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Democracy - Good Governance - Corruption - African Union

The Year In Africa With, Professor George Ayittey.



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A Foot Note With Hurricane Ahmad

By Ajong Mbatndah L

Ahmad Ahmad the President of the Confederation of African football is turning out to be a very enigmatic figure. Not a popular figure, and from Madagascar, a country not known for any football prowess in Africa, the sporting world was shocked in 2017 when Ahmad defeated Issa Hayatou of Cameroon who had served uninterrupted as the President of CAF since 1988. As if the man has an axe to grind with Cameroon, he recently soured Christmas by withdrawing the hosting rights of the 2019 nations cup from the country that has represented Africa at seven world cups, won 5 nations cup and produced some of the global icons in the game like Samuel Eto'o, Roger Milla, Bell Joseph Antoine, Thomas Nkono and others.

Far from biased, hatred, or yet another conspiracy to bring down the government as some holier than thou partisans of Mr Biya claim, Ahmad Ahmad may have rescued Cameroon from a bigger international embarrassment if the tournament had taken place. Despite the colossal sums set aside by the government for new infrastructure, the progress was too slow. Each time Ahmad complained that Cameroon was not ready to host even a tournament of four nations, instead of speeding up preparations, Ahmad Ahmad was called names. While it is no use crying over spilt milk, there are a number of important lessons that Cameroon must learn.

For the last ten years or so, Cameroon has not had a football federation. As recent

as November, it lost one of its spots for a continental club competition because it did not meet the dateline for submitting its representative. How a country mired in interminable crisis managing its football could host a nations cup was always mind boggling.

The second lesson is that Cameroonians must learn not just to be angry, but to channel the anger into stronger demands for reforms. It is now public knowledge that heavily inflated contracts were given to cronies. Prices of commodities inflated. Curiously, even some of the diehard supporters of the President are calling for heads to roll. So far Mr Biya is still to take action.

In trying to justify their decision, Ahmad Ahmad and his team have made a number of staggering revelations including one that Aides to President Biya were presenting him with bogus reports on the state of preparation. If this is true than what else have Aides lied to Mr Biya about? Is he aware of the carnage in the North West, and South Regions of the country? Is he aware that Cameroon is on the brink of collapse? Is the President in the right frame of mind to diligently discharge his duties?

If he was, how comes he could not even find time to visit construction work on one of the stadiums named after him a few miles from where he lives? If he is, how will he think that Ambazonia fighters will lay down their arms just because he said so without a political solution to the problems that sparked off the current crisis? If he

was in touch with reality, how will his government continue to handle such a serious crisis with so much callousness?

Beyond the economic and sporting perils that such a ridicule entails, the decision of Ahmad Ahmad has further exposed the ills plaguing Cameroon to the wider world. A country with enormous potential led by a leader who has outlived his usefulness, surrounded by aides who put self before country, where tribalism and incompetence excels, where embezzlement of public funds thrives.

In a country where leadership is accountable, this CAN fiasco would have been enough to bring down the government. Officials concerned will not even wait to be fired, they will own up to their shortcomings and do the honorable thing by resigning, *helas* we are talking of Cameroon here. For embezzlement of circa 500.000 frs CFA during the 1972 CAN in Cameroon, senior officials in the government of President Ahmadou Ahidjo went to jail. Today with billions up in smoke, culprits are going about their business unperturbed. How will a country make progress?

As we pointed out in our last editorial, whereas Biya has opted for a life presidency, this mandate will be one of all dangers for him. Every move and action



Ajong Mbatndah L, Managing Editor

will be scrutinized. The world is watching Cameroon. The CAN debacle could be a wake up call. It is time to show the world that his campaign slogan "The force of experience" meant more than just words. That experience should be used in resolving the ongoing Anglophone crisis, that experience should be used in suing for peace, in calling for broad, and comprehensive dialogue, it should make him know that releasing all the Anglophones detained will be a sign of strength and not weakness. Considering that the CAF President has indicated that Cameroon can host the 2021 African Nations, this should give him time to restore sanity to the spending spree and corruption fest going on.

While Cameroon continues to remain stagnant and regress, the rest of Africa is firmly on the move. Feuding parties in South Sudan

have sued for peace, Eritrea and Ethiopia have settled their own conflict, dialogue between President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition challenger Raila Odinga has reduced tensions in Kenya. Indeed, the year was not all doom for Africa. Hopefully the continent will continue to build on its successes in the new year.

In this last issue, we take a look at the year in Africa with Prof George Ayittey, one of the most respected voices from Africa on the international scene. From AU reforms, to the handshake in Kenya, the reform minded agenda of Prime Minister Abiy the hyper activism of the Maerck Foundation in Africa, and more, PAV runs through the year with you. To you and all yours Happy Christmas and a prosperous new year 2019 in advance.

Refreshing To See African leaders crafting their own reform initiatives to fight corruption - Prof George Ayittey

By Ajong Mbapndah L

For decades Ghanaian economist, author and president of the Free Africa Foundation in Washington DC, Prof George Ayittey has been relentless in speaking truth to power in Africa. A staunch proponent of African solutions to African problems, fighting corruption is a crusade he made personal. Discussing the year in Africa, Prof Ayittey known for his acerbic critique of corrupt African leaders, says reform initiatives

in a number of African countries were laudable. Listed in 2008 by Foreign Policy Magazine as one of the "Top 100 Public Intellectuals shaping the tenor of our time," Prof Ayittey cited the examples of Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda and Zimbabwe as countries grappling with serious reforms. From conflict resolution to regime changes, Chinese influence, and more, Prof Ayittey shares his take on major developments that marked the year in Africa and perspectives on the years ahead.

Thanks so much for accepting to discuss the year in Africa with us, before we delve into specific developments, may we know some significant developments that stood out for you?



Prof Ayittey has spent a life time speaking truth to power in Africa

The main thing that stood out and threatened to put me out of business was the reform initiative undertaken by some African leaders themselves in Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania. As you know, I have been preaching African solutions for African problems, so I was elated to see African leaders crafting their own reform initiatives to fight corruption, for example. Several countries are grappling with serious reform efforts, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Zimbabwe. Ethiopia's new prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, is trying to liberalize the economy after decades of Marxist adventurism. State-owned enterprises including Ethiopian Airlines are being privatized and political prisoners are being released. Private investors are being

courted to participate in railway service, electricity, shipping, and other services. It seems the reforms have also encouraged the Ethiopian rebel group Ogaden National Liberation Front to lay down their weapons and declare a cease-fire.

In Nigeria, President Muhammadu Buhari is making some admirable efforts to tackle corruption, and in Ghana, the new president, Nana Akufo-Addo, has appointed Martin Amidu as the Special Prosecutor on Corruption. Amidu was a former attorney general who was sacked in 2013 by President John Mahama for refusing to authorize payments that he thought were fraudulent.

However, there been some strong push back from those who benefit from the rotten status quo.

On June 23 a bomb blast rocked a rally Prime Minister Ahmed was attending, killing three people and injuring 160. The Prime Minister escaped unhurt. At about the same time, some 2,000 miles away in Harare, Zimbabwe, President Emmerson Mnangagwa – a self-acclaimed reformer suffered an attack at a political rally. In other countries, the credibility of reformers has been a problem.

In Zimbabwe, the anti-corruption czar, Ngonidzashé Gumbo, was himself a bandit, jailed 10 years for defrauding the commission of \$435,000. Nigeria finds itself in a similar situation where the anti-corruption commission – the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) – started prosecuting its own officials for alleged corruption. And

the presidency itself has not been spared the embarrassment of having to suspend key aides over alleged graft. Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Nigeria, once dismissed its National Assembly as «an assembly of thieves and looters.» Similarly, in Kenya and Tanzania bodies charged with fighting corruption were themselves found to be riddled with corruption.

Personalization is yet another obstacle that has stymied the reform effort. Presidents Buhari, Mnangagwa, and

John Magufuli of Tanzania have adopted a highly personalized approach to fighting corruption. Such personalization gives the erroneous impression that fighting corruption is the task of the president. The corrupt may also get the idea that if they bump off the person leading the battle they can shut down the whole process. Corruption is a breach of the rule of law, and the fight should be an ongoing process regardless of who the president is. And to fight corruption effectively, one only needs a free media to expose it, a pugnacious attorney general to prosecute the corrupt, and an independent judiciary to enforce the rule of law and to punish the corrupt for all to see. Sadly, these institutions do not exist in the vast majority of African countries.



George Ayittey, economist from Ghana, signing his book Africa Unchained - the blueprint for Africa's future with Bono.

In Zimbabwe, the recent election results have further dimmed prospects for lasting reform.

Here is the CORRECT Way to Fight Corruption in Africa.

To fight corruption effectively in Africa, one does not need new committees, councils or commissions set up by the president. It creates the FALSE impression that presidential leadership is needed to fight corruption. Mechanisms already exist to fight against corruption and should be allowed to operate, regardless of who the president is. In fact, the president shouldn't come anywhere near this campaign, let alone become involved in it. What if the president himself is a bandit, as was the case in Nigeria (Abacha) or Kenya (Moi)? Fancy this in Liberia and in South Africa

Just as each institution is required to police and cleanse itself, the government as an entity is also required to do so through this process. The government has a Comptroller-Accountant-General, Auditor-General and Attorney-General. These are the three key officials

to target in the war against corruption.

Each year, the Comptroller/Accountant-General is required by law or the constitution to submit an accounting report of all government expenditures, both at home and abroad in the embassies. This report must be submitted to the Auditor-General within a specified period of time. It is 90 days in Ghana. Upon receipt, the Auditor-General then goes through the expense account or accounting report with a fine comb, noting suspicious payments, financial irregularities and malfeasance. For example, suppose an entry showed that \$40 million was spent by the Ministry of Education to build just three classroom blocks. This expenditure may be queried in the Auditor-General's Report, which must, within 90 days, be submitted to three key entities: the President, the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament and the Attorney-General.

Upon receipt, the Attorney-General must confer with the president on the appropriate measures to take. Failing

that PAC may haul in the Minister of Education to explain how his ministry spent \$40 million on just three classroom blocks. If the Minister is unable to answer satisfactorily and PAC suspects embezzlement and a cover-up, it may refer the case to the Attorney-General for prosecution and recovery of the loot. Then the Attorney-General may hand the case over to the State Prosecutor to seek conviction in court. Note: There is no involvement by the President, who, on his own volition, may request the resignation of the Minister of Education.

In general, this is how the government system is supposed to cleanse itself automatically. It must be stressed that even if the President and the Attorney-General fail to act, parliamentary accounts committee or PAC can still push this issue forward. So forget about setting up an Anti-Corruption Commission like the EFCC in Nigeria. By the time the commission is set up, it is too late. The loot is already long gone, unretrievable.

Use the government's

own Auditor Gen.'s report to hit them hard. Nobody would accuse you of using information from "imperialist sources or propaganda." Thus, if corruption is pervasive it may be because of any of the following 4 reasons

1. The media does not expose it either because the media is controlled by the state or the independent media and the opposition choose to focus elsewhere else and not the Auditor-General's Report.

2. Some institution or agency in the government – the Comptroller/Accountant-General, Auditor-General, Attorney-General or Parliament is not doing its job. If so, then sack each of them. For example, for 20 years (1991 - 2011) Amos Wacko, the former Attorney General of Kenya, never caught one official bandit! On the other hand, the Atty. Gen. of Ghana Martin Amidu did his job by refusing to authorize payment for a suspicious bill in the Woyome corruption scandal and he, Martin, was sacked in 2012. Remember \$20 billion of Nigeria's oil money that is still missing? When Sanusi, the former governor of the Bank of Nigeria informed Pres. Jonathan in Feb 2014, it was he, the Governor, who was sacked for «financial recklessness and misconduct.

3. The President appoints the Accountant – General, the Auditor-Gen and the Atty. Gen. and refuses to sack them for personal or political reasons. In this case, amend the Constitution, so that the president does not have to appoint them. Consider this: in Ghana, President Rawlings executed by firing squad two former heads of state for corruption in 1979. In 1994,

he set up the Commission on Human Rights and Justice (CHRAJ). When the Commission fingered four ministers for corruption in 1996, Pres. Rawlings issued a government White Paper to exonerate them!

4. A one-party state, or rubber stamp Parliament would obviously, be ineffective in stamping out corruption. Such was the case in Ghana in 1993, for example, Ghana's Auditor General released a report that detailed a catalogue of corruption and embezzlement by high government officials, costing a staggering 401 billion cedis (about \$400 million) over a ten-year period (1983-1992). But not one single bandit was indicted.

What was waged in the past was coconut combat. Asked to fight corruption, they set up an anti-corruption commission with no teeth. And when the anti-corruption czar sniffed too close to the fat bandits, they wrote a White Paper to exonerate the corrupt ministers fingered (Ghana in 1996). Or they immediately shut the commission down, In Kenya, the czar, John Githongo had to flee Kenya for Britain in 2005 after receiving death threats. In Nigeria, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu was sent off to Britain for "further studies" in 2006. Zambia's anti-corruption czar, Maxwell Nkole, was sacked on Aug 29, 2009. In Tanzania, the entire Cabinet was dissolved in Feb 2008 over a corruption scandal, involving the award of \$172.5 million contract to supply 100 megawatts of emergency power to a Texas based company that did not exist. Then it was discovered that the anti-corruption czar, Dr Edward Hosea, himself was implicated. In

South Africa, the Scorpions, an effective anti-corruption unit was disbanded by President Thabo Mbeki in Oct 2008. The Scorpions were quite effective, securing a conviction rate of nearly 90 per cent. Following allegations of corruption, the Scorpions raided of homes of high-ranking politicians within the ANC Party, including then Deputy President Jacob Zuma, former Transport Minister Mac Maharaj and Durban businessman and Zuma's former financial adviser, Schabir Shaik. Shaik was convicted on fraud and corruption charges relating to South African Arms deal. Charges against former Deputy President Jacob Zuma were dropped. In Zimbabwe, the anti-corruption czar, Ngonidzashé Gumbo, was himself a bandit, jailed for 10 years for defrauding the commission of \$435,000. Elsewhere, the bodies set up to fight corruption in Kenya and Tanzania are themselves also corrupt.

