23 are Authoritarian Democracy. One country known to have done badly is Cameroon which got a RED CARD in Democratic practices. It performed badly in all the four types of Democracy- Full, Hybrid Regime, Flawed and Authoritarian

Democracy .This is added by President Paul Biya's force into power for the 7th Term a move which riled many Cameroonians. This was revealed by the MO Ibrahim Democracy Index.

Democracy in Ethiopia and Eretria has been trampled for the past decades. From 1998 to 2000 nearly 80,000 people were killed in brutal war. Ethiopia was ordered by the Independent Commission to return Territory along the border with Eretria but it refused. As of now Eretrian President Isaias Efwekwi and Ethiopia Prime Minister Abiya Ahmed have signed "The Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship."

Sudan has been over the years affected by the Military coup of 30 June 1989. Amar al Bashir, Brigadier of Sudanese Army ousted Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi. They later moved to the Peace Agreement called Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. It is a bit similar to Nigeria. It experienced a number of coups and Civil Wars. It has been ruled by series of Military Juntas. The last Junta Sani Abacha died in 1998. He was taken over by Abdulsalami Abu-Bakar. He came with the New Constitution on 5 May 1999. He was then followed by Olusegun Obasanjo.

African countries are plunged into Donor Syndrome of which by the end of the day, they turn to hate speech and think about their Colonial

History, talking more politics at the expense of Economy. Dictatorship, tyranny and complete control of politics and power [Hegemony] reduces economic effort. This is caused by political avarice and the existence of Historical Liberators trying to compete with the Western powers, fast to be super powers over-night. Lastly , Women have taken leading positions late 1990s assisted by Western Donors .Gender Equality is still below 50% representation in Parliament . Therefore Women Representative and Participatory Democracy is still low.

DEMOCRACY INDEX.

The World has experienced change in the Democratic Revolution space. This has been through the fair electoral processes, political pluralism, civil liberties, proper Government function, political participation and culture of peace tolerance to build more on Democracy and rule of Law. Many countries have attained the four 4 types of REGIMES, Full Democracy Flawed Democracy Hybrid Regime Democracy Authoritarian Democracy

BOTTOM Countries of DEMOCRACY in Africa.

RANK	SCORE
Chad	1,61

RANK	SCORE
Central African Republic	1,52
DRC	1,49
Syria	1,43

COUNTRIES with Hybrid Democracy.. Although there are Elections that take place, citizens are cut off from knowledge about activities of those with real power because of lack of Civil-Liberties, open society.

Madagascar, Botswana Cape-Verde, Morocco Nigeria, Uganda, South Africa

AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY

Countries with centralised powers and lack of political freedom. They are the rest in Africa after those mentioned above. There is only one out of the list, this is Mauritius. The only Democratic one in Africa..

Libya, Algeria , Egypt Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, DRC, Swaziland

Lesotho and the rest in Africa un-mentioned except for Mauritius

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German government to assist Zimbabwe to phase out nitrous oxide emissions to combat climate change

By Wallace Mawire

The government of Germany will support the government of Zimbabwe with a \$5 million facility to assist in initiatives to phase out nitrous oxide emissions into the atmosphere to combat climate change, according to Mr Washington Zhakata, Director for the Climate Change Management Department in the ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement.

According to Mr Zhakata, in 2019, the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement in collaboration with the Government of Germany as represented by GIZ and Sable Chemicals conducted a technical workshop on nitrous oxide abatement on the 17th of December 2018 to deliberate on the possibility of partnership between Germany and Zimbabwe on Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) Abatement.

It is reported that Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) is a highly potent greenhouse gas, with a global warming potential 265 times that of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

One major source of N₂O emissions is the manufacturing of nitric acid, which is an industrial product mainly used for manufacturing nitrogen based fertilizers.

"There are nowadays effective N₂O abatement technologies available in the market at comparably low cost. However, since nitric acid producers normally do not get incentives the abatement of the nitrous



Mr Washington Zhakata.

oxide, this potent greenhouse gas continues to be emitted into the atmosphere in most countries in the world," the Climate Change department said.

In a new drive to realize the mitigation potential of nitrous oxide abatement, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) has launched the Nitric Acid Climate Action Group (NACAG). The Zimbabwe government has joined NACAG and will be receiving support in its abatement initiatives.

It is reported that the initiative provides all governments and plant operators with technical support on nitrous oxide abatement technology. The initiative also supports governments during development and implementation of policies that ensure a sustained operation of the abatement activities realized in the framework of the initiative after 2020.

The initiative also provides

financial support for the purchase and installation of abatement technology to a selected number of countries with Nitric Acid Production, of which Zimbabwe is one.

The emission reductions can be accounted for in the partner country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as provided for in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

According to Mr Zhakata, there is one nitric acid production plant in Zimbabwe, located in Kwekwe which is operated by Sable Chemical Industries Limited.

It is reported that within the plant, two nitric acid production lines are in operation. The design capacity of each production line is 95 000 tonnes of nitric acid per year. The overall annual average emission reductions from operating the abatement technology are estimated to be around 470 000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent.

It is added that the project will offer technical advice on

N₂O abatement, decision making support, supporting for setting up of Measurement Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems, regulatory frameworks capacity building and technical assistance, integration of the project with the country's NDC, financing of the abatement technology and related costs for sable covering 100% initial cost and regulatory aspects which can be in form of studies. The project will also offer financing of cost for environmental management as well as additional staff.

"For Zimbabwe to be eligible for the project there is need to join the NACAG initiative by signing the NACAG declaration. The NACAG declaration is a non-binding expression of support for NACAGs Vision and Goal. By signing the declaration, the GoZ affirms its commitment to ensure abatement of N₂O but will not yet be eligible for the funding," according to the climate change department.

It is also added that the project offers two abatement technologies which are

the tertiary abatement technologies which have an abatement efficiency of approximately 80% in high pressure plants and the secondary abatement technology which has an abatement efficiency of between 95 to 98%.

GIZ came to Zimbabwe and conducted a feasibility study on the Sable Chemicals plant in December 2018 before the technical workshop. It was concluded from the feasibility study conducted from 12 to 14 December 2018 that either of the two abatement technologies can be installed onto the plant but the partners are now looking at deciding which one will be the most feasible as well as the policy and legal requirements to undertake the project.

A presentation was then made by Sable Chemicals which highlighted that the company had already conceptualized a nitric acid abatement project in 2008 and a consultant had been engaged for the feasibility study. The project had been registered under the Clean Development Mechanism board as the project was developed within the Kyoto Protocol framework but the project failed to pick up due to some pricing challenges.

It was also highlighted that the project will be a step in the right direction as the country is developing the Low Emissions Development Strategy to meet its commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

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