In Egypt, when Hisham Geneina, head of the government's Central Auditing Authority, alleged publicly in 2015 that from 2012-15, some \$76 billion were siphoned from Egypt's coffers through pervasive corruption from the bottom of the nation's massive public sector to the top, he was immediately placed under house arrest. "Geneina will face prosecution for speaking out against corruption and moving to hold figures from Egypt's executive, judiciary and police accountable in court for widespread graft ranging from day-to-day bribes to large-scale

misappropriation of state land" (The Wall Street Journal, March 31, 2016)

It should be clear from the above that all you need to fight corruption is paying heed to the revelations in the Auditor Gen.'s Report. But some countries play footsie with the report. Nigeria for example, plays hide and seek. It deliberately underfunds the office of the Auditor Gen. to prevent him from doing this work. The auditor general has an official website. When I visited the site, the latest report was for 2007 -- 10 years out of date. Even then, when I visited the site again, that report had mysteriously vanished. To read the auditor Gen.'s report, you are requested fill out a small form, giving your name and email address. Now how many people do you think would give their email address to an agency of the Nigerian government? If nobody, then how would Nigerians know their wealth is being looted?

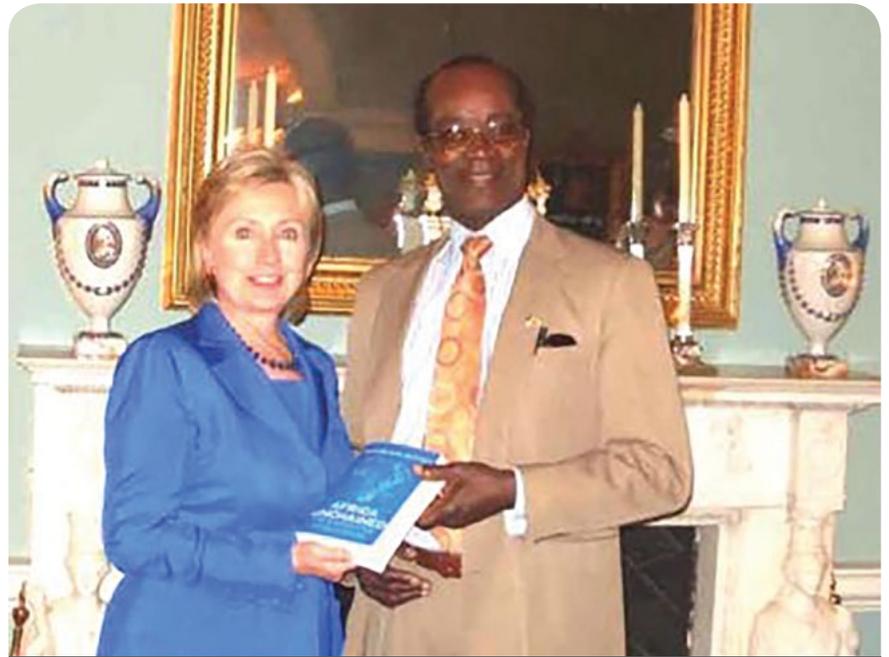
- Setting up a Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime that is independent of the Executive and reports to Parliament, as Botswana has done

Implementing additional measures, such as "Report Bribe Takers for a Reward" and a "Whistleblower" program. "Pay No Bribe" initiative in Sierra Leone

- Cross-country audit. Use auditors from Kenya in Liberia and Nigerian auditors in Zimbabwe, etc. See this example

- Fearlessly defend the Auditor General and the Atty. Gen. This is what Egyptian lawyers did admirably

- Make the Accountant-



Then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and George Ayittey, US State Department, August 1, 2009.

General, Auditor-General and Attorney-General independent of the Executive by having them appointed by the opposition or Parliament, not the President.

To conclude, no new commissions, committees or laws are required to fight corruption effectively. Just enforce and strengthen already existing laws and institutions charged with fighting it.

We will now try to cover important developments in all the sub regions of the continent and let's start with South Africa and the resignation of Jacob Zuma. It was the second time a President was forced out in that country before the expiration of his term, is this a sign of vibrant democracy and how is the current President Cyril Ramaphosa doing especially with the thorny issue of land

reform?

The arrogance of power and complacency are becoming the bane of the ANC in South Africa. Its support among blacks is slipping and opposition parties, such as the Democratic Alliance and the Economic Freedom Fighters, have been gaining in strength. Following mounting evidence of corruption against Pres. Zuma, the ANC had no choice but to force him to resign. He faces some 782 charges of corruption, including the use of state funds to renovate his private home at Nkandla.

Regarding the land issue, I think the ANC mishandled it. This is particularly perplexing because it had the disastrous results of land reform in Zimbabwe – right next door – to learn from. The land issue is not one to be solved politically with a majority vote. This is one particular issue where populism does not necessarily coincide with efficiency. A constitutional amendment

to allow confiscation of land without compensation can be secured with majority vote in Parliament but would wreak devastating results on the economy.

That main sticking point is compensation. Most people agree that the land in many cases was unlawfully seized from black owners and should be returned. However, the current white owners insist that, since they have made improvements to the land, they should be compensated. I agreed to that but in my view, compensation cuts both ways.

In a court of law if you deprive somebody of the use of their property to generate income you are liable to compensate the owner of the loss of that income. For example, if you stole somebody's taxi which makes \$500 a day and returned it 10 days later, you may be liable to pay the owner \$5000 in compensation in addition to the fine that would be slapped

on you by the court for your crime. Thus, the original owners of land in South Africa are entitled to compensation for being deprived of the use of their land to generate income.

Such an issue is best handled by a multi-racial and multi-partisan land commission with its recommendations binding on the government. I don't think it is too late to set up such a commission.

Regarding the new president, Cyril Ramaphosa, I do not think he will get very far with reforms. He will be fiercely rebuffed within the ANC. Let's not forget that he was part of the same corrupt cabal that has brought South Africa to its knees. The democratic dispensation has not brought any tangible benefits to the black majority. Unemployment remains unacceptably high – at about 40%. The delivery of social services has been abysmal. This standard of education, healthcare and sanitation remains very poor. The current rolling blackouts to ration electricity has hit upcoming black businesses the hardest.

Soon after apartheid was dismantled in 1994, a Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) program was initiated to help blacks acquire a piece of the national pie. But most of the beneficiaries of the program were ANC stalwarts such as Tony Yengeni, Tokyo Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa. As a reformer, Ramaphosa's credibility is dubious but, tragically, he is the best man around.

What is your take on the post Mugabe era in Zimbabwe and the election of a new President in Emmerson

Mnangagwa?

The credibility of President Mnangagwa as a reformer is also dubious at best. The economy was destroyed by violent seizures of white commercial farmlands in the 1990s and foreign investors stayed away. The currency collapsed in 2009 after bouts of hyperinflation that once reached 1 million percent. Election violence in 2008 earned the country U.S. and EU sanctions. Shortages of foreign exchange crimp production, while unemployment hovers at 80 percent.

When Zimbabwe's military generals ousted long-serving despot Robert Mugabe in November 2017 and installed Emmerson Mnangagwa as the new president, most international observers, pundits and donors held up their noses and gave him the chance to craft and implement the reforms that the country desperately needs. Mnangagwa vowed to end the country's international isolation, woo back investors and compensate white commercial farmers. But old habits die hard.

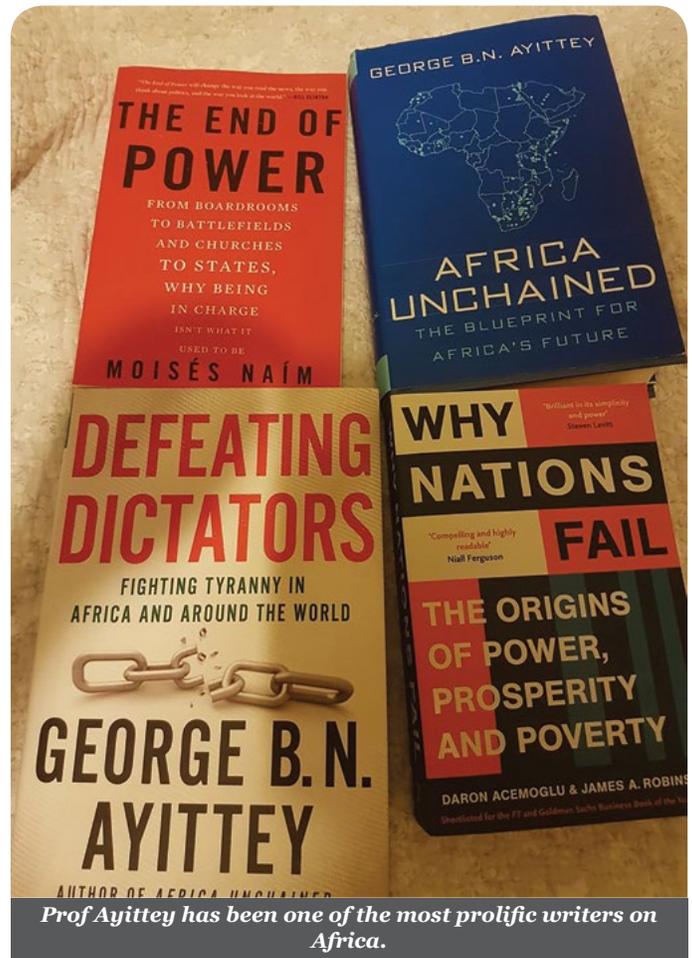
Mnangagwa is known as the "Crocodile" for the sly gaze he gives his rivals before moving swiftly to crush them. He was Mugabe's right-hand man, and as security chief he oversaw the massacre of about 20,000 Ndebele dissidents who questioned Mugabe's rule in the early 1980s. But in a rigged election in July 2018 that was marred by violence (protests left seven people dead) Mnangagwa showed that the Croc is no reformer. The election bore all the hallmarks of the long-ruling ZANU-PF party's usual machinations.

The voters' register was padded with fictitious names,

including more than 1,000 people about 100 years old and older; four were even born in the 1880s. Voter intimidation and vote buying were rampant. Even the results bore the telltale sign of election rigging: "Mnangagwa won 50.8% of votes to 44.3% for opposition leader Chamisa" to give the false impression that it was a very close race and he won barely scraping through by the skin of his teeth to avoid a runoff! This is the standard trick of African dictators.

Overall, ZANU-PF won 145 out of 210 seats in Parliament (69percent), while the MDC gained 65 seats. ZANU-PF has a parliamentary supra-majority with which the party can change the Constitution at will.

This bodes ill for country that desperately needs reform. Complicating matters, the military generals who installed Mnangagwa have little appetite for reform. After his ouster, an angry Mugabe asked the generals to account for \$15 billion the military is accused of plundering from the Marange diamond fields. Worse, Mnangagwa's feud with his deputy president, General Constantine Chiwenga, has broken out into the open – a power struggle over the leadership of the ruling ZANU-PF party. Chiwenga is suspected of abetting the brutal military crackdown



of opposition protests that claimed six lives after the July 30 election.

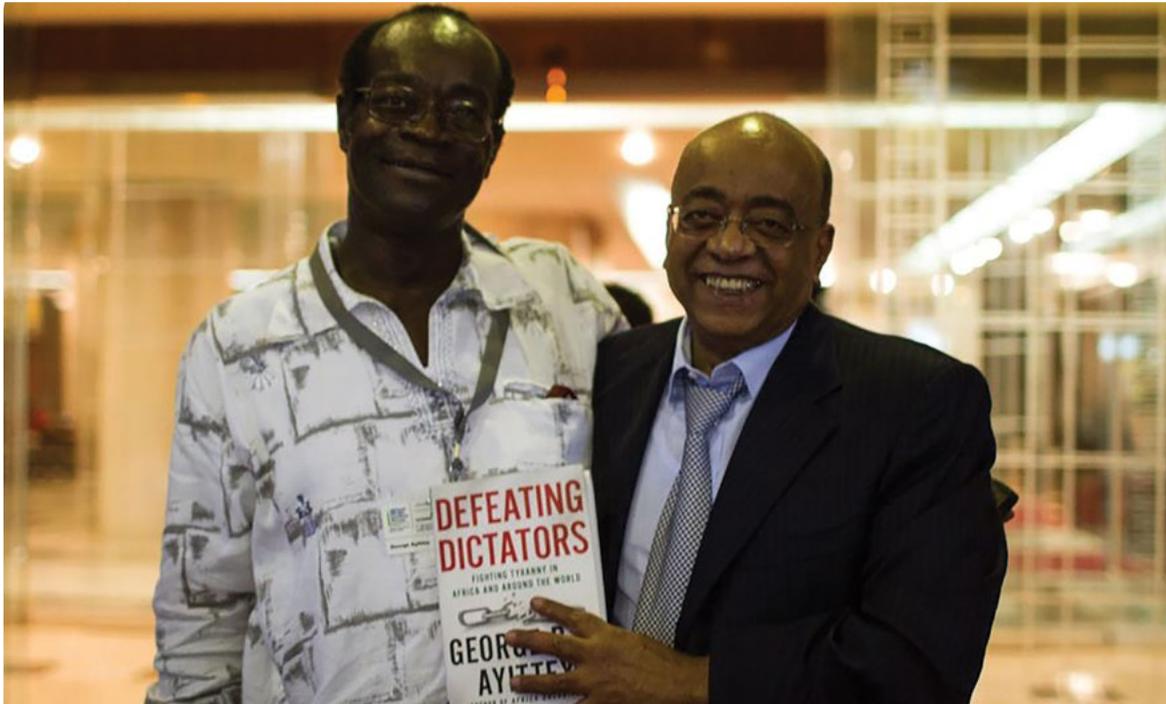
Zimbabwe's tragedy illustrates Africa's reform conundrum. The country sorely needs reform. But reform cannot be delivered because either the credibility of the reformer is dubious or there is strong pushback by the corrupt. Failure to achieve reform through the ballot box too often leads to civil war – witness Liberia (1990), Somalia (1991), Rwanda (1994), Zaire (1996), Sierra Leone (1997), Ivory Coast (2005), and Libya (2011). All of these countries were destroyed because they lacked the mechanisms for peaceful change. Tragically, there are many other African countries today that still lack this same mechanism.

Zambia seems to be

in some trouble after defaulting its Chinese loans, what can Prof tell us on this, and in follow up to the China chapter, is the Chinese presence in Africa a blessing or a curse?

Zambia is over-extended in Chinese loans. In July 2018, it defaulted on its Chinese loans and China seized control of its power utility company, ZESCO. It stands to lose more of its national assets as it defaults.

The Chinese presence in Africa is neither a blessing nor a curse. I characterize their inroads into Africa as "chopsticks mercantilism." Our leaders operate on the fallacious notion that "the enemy of my enemy must be my friend." Since China is the enemy of the West, China must be Africa's friend. What is amazing is the refusal of



Prof Ayittey and Mo-Ibrahim ,united in a common course to improve democracy and good governance in Africa

African leaders to learn from Africa's own history.

Our history documents that every foreign entity that goes to Africa does so to pursue their interest. Americans go to Africa to pursue American interests. The French, French interests. The Arabs pursue Arabs interests. Certainly the Chinese are not in Africa because they love black people sooooo much.

Fortunately, some African countries are beginning to realize this. Kenya declined a Chinese loan. Sierra Leone followed suit by turning down a \$400 million C

I am not suggesting that we should not borrow from a Chinese. In fact, there is nothing wrong with borrowing from foreign sources provided the loan is used productively to generate a return that can be used to repay or amortize the loan. In fact too many cases in Africa, our leaders borrowed money and used the proceeds unproductively – to pay salaries of civil servants, to establish unprofitable state-owned enterprises, to purchase weapons or to embezzle it. That's what got many African countries into a debt crisis in the 1980s. Unfortunately, many of them are doing the same with the Chinese

In the horn of Africa, reason seems to have prevailed and President Salva Kiir and his estranged former Vice President Riek Machar have mended fences , do you see a fresh beginning for South Sudan?

I have palpable contempt for President Salva Kiir and his estranged former Vice President Riek Machar. I have little patience for them. They need to understand that South Sudan does not belong to them, although they waged its wall of liberation that created the country in 2010 – only to be plunged into civil war by a power struggle three years later.

In a traditional African village when two combatants become intransigent and impervious to reason they can be expelled from the village in order to have peace. That is exactly what should have happened in South Sudan by expelling the two nut-cases. The Civil War – from 2013 to 2018 – has claimed more than 383,000 and more than 3 million internally displaced people or refugees – all because of the political ambition of two lunatics. And I am not backing down.

It is way past time to make some African leaders understand that winning independence for a country or saving the country from a catastrophe does not give anyone the license to do what he pleases with the country. The leaders of Eritrea, Rwanda and Uganda must also be told this.

Ethiopia and Eritrea also ended decades of conflict, what did you make of this?

The war between the two countries, from 1998 to 2000, was Africa's most idiotic Civil War. Two of the world's poorest nations were spending \$1 million a month each to purchase weapons to hammer themselves over a worthless piece of real estate at the border town of Badme. They would stop, apologize for the civilian casualties, bury them and then resume pounding each other again.

Since 2000 both countries have used the state of war to establish repressive societies. This was more evident in Eritrea, which earned the reputation of being called the North Korea of Africa. It used the war to demand National Service from its youth many of who fled the country to evade the draft. Many subsequently

became migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean and perishing at sea.

Hopefully now that peace has been restored between Ethiopia and Eritrea: the National Service will be abolished, political prisoners in Eritrea released some political reforms implemented – just as Ethiopia has been doing.

We move from there to Kenya ,where a handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and his opposition challenger Raila Odinga , could this be a lesson to leaders across Africa on putting country first?

The handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and his opposition challenger Raila Odinga is not a model to be emulated. First, it was not done properly; it should have been done openly in the presence of other opposition leaders and Not behind closed doors.

Second, we need a strong opposition to make democracy work in Africa. Handshakes compromise the credibility of the opposition leaders regardless of how honest their intentions are. Indeed after that famous handshake in Kenya, the opposition went quiet and has remained moribund. It suggests that Odinga might have been seriously compromised or even “bought.” He has since accepted AU position to oversee infrastructure development and the opposition in Kenya has become noticeably quiet.

Right now, Pres. Kenyatta faces no opposition and this is dangerous.

Be it in South Sudan, Ethiopia-Eritrea, and even in Kenya, we noticed that it was Africans themselves who took the lead in resolving their conflicts, how can this trend be emulated across Africa?

It is true they took themselves

in trying to resolve their conflicts but they were trying to implement the WRONG model. Africans have been trying to resolve conflicts themselves since 1990. Some approaches have worked but others have not. It is important to discuss this more fully because conflicts have destroyed many African countries.

The Western approach to crisis/conflict resolution has not worked well in postcolonial Africa. It involves direct, face-to-face negotiations between combatants/disputants – often the government on one side and rebel forces, protesters, etc. on the other side. This approach often culminates in a Government of National Unity (GNU). But GNU has NEVER worked in postcolonial Africa: in Angola (1992), Congo DR (1997), Ivory Coast (2000), Liberia (2003), Sudan (2004), Kenya (2008), Zimbabwe (2008), etc.

The Western approach failed for three reasons.

1. It expected people who had been sworn to the destruction of each other to suddenly lay down their arms, make nice, put aside their differences, hold the interest of their countries above their own and govern. These never happen – Savimbi of Angola, Garang of Sudan, Tsvangirai of Zimbabwe, etc.

2. GNU may entail the distribution of government posts and nobody is satisfied with what they get, which may lead to the resumption of conflict – Angola in 1993, Ivory Coast in 2001, etc.

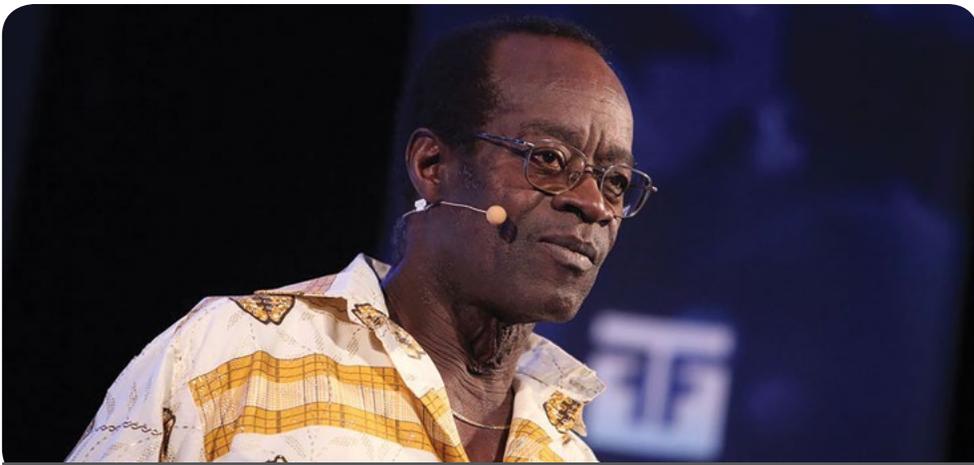
3. Civil society – those affected by the conflict /dispute – are often

excluded in the negotiations. 4. There is no arbiter to enforce compliance with the rules. Recalcitrant combatants can hold an entire country hostage, in Congo DR, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Sudan, etc.

4. The indigenous African approach avoids these pitfalls. When a crisis erupts in an African village, the chief and the elders would convene a village meeting. There the issue would be debated by the people until a consensus is reached. During the debate, the chief, acting as an arbiter, usually makes no effort to manipulate the outcome or sway public opinion. Nor are there bazoorka-wielding rogues, intimidating or instructing people on what they should say. People express their ideas openly and freely without fear of arrest. Those who cared participated in the decision-making process. No one was locked out. Once a decision has been reached by consensus, it was binding on all, including the chief.

These village' meetings are variously called asetena kese by the Ashanti, ama-ala by the Igbo of Nigeria, guurti by the Somali, kgotla by the Tswana of Botswana, pitso by the Xhosa, ndaba by the Zulu, dare by the Shona of Zimbabwe, etc.

In recent years, this indigenous African institution was modernized to resolve crises in Benin, Cape Verde Islands, Congo, Malawi,



Prof. George Ayittey

Mali, South Africa, and Zambia. The village meeting metastasize into a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) with an arbiter and most importantly, the participation of civil society/

Benin's nine-day "Sovereign National Conference" began on 19 February 1990, with 488 delegates, representing various political, religious, trade union, and other groups encompassing the broad spectrum of Beninois society. (Note the representation.) The conference, whose chairman was Father Isidore de Souza, held "sovereign power" and its decisions were binding on all, including the government. "Sovereign power" meant that no one, not even the president, could abrogate its decisions. SNC stripped President Matthieu Kerekou of his power, scheduled multiparty elections that ended 17 years of autocratic Marxist rule.

Congo's national conference had more delegates (1,500) and lasted longer three months. But when it was over in June 1991, the 12-year old government of General Denis Sassou-Nguesso had been

dismantled. The constitution was rewritten and the nation's first free elections were scheduled for June 1992. Before the conference, Congo was among Africa's most avowedly Marxist-Leninist states. A Western business executive said, "The remarkable thing is that the revolution occurred without a single shot being fired ... (and) if it can happen here, it can happen anywhere" (The New York Times, 25 June 1991, A8). Unfortunately, General Sassou-Nguesso did not accept his defeat graciously and overthrew, with the help of France and Angola, the civilian government of Pascal Lissouba in October 1997.

A similar national conference in Niger in 1991 denounced the military dictatorship of Colonel Ali Seibou and stripped him of his power, leaving him with one main task: To organize the transition to civilian rule. "For the first time since the independence of the country in 1960, free and fair elections were held and in March 1993, Mahamane Ousmane became the newcomer in the political arena" (West Africa, Dec 6-12, 1999). Ousmane subsequently turned out to

be a corrupt, incompetent buffoon, who brought the country to a standstill because a rift between him and his prime minister. He was ousted by General Ibrahim Mainassara in a coup in January 1996 and the general himself was assassinated three years later by the head of his own presidential guard, Colonel Dauoda Wanke in 1999.

In South Africa, the vehicle used to make that difficult but peaceful transition to a multiracial democratic society was the Convention for a Democratic South Africa. It began deliberations in July 1991, with 228 delegates drawn from about 25 political parties and various anti-apartheid groups. The de Klerk government made no effort to "control" the composition of CODESA. Political parties were not excluded; not even ultra right-wing political groups, although they chose to boycott its deliberations. CODESA strove to reach a "working consensus" on an interim constitution and set a date for the March 1994 elections. Elections were held. More important, CODESA was "sovereign."

Its decisions were binding on the de Klerk government. De Klerk could not abrogate any decision made by CODESA – just as the African chief could not disregard any decision arrived at the village meeting.

The mechanism exists in Africa for peaceful resolution of crises/conflicts. Instead of sending dictators to resolve political crises in Libya (2011), Ivory Coast (2011) and South Sudan, the African Union should have insisted on the convocation of a Sovereign National Conference. It should immediately do so for Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Madagascar, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and the other hotspots in Africa. If the African Union fails to act, civil society should demand it. SNC is an African solution to an African problem with a proven track record.

What is your reading of the situation Cameroon with President Biya consolidating his grip on power and the rebellion in the English speaking regions gain steam, how does Cameroon get its act again together?

The situation in Cameroon would be comical if not tragic. You have an absentee precedent who is holed up in a Château in Switzerland and holds a cabinet meeting every four years. Imagine!

The English-speaking counterparts have a grievance and you don't solve that with heavy-handed repression. Otherwise you risk a Civil War, which may already have started. The solution is a sovereign national conference, as I explained in the previous section.

The political situation in the country is unbearable.

The 85 year old president, who has been in power for nearly 43 years, has just won a 7th term for another 7 years. By the time his term ends he would have been in power nearly half a century. But I don't blame them too much.

You see, for every force in nature, there is a counterforce. A force dominates if the counterforce is weak or nonexistent. Biya has dominated because the opposition is weak, hopelessly fragmented, given to crass tactics, prone to squabbling and susceptible to bribery. In the 2013 election for example, there were more than 200 opposition parties because Biya would give any opposition leader 50 million CFA to run against him. And so many idiots took the bait.

In the past you have been an acerbic critic of the African Union, what do you think of the ongoing efforts to reform the continental body?

And why shouldn't I be an acerbic critic of the African Union? It has become a huge embarrassment on these counts:

- It has the African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights (the Banjul Charter of 1968). Article 9 of that Charter guarantees freedom of expression and of the media. But the AU does not enforce its own Charter.

- The AU is yet to resolve a single crisis in Africa. It is still struggling in Somalia. It sent peacekeeping troops to Darfur, Sudan. But when their base in Haskanita came under sustained rebel attack in October 2007, the AU soldiers fled into the bush.

- The AU can't even define democracy. There is no election the AU doesn't like.

It certifies all as free and fair.

- It's budget is 80% funded by Western donors so how independent is it in taking decisions in Africa interest?

- It could not build its own headquarters. The current glitzy \$200 million headquarters is a gift from China. Naturally, every room is bugged.

- The AU announced the creation of an African common market without any preparation whatsoever. You need to have some basic infrastructure for a market function. For example, how do you ship a ton of beef from Johannesburg to Kampala?

The AU is not only hopeless but completely useless. We need a Continental organization with a stiff backbone to stand up to dictators – just like the Organization of States (OAS) does in Latin America. At the minimum, the AU should expel countries that do not uphold its Charter or pay their dues. I have argued that the AU should be disbanded and replaced with the Organization of Free African States (OFAS).

[I have been invited by the President of Oxford Union to take pot in a debate on the African Union in February 2019. It will be brutal. The Oxford Union was founded in 1823 by University students protesting restrictions on freedom of speech and expression.]

And with all that is taking place in Africa, how do you see the future of Africa, what will it take for the continent to live its full potential?

There is a saying that, "The wise learn from the mistakes of others while fools repeat them. Idiots, on the other

hand, repeat their own stupid mistakes."

Albert Einstein once defined insanity as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. I define lunacy as doing the same stupid thing over and over again and expecting the same stupid results.

I am sorry to say this but many of our leaders in Africa fall into one or more of the categories delineated above. They adamantly refuse not only to learn from the mistakes of others but also from their own stupid mistakes. I owe no one an apology for using such strong words. All they have to do is to look at South Sudan. How can a newly minted African country descend into civil war in 2013 just three years after gaining its independence from Sudan? Even then, look at Sudan's own history. It was the first African country gained its independence in 1956 but plunged into civil war that raged for more than 20 years.

In 1990, only 4 African countries – Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius and Senegal – were democratic. In January 2017, only 17 out of 54 countries are democratic – Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde Islands, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles Islands, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

At this rate – 12 democracies in 27 years – it will take Africa exactly 94.5 years to become fully democratic, other things being equal.

Even then, it is important that elections alone do not make a

country democratic. In addition to periodic elections, the following are also needed:

1. A free and independent press – for free flow of information to inform the public

2. An independent judiciary – for the rule of law, adjudication of disputes,

3. An independent Electoral Commission, Neutral and professional security forces, and possibly, or where driven into exile

4. An independent central bank

If you apply these additional criteria, fewer than five of the African countries would be democratic.

Since 1960, there have been exactly 235 African heads of state. Fewer than 20 can be said to have been good leaders and statesmen. That means that rest – an overwhelming majority – were complete failures, who were violently overthrown, driven into exile or assassinated.

The future does not bode well. The struggle for power will continue with deadly and destructive consequences in Algeria, Burundi, CAR, Chad, Congo DR, etc. Elsewhere, there will be more political turmoil as more African countries will implode. African leaders who cannot be peacefully removed from power through the ballot box will be violently removed with destructive consequences. This is not rocket science but has occurred many times in our postcolonial history. Candidates that fit this bill include Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Rwanda, Uganda, etc.

Bold and Innovative: How Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Is Refreshing African Leadership

By Prince Kurupati



Prime Minister Abiy has taken Ethiopia and Africa by storm with his bold and innovative agenda

On 15 February 2018, then Ethiopian Prime Minister Haile Mariam Dasalegn conceded to pressure as he tendered his resignation letter. For over two years before his resignation, Ethiopia had been marred by numerous demonstrations against political restrictions and human rights abuses. At first, Haile Mariam Dasalegn decided to turn a blind eye to the demonstrations but with time, the demonstrations grew in 'nature'. As such, Dasalegn had to act to prevent the demonstrations from turning into a full-blown conflict. The first decision that Dasalegn took was to declare a state of emergency. For a few weeks, it looked as if the state of emergency would succeed in calming down the tension and normalizing the situation. However, despite the positive start, the state of emergency failed in its

endeavour to bring back normality. In the end, Haile Mariam Dasalegn had no option but to step down.

The resignation of Haile Mariam Dasalegn paved the way for Abiy Ahmed (the current Ethiopian Prime Minister). Truth be told, Abiy Ahmed was an 'underdog' in the succession race as there were other 'notable' names in the succession race. With his charisma and wit as his main weapons, Abiy Ahmed managed to garner the necessary numbers to assume the highest office in the land. In the process, he became the very first person from the Oromo ethnic group, which is the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia to assume the role of Prime Minister.

From the onset, it was evident that Abiy Ahmed's task would not be easy as he was inheriting a country ravaged by violent demonstrations, a country

torn apart along ethnic lines and a country which was at 'war' with one of its neighbours in Eritrea. Therefore, Abiy Ahmed had a herculean task at hand.

For those who had been close to Abiy Ahmed, they knew the type of man he was i.e. a reformist, however, for the general populace, it was only during his first speech that they began to know more about the man who was going to lead them for the next couple of years until the next elections in 2020. To be precise, in his inauguration speech, Abiy Ahmed started by saying, "When an egg is broken from inside, it is life; but when an egg is broken from outside, it is death." Many interpreted this to mean that he was giving new life to the EPRDF (Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front), which had been criticized for alleged violation of human rights,

press freedom and bad governance.

Though Abiy Ahmed said all the right things in his inauguration speech in terms of reforming the whole fabric of government and governance in Ethiopia, people were more interested in actions and not in words. As such, from the very start, Abiy Ahmed knew that what would determine his success were his actions and not his words. With this in mind, the new prime minister started putting his words into action early on.

At this point, Abiy Ahmed has completed less than one half of his tenure in office but it's safe to say that he has succeeded on many fronts. His success is not only evident in Ethiopia but it is also evident in the East African region in particular and Africa in general. To put this into perspective. Below we share with you all of Abiy Ahmed's successes to this point.

Pledging Free and Fair Elections and Widening the Political Landscape

One of the reasons which precipitated the demonstrations that ultimately led to the fall of Haile Mariam Dasalegn was the cracking down on opposition political leaders as well as the crackdown on opposition groups and civil society. From the word go, it was clear that this 'issue' had to be addressed if the country was to move forward smoothly. As such, Abiy Ahmed took the swift action

of widening the political landscape by welcoming once-banned opposition groups home. This gesture has calmed the nerves of opposition supporters. In addition to welcoming back opposition politicians back home, Abiy Ahmed has already pledged that the next elections set to be held in 2020 will be held when they are due (there aren't going to be any delays) and that they will be free and fair with all opposition parties given the space to campaign freely. Just to show his commitment in guaranteeing free and fair elections, Abiy Ahmed took the unprecedented step of appointing opposition leader Birtukan Mideksa to head the country's election body.

Agreeing to a Peace Deal with Longtime Rival Eritrea

For over two decades, Ethiopia and Eritrea had been in a state of war. Virtually all forms of communication between the two countries were cut. Citizens from either country could not cross the border while phone lines between the two countries were cut, this despite the fact that some Eritreans had close relatives in Ethiopia while some Ethiopians also had close relatives in Eritrea. Trade was also cut with Ethiopia being forced to use the Djibouti ports even though the nearest ports from Ethiopia to the sea are in Eritrea. With no signs of any peace deal in place during Haile Mariam Dasalegn's reign, Abiy Ahmed



Prime Minister Abiy initiated moves to meet Eritrea's President Isaias Afwerki in order to secure peace

worked miracles to bring a two-decade-long 'war' to an end within a few months! The Peace Deal with Eritrea was widely received in both Ethiopia and Eritrea as long lost relatives and friends managed to see each other in over 20 years. Apart from reuniting families, the Peace Deal also meant that Ethiopia and Eritrea would resume trade, a great thing for both economies. The Peace Deal was not only significant for Ethiopians and Eritreans but for East Africa and Africa as a whole as it set a good precedence that regardless of the differences at hand, a solution to bring peace and security will always be found.

Reforming Government Institutions

For long, there had been calls to reform government institutions as many saw them as inefficient and ineffective. However, the calls always fell on deaf ears. That was not the case however with Abiy Ahmed when he assumed power. Immediately after his

inauguration, Abiy Ahmed started taking steps to reform government institutions with his focus primarily on the intelligence, military, federal police and the justice systems. Certain agencies and departments that fell under these ministries were disbanded, however, what impressed the public the most was the replacing of the heads of the military and federal police ministries with civilians. The heads of the security ministries had for a long time been synonymous with government corruption and as such, their dismissal meant that Abiy Ahmed had struck corruption on the head.

Ending the Chinese economic growth model

Like most other African countries, Ethiopia had adopted the Chinese economic growth model. However, the coming into power of Abiy Ahmed signalled the beginning of the end of the Chinese economic growth model in Ethiopia. In order

to achieve this, Abiy Ahmed stated that the government was going to sell shares in major state enterprises such as Ethiopian Airlines, Ethio Telecom, Ethiopian Shipping Lines and Logistics, and Ethiopian Electric Power. The rationale behind this move being necessitated by the need to address the shortage of foreign currency as well as improve the efficiency of the poorly managed enterprises, save for Ethiopian Airlines.

Gender Balanced Cabinet

For his first few months in office, Abiy Ahmed worked with the same group of ministers which had served under Haile Mariam Dasalegn. However, late in October, Abiy Ahmed decided to create his own team via a cabinet reshuffle. Instead of appointing 28 ministers as was the case in Haile Mariam Dasalegn's reign, Abiy Ahmed downsized and appointed only 20 ministers. Of these 20, 10 were male and 10 were female meaning that Ethiopia's new cabinet was

gender balanced, a first for Ethiopia and also a first for Africa.

Creation of the Ministry of Peace

In his new cabinet, Abiy Ahmed also created a new ministry i.e. the Ministry of Peace. This ministry was created to oversee intelligence and security-related agencies, federal affairs, immigration and others. It was also created with the hope that it will improve ethnic relations in the country, and work towards reconciliation among communities ravaged by unprecedented levels of ethnic violence over the last two decades. With the creation of this ministry, Abiy Ahmed showed his desire to pursue a peace agenda with the view to building a stable and more tolerant nation-state. To head the ministry, Abiy Ahmed appointed the former speaker of the house Muferyiat Kamil. A reformist herself, it's to be seen how she will fare in her endeavour make Ethiopia a more

tolerant nation. Her task is made difficult though by the fact that the power structure in the country has not changed of prioritizing ethnic politics and the furthering of the rights of groups over the rights of individual citizens. Furthermore, the ruling coalition's main political and economic ideology which prioritizes the party agenda over the sanctity of the country's constitution is also problematic.

Lifting Bans on Media Outlets and Unblocking Websites

Under the reign of Haile Mariam Dasalegn, any media outlet which was viewed to be anti-government was banned, its website blocked and the owners on occasions jailed. However, when Abiy Ahmed assumed power, he dropped the charges against many bloggers, journalists, and opposition groups, freed thousands of prisoners, and most recently unblocked more than 250 websites. After the move, the Chief of staff at the Prime Minister's office, Fitsum Arega said in a tweet, "A free flow of information is essential for engaged & responsible citizenry... Freedom of expression is a foundational right that other rights depend on... only a free market of ideas will lead to the truth." The announcement also gives Ethiopians access to this website, the Ethiopian Satellite Television and Radio (ESAT), a site that has been blocked since its inception and its satellite transmissions jammed at least 25 times.



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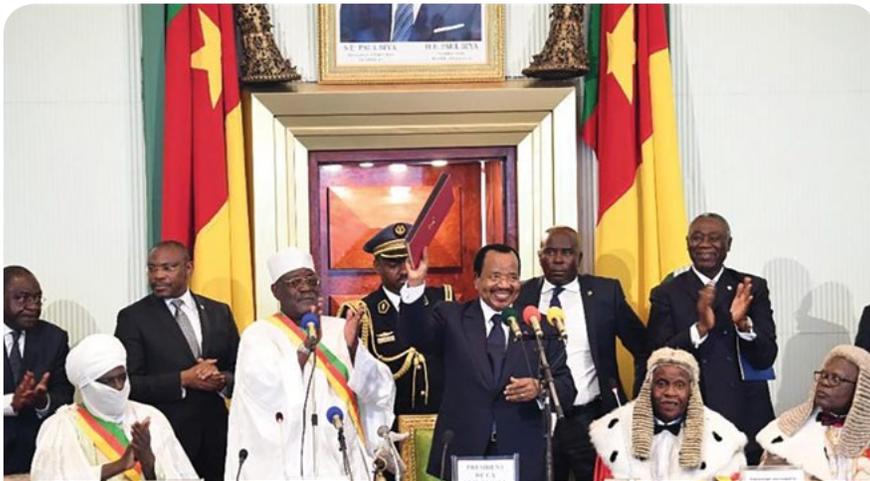
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Cameroon in The turbulent zone: Anglophone crisis proving to be a tough test for Biya's government

By Boris Esono (Buea-Cameroon)



Another Mandate for President Biya as Cameroon hits the most turbulent period of its history.



Though President Biya recently ordered the release of some detainees, Julius Ayuk Tabe and so many others are still in jail. Many believe their release could ease tensions.

Against a backdrop of bomb blasts, sporadic violence and repressive state measures, Cameroon's Anglophone crisis has entered a new and intensified phase that shows no signs of slowing down. The UN reports that an more than 4,000 have become refugees in Nigeria since 2017.

The violence that was rife between November 2016 to January 2017 in Cameroon's two Anglophone regions and the support for the Operation Ghost Town that followed showed that the Anglophone problem is deep-rooted. It will not be resolved by denying it exists or by repression, but by dialogue and institutional reform.

In the context of pressure from the government and the financial difficulties of continuing the strike, some people have disassociated themselves from the movement and more would do so if it were not for the threats of secessionists. However,

they are still dissatisfied. After sacrificing an academic year and resisting pressure from the government and secessionist militants, the risk is that they will become increasingly bitter if no reasonable progress is made, especially on educational reform and governance.

Kidnappings/killings

The rate at which people are being killed and kidnapped has increased exponentially since the crisis started more than 2 years ago. Every week, scores of individuals are killed as clashes intensify between separatists and security forces. During the past weeks students, teachers, schools and Universities in Cameroon continue to endure significant violence. On Monday 5th November, 78 students were kidnapped at PSS Nkwen, in Bamenda, North West Region but later released. The school also suffered another separate attack in which 11 students were kidnapped

and later released. On the 10 and 16 of November 2018, 2 lecturers of the University of Buea were kidnapped by unknown men.

According to Human Rights Watch, the Anglophone crisis has seen several calamities, loss of property and lives. Over the past two years, a political standoff between Cameroon's Francophone dominated government and the country's Anglophone minority-some of whom are seeking independence have become a full-fledged human rights crisis. Hundreds are thought to have been killed, over a thousand homes burnt, and dozens of schools attacked. An estimated 250,000 people have had to flee their homes for safety.

Presidential election/Fallouts

The year 2018 saw Cameroon involve in the presidential election with incumbent president Paul Biya winning a landslide with

more than 71% of the votes. During the voting process, there were mass gunshots across the Anglophone regions with some casualties noted. The main opposition SDF Party had a disastrous election as they came in 4th position.

The fallouts caused by the incumbent winning have been massive. Maurice Kamto who had earlier claimed victory has called for a nationwide protest while also calling on Francophones to be in solidarity with the Anglophones by observing a partial ghost town from 1pm till evening for the present crisis. He (Kamto) has warned the government that if a solution is not found to the crisis then the ghost town will be extended to the year 2019 in the mostly French speaking regions of the country. The presidential election also culminated in mass arrest after Kamto's supporters took to the streets

to demonstrate against the President Biya's victory.

Disarmament committee created

In a bid to bring an end to the ongoing crisis, the Head of state in a decree Friday November 30 created a committee for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex fighters of Boko Haram and the armed groups in the South West and North West Regions.

Fai Yengo Francis was appointed to head the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration commission Tuesday December 4 by a presidential decree with headquarters in Yaounde and other regional branches in Buea, Bamenda and Mora.

The committee will be in charge of organizing, supervising and managing the disarmament, demobilization and re-integration of ex-Boko Haram fighters and armed groups in the South West and North West Regions willing



The crisis originally started as a peaceful protest and pressure has been mounting on President Biya to initiate broad base dialogue.

to lay down their arms.

The government is wrong to bet on the crisis running out of steam. The threat of a third year of schools ineffectiveness hangs over the beginning of the next academic year. Above and beyond the electoral question, the sporadic violence of the last few months and the use of social networks have shown that some secessionists are ready for the armed struggle. The opening of a front in the West

could prove to be dramatic for Cameroon, which already faces Boko Haram in the Far North and militias from the Central African Republic to the East.

In order to prevent the outbreak of an armed uprising, Cameroon's president must go beyond superficial measures by urgently implementing key reforms and pursuing inclusive, high-level dialogue mediated by the UN or African Union.

Kagame and His Insurmountable Task of Reforming the African Union: A Look at How He Has Fared As His Term Comes To an End

By Prince Kurupati



President Paul Kagame has picked a team of eminent persons he will work with as he leads efforts to reform the African Union into a more credible and self-reliant body.

In the academic circles, the main debate on the subject of the African Union (AU) is the question of whether the regional body is a toothless bulldog and a vast, sprawling bureaucracy whose sole purpose is to enrich the already rich (top government officials and others who work

directly with the regional body) while sidelining the very same people who it should be serving i.e. the ordinary African.

Though there are many who believe that the AU is not just serving the interests of the rich but also serving the interests of the ordinary

citizen, the mere fact that this debate is still raging on is ample proof that there is something wrong in nature, functions and operations of the AU. It is in light of this that when Paul Kagame assumed the reigns to become the Chairperson of the AU earlier on this year, he prioritized the

internal reformation of the regional body so as to give the body a new 'image' while at the same time ensuring that it starts serving the people it ought to serve.

When he assumed the reigns to become the Chairperson of the AU and after outlining his vision and objective (i.e. reforming the AU), Kagame was faced with a hard decision to make. The decision was whether he should go all out in pursuit of his objective or to just take a bystander view and focus on 'proposing' rather than taking action. This was in light of the calls made by a number of countries warning that the desire to reform and create "a strong AU Commission in Addis Ababa that can dictate to sovereign states" would not be popular and in some instances rejected.

Faced with a tough decision to make, Kagame settled for

the tougher choice, going all out in pursuit of his objective. If truth be told, the tougher choice was the right decision. In order to achieve his objective while at the same time fulfilling his vision,

Kagame over the past couple of years did implement a number of measures meant at reforming the 'core' of the AU. Most of these measures have been successfully implemented; though some will take time to complete, the foundation laid out by Kagame makes them odds-on to succeed. Below, we take a look at some of the reforms that have been implemented by Kagame thus far.

Financial Autonomy

Traditionally, the AU has survived (financially) on grants and donations from member states as well as the international community. Primarily, these two sources



provided the bulk of the AU's 'revenue'. However, when Kagame became the Chair, he stated that the regional body ought not to rely on grants and donations, rather, the AU ought to sustain itself.

In the words of Rwanda's Foreign Affairs minister Dr Richard Sezibera, who is also the chairperson of the Executive Council, "As the reforms take place there is need to recognize that self-financing of the Union in a sustainable manner will be a key determinant of our accomplishments."

In order to achieve financial autonomy, Kagame unrolled a multifaceted plan. Firstly, the plan focused on weaning the AU off foreign donor funding. To replace donor funding, Kagame came up with a proposal to levy a 0.2 percent tax on imports, which then would be channelled to the regional body to run its activities. From the calculations, if all member states do oblige to the

proposal, AU will raise \$1.2 billion against the AU's average annual budget of \$782 million hence meaning the body would effectively end dependence on donors. To date, only the following countries have effected the levy: Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Chad, Guinea, Sudan, Congo-Brazzaville, Cameroon, Gambia, Gabon, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Ghana

Secondly, the plan focused on reducing the number of summits and commissions held annually. Paradoxically,

it is in 2018 that the AU held more summits than any other year (4). This, however, ought to be taken in the context that Kagame convened the additional summits as a way of expediting the adoption and ratification of the reforms that he is implementing. 2018 aside, the plan implemented by Kagame will see the AU holding just one major summit annually instead of the previous two where heads of states met on their own while ministers and delegates met on their own. The plan to cut the number of summits was in response to

the costliness of holding such summits.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat said that "Rationalization of our working has resulted in greater efficiency in conducting the affairs of our Union. Progress towards financial autonomy has established the conditions for greater ownership of our policies and efforts. However, it must be recognized that much remains to be done."

The Single African Air Transport Market and The Continental Free Trade Area

When Kagame assumed the chairperson of the AU, The Single African Air Transport Market proposal was already in the pipeline. However, Kagame gets much credit as he managed to convince many countries to sign up this year. The same is also true of The Continental Free Trade Area. Kagame assumed the chairperson of the AU when The Continental Free Trade Area proposal was already in the pipeline but he did enough to convince a number of countries to be

signatories to the free trade area agreement. So far 49 countries have signed The Continental Free Trade Area and six of the requisite 22 countries have ratified.

Making The Regional Body Lean And Performance-orientated

As part of his reformation measures, Kagame also sought to make the AU lean and performance-oriented as in his words, the AU has a multitude of focus areas. In order to achieve this goal, Kagame targeted a number of areas. Firstly, he targeted the election and recruitment of the chairperson and deputy chairperson of the AU Commission and the eight commissioners. Though recognizing that the role of the AU Commission is important, he sought to downsize the composition of the body so that it focuses only on main priority areas such as political affairs, Africa's global representations, peace and security, and economic integration. Downsizing to these four main priority areas would have seen the AU reducing the number of AU Commissioners from eight to four. The proposal, however, received stern criticism from various quarters hence the commission was downsized so as to remain with six commissioners.

Institutional Reform

Kagame has also called for institutional reform as a way of dealing with the AU's challenge of having a multitude of focus areas. Kagame sought the transformation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development Agency into the AU Development Agency.



Namibia's Economy Is Back On The Rails- Finance Minister Calle Schlettwein

By Ajong Mbapndah L



Finance Minister Calle Schlettwein says the Namibian economy is back on the rails with a more positive outlook for the future.

After a turbulent last few years, the worse is behind for the economy of Namibia, and quality growth could start as early as the last quarter of the year says Finance Minister Calle Schlettwein. By balancing the budget and a pro-growth consolidation approach, past gains were not lost while the economy was in troubled waters, Minister Schlettwein said. Interviewed by Pan African Visions on a mission in Washington, DC, Minister Schlettwein opened up on areas where there have been challenges, investment opportunities, corruption, land reforms and more. On the economic legacy of President Hage Geingob who is up for elections next year, Minister Schlettwein said his vision of shared prosperity is reducing inequality and Namibians will soon reap full benefits of his policies.

How's the economy in Namibia doing today?

The economy of Namibia in the last 2 years or so lost most of its growth and we started a consolidation phase that managed to balance all financial revenue. That has been achieved. But growth has by and large been lost. We are now in a phase where the economy is decent, the micro economics are better, stabilized and we are in a better situation than last year. We are hopeful that we will return to quality growth in the near future or even in the last quarter of this year probably.

In March you presented a budget in parliament and you indicated that the budget was aimed at bringing about jobs, less poverty and improve delivery. How is that working so far?

Between balancing of the budget and pro-growth

consolidation approach, we managed not to lose what we have gained in the past. On inequalities we are stable. Unfortunately, we saw some jobs losses and that is because of loss of growth. We also saw jobs lost in the construction sector, fishing sector and some of the supply industries for the construction sector. We are experiencing job losses but on the inequalities side we managed to stabilize the situation.

According to the central bank of Namibia in a recent forecast, the economy was expected to grow by 0.6% in 2018, with the potential Namibia has, what will it take for optimal growth?

We need to use our domestic savings into investment in the economy. We are still the net exporter of capital so there is significant opportunity to leverage our

own savings into the economy itself and develop our country with it. We also believe that foreign direct investment can be improved; just recently we opened a car assembly plant by Peugeot. That is a very positive move that shows that investors still have confidence in our country. Transport and logistics have actually grown in spite of the difficult situations. We saw growth in the mining sector. Growth through is back with Agriculture but tourism is going well. Both in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors growth is appearing.

The problem still is manufacturing and wholesale those were the main contributors to negative growth and that cancelled each other. We must work harder to improve our investment climate, there are some bureaucratic processes that are taking too long, and we now have a dedicated program in our prosperity plan focused on streamlining administrative processes to improve where reports have shown some weaknesses.

For potential investors, what opportunities are in Namibia for them?

Namibia is still judged as a stable country with a very sophisticated financial sector, proper infrastructure, growth, transport and also ICT and Telecommunications. We also have a good number of resources that are very attractive like in the mining sector. But we believe it is not only mining that is the

primary sectors but also the secondary sector. We have a growing tourism sector where the appetite for investment is great. There are a number of individual projects whether it is jewelry making, agro processing, we have potential there as well and many others.

What impact has the Moody's investors services ratings had on efforts to get the economy back on track?

It has reduced the investors confidence of for foreign investors. We were fearful that it would have a large impact on our bonds but they didn't suffer a lot. We are quite happy for not being thrown under the bus. We are satisfied with the actions we took

How much is corruption a problem for the government?

No country in the world can say they are corruption free. We have had our own share of it. We have consistently been amongst the top five countries that are corruption free. We do take it seriously because the cost of corruption that were uncovered was significant and as a small economy that is experiencing flat growth performances, any additional cost to the economy is not tolerable. We believe that corruption is a phenomenon that must attract zero tolerance at all levels.

Where are we on the debate on land reforms and what impact is it having on the economy?

Land reform continues to be a very sensitive but also



Namibia must have zero tolerance for corruption says Finance Minister Calle Schlettwein.



Namibia is on the right path with the policies of President Hage Geingob and he deserves a second term says Calle Schlettwein.

fundamental issue in our society and economy. Our liberation struggle had the issue of land reform as the main issue in the fight for freedom. We started with a land reform program shortly after independence which was basically anchored on the constitutional provisions which protects property, but which allows the state to intervene, buy out land and redistribute to disadvantage people. That system delivered but did not deliver enough to be satisfactory. So, it was a slow process that didn't address the structural issues that were underlying the unfair distribution of land. A land mark conference was held some 2 months ago with everyone in attendance. We believe that it is only through talking that issues can be solved.

The outcome of the conference was very positive because everyone was on board. We now have through the resolutions of the conference a set of actions that need to be down to solve land issues. The other positive in the conference is that it brought about stability. It was clear that if we don't resolve these issues people will resort to civil unrest to put pressure on the government.

What have been the achievements of President Hege Geingob since he took office?

The president took over an economy which was un-stable. His greatest achievements are stabilizing the economy while also managing to stabilize inequality and that is not a small achievement in a declining economy. The job shedding could have been even worse but we have maintained it and reduce the job loss. He has also managed in an admirable way to bring all of us together which is very crucial for a government that faces issues that are not of our own doing.

Are these achievements enough to warrant a second term for him?

Foreign Minister: Yes, for sure. I believe our plan that is focusing on shared prosperity to improve inclusivity in our policy making, to induce growth in to our economy, to focus on youth employment, to make sure that our children are better enough than we are, and the tightening of the systems to prevent corruption, put the country on the right direction under his leadership. Those are programs that will show he deserves a second term. We have reviewed the tax system, land reforms system,

housing system. The plan is a solid and good one.

What are your fears and hope for Namibia?

For the fears, we hope that the trade wars that big nations like America and China are engaged in, the increase in populists' movements in Europe, conflicts in the Middle East that are not going away, we hope that these issues will be addressed quickly. Namibia is a small open economy and we don't want to be drawn in to negative developments which we can't do anything about. We are watching with some worry. They are clouds that don't want to go away.

We are happy that we are part of the African continent where things have turned out for the better. Governance issues on the African continent have improved quite significantly. All the days of coup are very limited, and all African countries have gone in to the mentality that better government means they can get Africa going other than hidden agendas, funny businesses. Governance in Africa will be improved. We believe the economic integration of Africa will create massive opportunities for better trade and for making Africa a much more attractive market. Economic integration as we

foresee in agenda 63 is very good development.

The one worry we have is that most investments are resource seeking investments and they have not yet appreciated governance as a criteria in order to invest there or not. In Africa, those with weaker records on governance attract higher investments, a clear indication that it is a resource seeking issue. That doesn't deter us to have governance issue at the top of our agenda. We are not a country that wants to be resource base and primary sector base forever we need to move up the chain.

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The Handshake that transformed Kenyan politics

By Samuel Ouma

The disputed presidential results during 2017 General elections plunged Kenya into chaos that the East African country had never witnessed for a decade.

Trouble commenced few months to August polls as leaders were aligning themselves along ethnic lines and Kenyans followed their footsteps which resulted to ethnic hatred. They engaged in verbal exchange to tear their political nemesis apart.

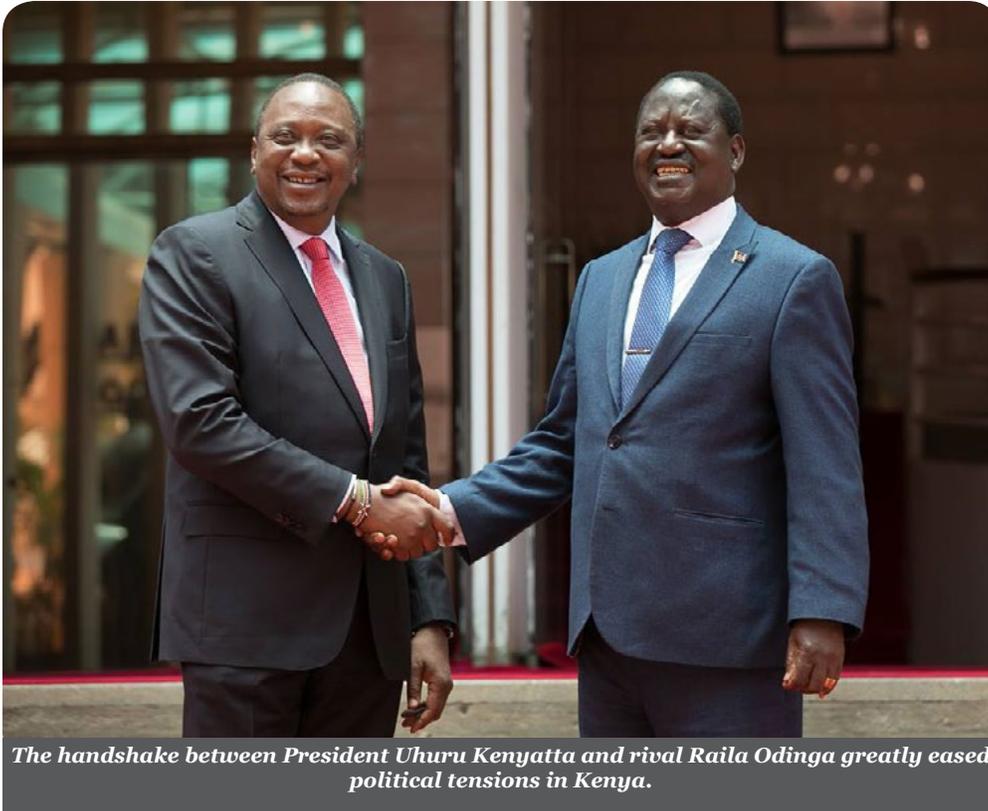
Tension escalated when the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

Information and Communication Technology director Chris Musando was murdered. Mr. Musando went missing for two days, thereafter, his body was found dumped in a forest, few kilometers from Nairobi. The postmortem revealed he was strangled.

“He died from strangulation and he also had incisions on his right arm, but the rest of his body was intact,” said the chief government pathologist Johansen Oduor.

The opposition led by Raila Odinga condemned the killing linking a top government official to Musando’s death. They said the manager’s murder was intended to create an avenue for the rigging of the general elections.

“Over 70 per cent of



The handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and rival Raila Odinga greatly eased political tensions in Kenya.

Kenyans support the opposition taking over power from the government next week, Jubilee leaders are afraid of this and that is why you are seeing all these strange activities just few days to the elections,” reiterated the then Raila’s running mate Kalonzo Musyoka.

Presidential results rejected

Protests and chaos erupted in the capital and the oppositions strongholds after the opposition leader Raila Odinga rejected the preliminary results released by the electoral body, IEBC. Odinga alleged fraud saying hackers used the identity of the slain official to infiltrate the database of the country’s election and manipulated results.

The opposition supporters barricaded roads, burned tyres and engaged police in running battles. Police open fire on them killing and injured many.

The former premier termed the outcome that saw him trail the incumbent with more than one million votes as work of computer, not Kenyans will. He described the results as sham, fake and fictitious.

“The results are fabricated. They are all fake,” Odinga said.

The electoral agency’s decision to declare President Uhuru Kenyatta as August 8 presidential winner aggravated turmoil in the country. Thousands of Kenyans took it to the streets to protest what they termed as injustices and the security

officers used the opportunity to butcher innocent citizens. People turned against each other, tribe against tribe. Goodwill and peaceful co-existence between neighbors came to halt.

Court nullifies results

After thorough consultations, the opposition resorted to challenge President Uhuru’s win in the Supreme Court which it labeled as fraudulent and computer generated results. They had vowed not to go to court on the ground of 2013 petition which they said was unfairly dismissed by the Judges.

The opposition pointed at the polling stations that did not exist but was used to inflate figures in favor of Mr. Kenyatta and the pattern

between him and the incumbent that remained constant at 11 per cent throughout the release of the results.

“We will show how they shamelessly cooked results from non-existent polling stations and fake un-gazetted presiding and returning officers. They gave figures from non-existent Forms 34A and 34B; they scrambled to manufacture such forms; switched vote numbers and how they openly swindled to reach predetermined consistent vote numbers. They cooked numbers to the extent that vote tallies often

surpassed registered voters in polling stations,” said Mr. Odinga.

On September 1, 2017, the Kenyan powerful court made led by Chief Justice David Maraga made history by nullifying the incumbent re-election saying it was not conducted according to the law.

Maraga said the electoral body failed, neglected or refused to conduct election in keeping with the law. He ordered for fresh polls within 60 days.

“We were satisfied that the election was not conducted as the Constitution dictates,” he said.

The IEBC failure to adhere to the opposition’s irreducible minimums made Odinga to withdraw from October 26 repeat polls. He succeeded

in persuading Kenyans from participating in it.

The election was marked with a low voter turnout of 35 per cent, boycotts and violence in some opposition strongholds. Even though Kenyatta won the polls, the opposition vowed not to recognize him as the president. Instead it formed people's assembly which comprised of elected leaders and key players from the civil society, trade unions, youths to spearhead constitutional amendments.

There were also calls for cessation. The opposition leaders wanted the country to be divided into two, Central Republic of Kenya headed by Kenyatta and Democratic Republic of Kenya on the ground of electoral injustices and lack of democracy.

The opposition's resistance wing-National Resistance Movement further called Kenyans to boycott products from companies it claimed were supporting the government to scuttle Uhuru's legacy economically.

The companies were the dominant mobile operator Safaricom, Bidco and Brookside. The opposition accused Safaricom of helping rigging of August poll in favor of the President while Bidco and Brookside funded his campaigns. Others were Shell, Total, Oil Libya and Gulf oil.

"We will resist the products of these companies because they are beneficiaries of the regime that killed people in this country," said Junet Mohamed, an opposition legislator.

Mock oath

Government hard stance forced the National Super Alliance coalition to swear in its Presidential candidate

as the People's president on January 30 despite warnings from the government top officials.

Prior to the ceremony the opposition unveiled what it said were authentic results of the August 8 presidential poll. The results showed Odinga garnered 8,104,744 votes and Kenyatta got 7,908,215 votes which represented 50.24 and 48.92 per cent respectively.

The chief agents, Odinga's co-principal Musalia Mudavadi and Siaya Senator James Orengo termed the results as undiluted and unadulterated.

"This is it. This is what the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission has denied Kenya ever since the elections were held on August 8," said Orengo.

Thousands of Kenyans who attended the event sent jitters in the government camp. The government shut down all media houses which attempted to air the fully packed ceremony drawing criticism from the Human rights groups.

Handshake building process

The country's economy was on the verge of falling due to continuous political squabble. The investors were scared and they began leaving the country. Businesses were closed over fear of looting by the protesters. Foreign travelling agencies warned

their citizens against visiting the country and as result there were a few number of tourists thus a heavy slump in tourism sector.

The election melee devastated the government also. It was expected to pay Ksh.77 billion (\$770 million) syndicated loan in October 2017 but the treasury asked for more six months until calm is restored.

When the period of six months elapsed, the treasury took another loan from the Trade Development Bank to settle the syndicated loan. However, this did not ease pressure on the government. There were delays in disbursement of funds to counties. Development projects at county level were at standstill.

The circulation of money in the market was reduced. The government was not spending in infrastructure, paying suppliers and releasing money to counties.

Kenyatta's government request of loan from Eurobond market was turned down due to political

uncertainty. Bondholders noted that the continuous political fracas would jeopardize the country's prospect to pay back its debts.

"There is no assurance that stability will increase again in the future, which may impact Kenya's level of tourism and foreign investment or risk of sudden withdrawal of foreign deposits among other things, which in turn may adversely affect Kenya's economy and its ability to service its debt," read part of the prospect from bondholders.

Seeing things becoming worse, President Kenyatta fought off hardline position from his supporters to save the country by approaching Mr. Odinga for a peaceful talk. Mr. Odinga whose supporters were determined to boycott paying taxes to the government and remove president's portraits from offices and businesses heeded the call and behind the scene negotiation began.

The two agreed to leave the leaders interested in 2022 presidential elections out of the talks.

"We first had preliminary talks on how to conduct the final talks. I gave my demands and he accepted that I will meet him alone. He also insisted that my co-principals be excluded and kept in the dark," said Raila.

After few weeks of discussion they reached a political truce and on Friday, March 9, 2018, they two were spotted in the Harambee House, the president's office, shaking hands which were closely followed by speeches. The two arch-rivals became friends and pledged to work together for betterment of Kenya.

"We have a responsibility to discuss and find solutions that will bind, unify and give a lifecycle beyond the five years we have given ourselves. Elections come and go but Kenya will remain," President Kenyatta said.

"We have been pouring new wine into old wine skins. We need leaders to secure the goals for peace, unity and justice. Such a time has come for Kenya," Odinga, the veteran opposition leader



President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga leave Mamboleo Showground, Kisumu County, after launching the Universal Health Coverage scheme.

said.

Impact of handshake

Famous handshake came with many benefits; immense tranquility was experienced across the country, the shilling gained against the dollar.

Economy got a boom. Businesses were operating without any fear, scared investors returned and an influx of tourists in the country was unexplainable.

The handshake was extended to their allies. They reconciled and began working together to improve the economy. President Kenyatta reached out to his political rivals and asked for forgiveness and the same applied to Odinga.

Succession politics

The rapprochement, however, has caused split in the Jubilee, ruling party, over the 2022 succession

politics. President Kenyatta and Ruto reached a deal prior to 2013 General elections. The deal stated that Uhuru to reciprocate Ruto's backing in 2022.

The Deputy President allies have expressed their dissatisfaction with the dalliance saying its main aim is to scuttle Ruto's presidential bid. They have accused some anonymous people in the State House who have a plan to block the deputy president from succeeding Kenyatta.

"The president that I defended even as others were being sworn in as unofficial presidents, I know him as a president who loves the common man and if he has change I would know," reiterated Murkomen, staunch Ruto's supporter.

The lifestyle audit proposed by the Head of the state to all government officials and elected leaders in fight

against graft further widen the rift with a section of leaders allied to Ruto saying he is being targeted. Ruto is alleged to have connection in some mega scandals in the country.

A handful of Ruto's lieutenants have been pushing the President to share the details of handshake saying it is the behind disquiet in the ruling party.

Death of the opposition

Division in the opposition dates back to mock swearing-in when Odinga's co-principals; Kalonzo Musyoka, Musalia Mudavadi and Moses Wetangula skipped the even. Their exclusion from the political truce did not go well with Odinga. They castigated him for betrayal.

Ouster of Moses Wetangula as the Senate minority leader by the Odinga's party added more trouble to the embattled outfit and created

an enmity between the two. Mr. Wetangula lambasted Odinga for conniving with the opposition's senators to strip him off his post. He described Odinga as a betrayer who cannot be trusted by anyone.

He further revealed that the opposition is dead, noting his party is no longer in the outfit. Later, he branded himself the opposition leader on the ground that Odinga is in government.

"I am leading the opposition and we are fighting for Kenyans. In history, we have people who fight and in the process of the fight, however strong and lethal they are, they get captured. And once they are captured, they distort the process of the fight, but eventually others emerge and lead the fight," Wetangula said.

Following Odinga's appointment as the High Representative for infrastructure Development

in Africa and Kalonzo Musyoka as the new head of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) on peace in South Sudan, Kenyans have questioned the role of opposition in the country. The argument is that the government is aiming at eradicating opposition so as to carry out its ill-activities.

However, Odinga has downplayed the rumors going around that the opposition does not exist. He maintained that it is vibrant and intact. He has also denied being in the government.

"I have not joined government. I do not hold any position in the Jubilee administration. Therefore, nothing stops me from criticizing the government. Those that have contrary views are wrong," said Raila.

Mozambique: Nyusi's Administration Under Fire for Security Lapses

By Alexandre Nhampossa



Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi shakes hands with opposition leader late Afonso Dhlakama on February 7, 2015 in Maputo

Decapitation, around 280 people and many carbonization and gunshots are the three main forms of murder that an unknown armed group has used to assassinate defenseless

people in northern Mozambique, a situation that has lasted since October 2017, when a group of 30 masked men attacked for three days at a time police stations in Mocimboa da Praia, Cabo Delgado province, in a clash that left 16 dead.

It was, in fact, the beginning of a wave of attacks, which lasted until December 7,

2018, caused the deaths of

houses burned, according to Mozambican press reports, as the Mozambican state hides official numbers.

Usually when the extremist group attacks, always at night or dawn, it steals food and motorcycle, sets fire on houses and abducts some women. To public institutions they usually set fire as happened in police stations and in some sanitary units. They do it provided with guns, machetes, and other blunt objects.

But who are these people? What do they claim? Where

are they based? How is it possible to attack several districts of the province in a period of more than one year and continue unpunished? Where were the secret services when the group organized its logistics to make the first attacks? And how is it possible that in more than a year the agents of the secret as well as the forces of defense and security cannot unravel the group that continues to kill almost loosely?

These are some of the questions that have been put to the Mozambican President in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief of the Mozambican Defense and Security Forces, Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, who heads the country in his penultimate term. Before to his election to the post of President of the Republic, Nyusi was Minister of National Defense.

He took office on January 15, 2015, ensuring that Mozambique would live in a peaceful environment, since the country was facing a military political conflict involving the government forces and rebels of the largest opposition party, Renamo, commanded by the late president Afonso Dhlakama who died in last May.

Early in his first Mandate, Nyusi began a long process of political dialogue aimed

at ending the conflict, whose ceasefire was decreed by the two presidents in May 2017. The definitive truce should be declared after the process of Disarmament, Demilitarization and Social Reintegration of the armed men of Renamo, a process that is underway involving several international military experts.

The Peace that Mozambique enjoys today, although it is not definitive, was considered one of the assets and legacy of President Nyusi, who is known to run for his second term in the presidential elections of October 2019. However, with the emergence of extremist attacks in Cabo Delgado that affect several districts of the province, forcing several people to take refuge in neighboring countries, especially Tanzania, many have questioned his leadership, mainly the secret services that responds directly to him.

The African expert Luca Bussotti believes that the Mozambican government has ignored the danger of terrorism in Mozambique because it was focused on the «historic enemy» Renamo, noting that the outbreaks of destabilization in that region of the country have been happening for some years.

«This movement has not happened now, but probably Mozambican intelligence was turned to the historical enemy - Renamo - and did not realize these radical groups that already worked between Nampula and Cabo Delgado,» Busstoti told Lusa Agency.

He also criticized the fact that the president of the Republic chose to send several soldiers to the region of the attacks carrying with them a lot of military equipment, but without success. There are several reports of soldiers who fell into the ambushes of the insurgents and were eventually killed. Busstoti suggests a change of strategy because it is an unconventional war.

«We're dealing with guerrilla attacks, the battles do not go out in the open field, it's intelligence work,» he suggested.

According to Human Rights Watch, when the security forces arrive in villages hours after the attacks have occurred, they detain young men and other individuals who refuse to cooperate. They do so arbitrarily, mistreat and summarily execute dozens of individuals suspected of belonging to an armed group.

Some of them are taken to the police. On 30 September, a court in Pemba, capital of

Cabo Delgado, began the trial of 189 people, including Mozambicans, Tanzanians, Congolese, Somalis and Burundians, suspected of belonging to the armed group. Forty-two of the defendants are women. These individuals are charged with murder, use of prohibited weapons, crimes against state security and disturbance of public order.

A prosecutor in the Cabo Delgado province prosecutor's office, who asked not to be identified, told HRW that many of the defendants accused the soldiers of keeping them detained for several weeks before handing them over to police, using torture to force them to confess and, in some cases, killing insurgent suspects unarmed in the bush.

While the trial does not end, unconfirmed information indicates that the insurgent group is made up of youths who profess Islam and fight against the practice of another religion in that region. Other information indicates to a group of marginalized youths who demand better living conditions, while another indicates to a group of local merchants who protest against the robustness of the Mozambican state in the control of trafficking of

wood, rubies, gold and other exploited resources in the province illegally, as well as a group created with the mission to destabilize gas exploration by multinationals like Anadarko, ENI and other companies that are already settling in the region.

Whatever the motivation, the Mozambican State is not able to stop the attacks, which leads several quarters of society to question the role of the secret services and of the defense and security forces led by President Nyusi as commander in chief.

The worst thing is that the attacks tend to be intensified. Due to the situation, the UK advises against travelling to the districts of Palma, Mocimboa da Praia and Macomia, but is clear that "this advice does not apply to islands off the coast of Mozambique." The US advises travelers to "reconsider" travelling to the Cabo Delgado districts of of Mocimboa da Praia, Nangade, Palma, Macomia, and Quissanga. France adds Muidumbe to the list of districts to avoid, but says "it is possible to stay on the islands off these districts (Ibo and the Quirimbas)" - though travelers should fly straight there rather than travelling by land or sea.



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The Africa Gas Association

THE LEADING VOICE OF AFRICA'S NATURAL GAS & ENERGY INDUSTRY

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OUR VISION: The Africa Gas Association is the leading voice of the natural gas and energy industry in Africa. It seeks to become one of the most influential and respectful organizations in the global natural gas and energy industry.

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MERCK Foundation and the Redefinition of Partnership in Africa

-On Building Health Care Capacities in Africa count on the Merck Foundation-CEO Rasha Kelej

By Ajong Mbandah L

From meetings with African leaders and First Ladies, to media trainings to break the stigma around infertility, training of more than 40 Oncologists through a fellowship program, and the 5th edition of the Merck Foundation Africa Asia Luminary in Dakar, Senegal, it has been a hectic year for the Merck Foundation in Africa. Leading the charge in building partnerships with African countries is Dr Rasha Kelej, CEO of the Merck Foundation. The Merck Foundation



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with H.E. Macky Sall, The President of Senegal and H.E. Marieme Faye Sall, The First Lady of Senegal.

is resolute in its desire to help Africa meet its health care challenges, says Dr Kelej in an interview with Pan African Visions Magazine.

Dr Rasha Kelej, you are CEO of Merck Foundation, can you start by introducing the Foundation for us?

Merck Foundation is the Philanthropic arm of Merck KGaA Germany. It is a non-profit organization that aims to improve health and wellbeing of people and advance their lives through science and technology. Our efforts are primarily focussed on raising awareness about non-communicable diseases, empowering women and youth, improving access

to innovative healthcare solutions in under-served communities, building healthcare, and scientific research capacity in the fields of diabetes, hypertension, cancer and fertility care in underserved communities. Our vision is to see a world where everyone can lead a healthy and fulfilling life.

The Foundation seems to be so fond of Africa, why the interest, many will ask?

Prof Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, the Chairperson of E-Merck KG and Merck foundation is very fond of Africa and believes in its potentiality.

Furthermore, there are many challenges in Africa

with regards to healthcare and this is our speciality, we can help, and this is what we do, and we do it well.

But we also focus on Asia, we have programs in many countries such as Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar and Cambodia; and we will expand to Latin America in 2020.

It has been a hectic year for you and the foundation and we will like to visit some of the initiatives you undertook. Partnership between Merck Foundation and The African First ladies organization was established in Jan 2018 to cooperate in building health care capacity, can

you shed some light on this?

As you can see we have established many partnership with First Ladies, we have visited Chad, and in line with First Lady of Chad, H.E. Hinda Deby Itno and we visited Niger too and launched with H.E. Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou, The First Lady of Niger.

And Gambia with H.E. Fatomattou Bah Barrow

And Central African Republic with H.E. Brigitte Touadora

And during our last annual conference in Senegal, 5th edition of Merck Foundation Africa Asia Luminary in Dakar, Senegal which was presided over by President of Senegal, H.E. Macky Sall,

we established the partnership with First Lady of Botswana H.E. Neo Jane Masisi, The First Lady Ghana H.E. Rebecca Naa Okaikor Akufo-Addo, the First Lady of Burundi H.E. Denise Nkurunziza, the First Lady of Sierra Leone H.E. Fatima Maada Bio and the First Lady of Zambia H.E. Esther Lungu.

Also, we will soon launch there and in Liberia with First Lady of Liberia.

We have also established partnership with First Lady of Guinea Conakry and all of them accepted gracefully to be ambassadors of Merck more than a Mother to empower infertile women in their countries. And they are working with us to implement all programs to build health care capacity in partnership with their ministries of health.

We have also established partnership with ministry of health in each of their countries and in other countries such as; Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia.

The foundation supported the training of more than 40 Oncologists through a fellowship program,

why oncology, what was the selection criteria and does the program have any future or it was just a onetime thing?

Launched in 2016, Merck Oncology Fellowship Program is an on-going initiative, which focuses on building professional cancer care capacity with the aim of increasing the limited number of Oncologists in Africa and Developing countries. The program provides One-and two-year Fellowship and master's degree from Cairo University - Egypt, Tata memorial Centre in India, and Malaya University in Malaysia and specially created two year Oncology fellowship with the University of Nairobi, Kenya, in partnership with African First Ladies Offices and Ministries of Health, Local Governments, and Academia.

So far, over 43 candidates from more than 21 African countries have been enrolled in the Merck Oncology Fellowship Program. We specially reach out to countries that do not have even single Oncologists such as Sierra Leone, Liberia, The Gambia or have only very few such as Chad, Niger and Central African Republic and Guinea. It is our vision to create a strong platform of African specialists in these countries.

We also had the first Merck Health Media Training to break the stigma around infertility in Africa, may we know the logic behind the focus on infertility and liaising with the media?

According to WHO data 2016, one in every four couples in Africa and developing countries are infertile which means that some 180 million couples



Dr. Rasha Kelej meets First Ladies of Gambia, Fatoumattah Bah-Barrow, Lesotho.

are infertile. The incidence is much higher than in Europe and developed countries which is around maximum 8% to 9%. A very high percentage of infertility is due to untreated infectious diseases which result from child marriages, unsafe abortions, unsafe deliveries, STDs and genital mutilations. Hence prevention is very important.

More importantly, in many cultures women suffer discrimination, mistreatment, and violence due to their inability to bear children, although 50% of infertility cases are due to male infertility, therefore we need to create a culture shift to respect women whether they are mothers or not, encourage men to speak up about their infertility and support their wives through the treatment journey. I strongly believe in the power of art and media. They are critical partners to address such sensitive topics. We have produced many projects of songs, and now we are going to produce drama (plays and documentaries) with African talents across the continent.

It will be the first and we will be creating a cultural shift, raising awareness, and exploring African talents.

We started «Merck More Than a Mother» campaign in 2015 now it is in 35 countries in Africa and Asia. It aims to empower infertile women through access to information, education, and health and by changing mind-sets. This historic initiative supports governments in defining policies to enhance access to regulated, safe and effective fertility care. It also defines interventions to break the stigma around infertile women and raises awareness about infertility prevention and management. In partnership with First Ladies who are the ambassadors in their respective countries, academia, ministries of health and international fertility societies, the initiative also provides medical education and training for fertility specialists and embryologists to enable them to help and treat infertile couples in their countries.

Merck Foundation has many First Ladies to be Merck More Than a Mother

ambassadors in their countries such as those of Niger, Chad, Gambia, Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Botswana, Zambia, Burundi, Ghana, Guinea and Gambia and more. This speaks volumes about the work we are doing and the potential impact that is expected.

Also, part of the campaign is our Merck Embryology & Fertility Training Program, a three-month hands-on practical course to establish the platform of fertility specialists across Africa and Asia. Merck Foundation provides clinical and practical training for fertility specialists and embryologists in more than 35 countries across Africa and Asia such as: Chad, Niger, Central African Republic, Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Nigeria, Benin, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leon, Liberia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Botswana, DR Congo, Congo Brazzaville, Gambia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Cambodia. So far more than 80 candidates

have taken the training.

Merck Foundation is making history in many African countries where they never had fertility specialists or specialized fertility clinics before 'Merck More Than a Mother' intervention, to train the first fertility specialists such as; in Sierra Leone, Liberia, The Gambia, Niger, Chad, and Guinea.

The Merck Foundation has also supported the establishment of the first ever Public IVF centres in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Uganda.

Amongst the leaders you met were Presidents Mahamadou Issoufou of Niger and Macky Sall of Senegal to discuss long term commitment to build healthcare capacities , using your experience with these two leaders, and others you met, do you see a genuine commitment on their part to seriously tackle the issues around health care in Africa?

We have witnessed great commitment from our discussion with many heads of states such as the President

of Niger, H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou; President of Chad, H.E. Idriss Déby; President of Central African Republic, H. E. Faustin-Archange Touadéra, and the former President of Liberia, Madam Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, the Prime minister of Uganda, Mr. Ruhakana Rugunda, the Vice President of Tanzania, Dr Samia Suluhu and last but not the least, the President of Senegal, H.E. Macky Sall. All of them supported our efforts and endorsed our long term commitment to build healthcare capacity in partnership with their ministries of health. They all pledged partnership to facilitate our work to achieve our vision, which is improving the healthcare sector and serving the underserved communities in a quality and equitable way.

Senegal also hosted the 5th edition of the Merck Africa Asia Luminary, how did the forum go and what were some of the outcome?

This conference was very special since it was presided by The president of Senegal H.E. Macky Sall who led 10

African First Ladies and 15 ministers of health and 1000 participants from 57 countries. The First Ladies accepted gracefully to become Ambassadors of Merck more than a Mother Campaign and the long term partnership with Merck foundation with the aim to build healthcare capacity in their countries and to empower infertile women and break the stigma around infertility in Africa and Asia.

It took me a lot of effort and time to bring all of them on board and after this successful conference I will start executing the programs in each country with the support of each First Lady and ministry of health and for the countries that we have started already, we will follow up and expand to improve access to equitable healthcare solutions.

My first state visit after this conference was to Central African Republic in November. I will now be

visiting Botswana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Zambia, and Burundi as invited by First Ladies there.

I will also visit soon Ghana since we are going to conduct the next edition there with H.E, First Lady of Ghana. She is waiting for us to start working immediately.

Is there any part of Africa that the Merck Foundation has not yet reached, and may we know some of the challenges you face as the CEO in the course of building

of these partnerships and helping to improve health services in the continent?

We still want to visit DR Congo and Congo-Brazzaville, Guinea Conakry, Guinea -Bissau, Mal, Benin and Cameroon.

As per the challenges I face, one is the time I need to travel to all these countries and we all know it takes sometimes two days to travel from country to country since there are no direct flights in most cases.

you share outlines of some the initiatives that the Merck Foundation already has on its calendar?

We will be expanding and launching in many new countries this year in a bigger way, Burundi, Botswana, Zambia, and Liberia. There is also a new initiative we are going to launch very soon, but I will to keep it a surprise for now.

Last question, how do you envisage the future of health care in Africa and the partnerships that Merck foundation is forging across the continent?

I think the future will be brighter if we cooperate together. The magnitude of the health challenges are very big to be addresses by one organization. The secret is in the private public partnership and to really get things done by been hands on.

No time for talking anymore. We need to talk only when we talk about our impact and way forward.

With regards to 2019, could



Chairman of the Executive Board of E.Merck KG and Dr Kelej CEO of the Merck Foundation with First ladies of Chad, Niger, Guinea, Central Africa, Gambia, and Hon Margaret Mensah Williams of Namibia



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation meets the future Oncologists

The Second Coming Of Julius Maada Wonie Bio

By Uzman Unis Bah



Milestones

The milestones of President Bio's life as an adult coincides with some of the most important events in the life of Sierra Leone, in large part because he helped shape those events. The son of the Paramount Chief of the Sogbini Chiefdom in Southern Sierra Leone, Bio opted to join the army after finishing secondary school instead of going to university, which was open to him. At 32, he became Head of State and guided the process that returned Sierra Leone to multi-party



First Rescue Mission

democracy.

Bio is the fifth elected President of Sierra Leone and was sworn into office on 4th April 2018. He was born on 12 May 1964.

First Rescue Mission

In April 1992, Bio and his colleagues at the warfront, angry about the corruption and incompetence of President Joseph Saidu Momoh's All Peoples Party (APC) Government, staged a coup. Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), in its widely hailed report of 2004, described the coup as something of a rescue action by patriotic soldiers.

Peacemaker

Though a tough warrior, Bio has always preferred peaceful resolution of problems to fighting. He and his men reorganized the army and launched several successful attacks against the RUF, dislodging them from large parts of the country. As Head of State, Bio initiated the Sierra Leone Civil war Peace settlement. His efforts led to the Abidjan Peace Accord and after a series of other failed and discouraging attempts, Sierra Leone finally got peace with the Lome Accord in 2002.

Champion of Democracy

Bio was almost singularly determined among his colleagues that the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) should keep their word about conducting elections. Upon assuming office as Head of State, Bio told the nation in his maiden address on 17th January 1996 "Fellow Sierra Leoneans, before concluding this address, let me once again assure the international community that

our commitment to restore this country to democratic civilian rule is irreversible." True to his words, Bio did not only preside over the conduct of the first democratic election in nearly three decades but also voluntarily relinquished power to the democratically elected government of late President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

Politician

In 1996, Julius Maada Bio resigned from the army, went to the United States on scholarship, and bagged a Masters Degree in International Affairs from American University in Washington, DC. He returned to Sierra Leone in April 2003, set up several businesses, and in 2005 officially joined the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). He contested the 2012 elections as SLPP Presidential Candidate lost to the incumbent, President Ernest Bai Koroma, who rigged the elections. He ran for President again as the SLPP's standard-bearer on a platform of anti-corruption and promising to provide free primary and secondary education. He won the votes decisively in March 2018.

Keeping his Word

•Political Accountability: In furtherance of his commitment to

political accountability, President Bio set up a Transition team in April 2018, whose Governance Transition Team Report detailed corruption by the Government of former President Ernest Bai Koroma. As a follow-up to that report, Government announced steps to establish the Commission of Inquiry and is following through on other recommendations.

•Zero Tolerance for corruption: In Keeping to his campaign promise of fighting corruption, the President



Peace maker



Champion Of Democracy



Politician



Keeping his Word : Political Accountability



Keeping his Word : Zero Tolerance for corruption



Keeping his Word : Free Quality Education

has taken steps to restructure and empower the Anti-Corruption Commission by appointing a competent young commissioner. He has also encouraged the Auditor General to conduct system reviews and directed Minister of Finance and Attorney-General and Minister of Justice to institute the Stolen Assets Recovery Initiative (StAR), which supports international efforts to end safe havens for corrupt funds.

•Free Quality Education: In August, he launched his free quality education project which started on 17th September 2018 to increase nationwide access to pre-primary, primary and secondary schooling.

This is the country's biggest human development project since independence in 1961 that will target more than 2 million children, 56, 129 teachers and 8,105 schools for the first phase. The initial cost is estimated at US\$ 87.6 million. Government has committed 21% of its budget for this year with a funding gap of US\$ 10 million;

•Transforming the Economy: President Bio took over a country with very challenging economic conditions. Therefore, he announced two separate executive orders on Revenue Mobilisation (Published 9th April 2018) and on Expenditure Control (Published 25th April 2018).

These executive orders have resulted in increased revenue collection, minimised leakages and control expenditures. Bio has also committed his Government to economic diversification by focusing on three priority sectors – Agriculture, Fisheries and Tourism.

•Improved Energy supply: To improve on access to electricity supply at Government signed a two-year Utility Grid Infrastructure & Electricity contract for the generation of electricity at a reduced tariff rate of 16.4USc/KWh from the original tariff of 19.596USc/KWh negotiated by the former Government, making an annual savings of

approximately US\$9 million. Also, Government has signed an agreement to expand the Rural Renewable Energy Project (RREP) of mini-grids from 54 chiefdoms to 194 chiefdoms;

• Infrastructure: President Bio is very committed to infrastructure development by focusing on: improving road, air and sea transportation; increasing access to water supply and improved sanitation; improving information, Communications and Technology, improving Lands, Housing and Country Planning and improving environmental management. Bio has also shown commitment to

engage and attract investors for the construction of “Lungi Bridge” to improve the transportation from Lungi International Airport.

•On the world Stage: His Excellency the President's leadership style has won the admiration of his colleague presidents who praised him at the Commonwealth Summit in the UK and during State Visits to Senegal, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia and Qatar. President Bio is currently the Coordinator for the Committee of 10 (C-10) and Chairman of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. He was also honored to deliver a statement at the 4th Investing in Africa Forum in China where he told investors “Sierra Leone is Open For Business”.

Family

Brigadier (Retired) Julius Maada Bio is the fifth elected President of Sierra Leone. He was sworn into the office on 4 April 2018. Born on 12 May 1964, President Bio was formally inaugurated as Head of State of the Republic of Sierra Leone on his 54th birthday. President Bio is married to Fatima Bio.



H.E. Mrs Fatima Bio & HE President Bio in Doha, C

Zuma Out, Ramaphosa In: Assessing Ramaphosa's First 10 Months At The Helm in South Africa

By Prince Kurupati



14 February is a special day for those who believe in love, however, for South Africans, this year's Valentine's Day was more than just a day set aside for 'lovebirds', rather, it was also the day that many celebrated the 'fall' of Jacob Zuma.

Before 14 February, there were numerous protests mushrooming in all corners of the country under the banner #ZUMAMUSTFALL. Therefore, before Valentine's Day, the writing was on the wall that Zuma's days in power were numbered.

A few days before the 'big day' it had become increasingly evident that then-president Jacob Zuma would not complete his term in office (just like his predecessor Thabo Mbeki) mainly as a result of the impending vote of no confidence that his party, the

African National Congress (ANC) wanted to pass if he failed to resign 'soonest'. As such, it was no surprise when media houses were called to the government buildings in Pretoria to cover a presser from the president. In fact, beforehand, many knew that there was only one thing which the president was going to announce i.e. his resignation.

Indeed, the main message from Jacob Zuma on Valentine's Day was to announce his resignation. The news was met with great aplomb and fanfare by South Africans both rich and poor, white and black, ruling party supporters as well as opposition party supporters.

For the rich and mostly white, they had been angered by Zuma's pursuance of the radical transformation initiative which threatened

white monopoly capital. This was further compounded by the Land Expropriation without Compensation Act resolution which had just been passed by his party. For the rich and mostly white, it meant that not only were their assets under threat due to the radical transformation initiative but also their property (land) was also under threat from land expropriation without compensation. It is against this background why the whites and the rich wanted Zuma gone. From the word go, it was crystal clear that Zuma would be replaced by another ANC top official in Cyril Ramaphosa. However, the belief was that a change in personalities would also entail a change in other facets such as policy.

For the poor, most of whom are also blacks, they had been

angered by Zuma's failure to honour his promises and also his weak stance in tackling corruption as well as his perceived involvement in corrupt practices. As a populist, Zuma in his election campaigns promised to make the life of the ordinary citizen easy through a number of ways which include providing more jobs, improving the standard of living as well as expediting the land reform process. However, a couple of years after his election, many started to think and say that he was not doing enough while others stated that he had outright failed to honour his promises. Therefore, it is at this point that Zuma started becoming the 'enemy' of the people. This was compounded by the corruption sagas that Zuma was involved in most notably the Nkandla debacle and the

State Capture scandal.

Paving way for Zuma after his resignation was Cyril Ramaphosa, a man who had served in the Zuma administration as the Vice President and who had just been elected as the President of the ANC. In his first few days, media outlets in South Africa used the catchphrase 'Ramaphoria' as a way of describing the happiness that had engulfed the nation following Ramaphosa's inauguration.

Fast forward 10 months later, the praises for Ramaphosa have dwindled. It is in light of this that we decided to take a look at Ramaphosa's first 10 months in office, looking at what may have caused people to lose faith in him while at the same time looking at the factors why others want Ramaphosa to be given more time.

The Good

Cyril Ramaphosa promised a 'new dawn' in his first speech as the president. He went on to further state that there were two things in particular that he was going to focus on in the immediate future i.e. cleaning up governance issues and driving an economic turnaround. Staying true to his word, Cyril Ramaphosa in his first few hours in office ordered a raid on various properties belonging to the controversial Gupta family which was believed to be the orchestrators of the State Capture scandal. By ordering the raid, Ramaphosa wanted to show that he would not be 'weak' when it comes to corruption



Former President Jacob Zuma and then Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa. Ramaphosa has the last laugh and is now the President.

and mismanagement of government resources; indeed, Ramaphosa did show that he is strong-willed and is willing to go the extra mile in cracking down on corruption. A good start we should say!

Following up on his good start, Ramaphosa went on to shake things up in a positive way when he named his cabinet. A number of key Zuma allies allegedly believed to have been complicit in the state capture debacle and other corrupt practices were shown the door. In their place came new 'untainted' faces. The only downside of Ramaphosa's cabinet was that it did not achieve gender parity but that is something which can always be rectified with subsequent cabinet reshuffles.

Though not acting alone, Ramaphosa at the forefront also helped the ANC to vote in unison with opposition political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) to pass a motion to begin a process to allow for land expropriation without compensation. Though the

motion divides opinion, it certainly appeals to the blacks and the landless who feel let down by the 'willing buyer willing seller' policy which currently guides land reform. Though not directly involved, but certainly under his tutelage, the National Prosecuting Authority did announce the decision to prosecute Zuma on 783 counts of fraud, corruption, money-laundering and racketeering. Some of the charges precede the time he was elected as president. By opening up the charges, the NPA and also Ramaphosa shows the nation that the rule of law is still observed in South Africa and that anyone irrespective of position will be charged if there are any allegations levelled against him. All that's left now is for the former president to prove his innocence.

Following up on his corruption crackdown, Ramaphosa suspended and fired a number of top bosses at government entities implicated in corrupt practices. One such

man is Tom Moyane, the South African Revenue Services boss suspended and is awaiting disciplinary hearings. The president also reassigned former state security agency boss Arthur Fraser who was facing numerous allegations of mismanagement to head the department of correctional services.

Ramaphosa's corruption crackdown does not just end with prosecuting individuals but goes a step further as he is tightening up any loopholes in the justice 'system'. Recently, Ramaphosa amended the state capture inquiry to allow for the admission and hearing of testimonies in criminal proceedings.

Aimed specifically for young people, Ramaphosa launched the Youth Employment Service (YES) whose main objective is to empower the youth through paid work experience and seed-funding. The initiative is a collaborative effort between the government, business, civil society and labour.

Last but not least,

Ramaphosa has also respected the House of Assembly. In his first 10 months, he has visited the House of Assembly for a President Q and A session on three occasions. As stated by the FW De Klerk Foundation, Ramaphosa has not only impressed with his presence "but the manner in which he answered the difficult questions" commands respect.

The Bad

In as much as Ramaphosa has done a lot of things right for the country as well as for the general populace, there are still some things that he has fallen short of. Firstly, there is the issue of the land expropriation without compensation. On one side, the land expropriation without compensation is a positive to the landless blacks as it affords them the opportunity to become landowners, something which they have longed for so long and also, the most important reason why their ancestors and relatives

lost their lives during the liberation struggle. However, on the other hand, the land expropriation without compensation is a failure as it undermines property rights. As per the constitution of South Africa right now, the agreement is that anyone willing to acquire land be it citizens or the government has to compensate the current landowner. As such, taking land without compensation will be a direct violation of the country's supreme law of the land and a violation of the universal right to property thus on that front, Ramaphosa's decision to pass the motion of land expropriation without compensation motion in parliament is a huge failure.

Other failures (though Ramaphosa still has time to correct them) include the inability of Ramaphosa's administration to stop the ever-rising unemployment rate which is now at its highest since the country attained its independence in 1994. Ramaphosa has also failed to improve health care and delivery in his first months as president as the health system in the country worsened during his tenure. Ramaphosa has also failed to steer the country out of its economy 'downturn' which saw fuel prices rise thrice in a single calendar year, something which has never happened before. Lastly, Ramaphosa failed to raise the minimum wage, rather opting to postpone the national minimum wage after labour bodies in the country as well as civil society and some opposition political parties had agreed on the minimum wage.



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The Eritrean Spirit of Self Reliance Should be an inspiration to the rest of Africa-A Conversation With Former Finance Minister Gebreselassie Tesfamichael

By Ajong Mbapndah L

It was one of the most substantive and positive developments that happened in Africa recently says Gebreselassie Tesfamichael describing the recent peace accords which ended decades of conflict and war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. On the heels of the peace accords, the United Nations lifted sanctions imposed since 1999. The embargo, asset freeze, and travel ban were imposed on the grounds that Eritrea was supporting al-Shabab militants in Eritrea. While he welcomes the lifting of sanctions, like the Eritrean government, Gebreselassie a former Minister of Finance maintains that the charges



Former Finance Minister Gebreselassie Tesfamichael Eritrea is happy with the peace deal and lifting of sanctions which to him were unjust in the first place.



Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki hosts Ethiopian PM Abiy in Asmara. The humble dwelling of the Eritrean President speaks volumes on the simplicity of life in Eritrea.

that led to the sanctions were ludicrous. In a long chat with Pan African Visions, Gebreselassie, who has experience spanning 30 years in economic development at national and international levels says Eritrea not only survived the sanctions but came out victorious. But how did this country of circa 6 million people, cope with a war against its bigger and powerful neighbor and the fury of the entire world through sanctions? Part of the answer lies in a self-reliant model of development which mitigated the impact of the war and sanctions. The self-reliant spirit and model

of development should serve as an inspiration to rest of Africa, says Gebreselassie.

Excerpts

On the recent peace accords between Eritrea and Ethiopia

It was one of the substantive and positive developments that has happened in Africa recently. It is going to be important not only for the two countries but for relations in the South.

There is a misconception, misunderstanding of what the conflict was. It has been depicted as a border conflict, disputed territory but that is far from the truth. There were

some border issues, fighting at the borders but this was only one aspect of the overall conflict. The conflict itself was a vision conflict and it was on three critical issues: the issue of how to go about nation building, the issue of democracy, and that of development. The issues between the two countries was because of these contrasting visions which were in a way linking these two countries where neighbors were on the one hand collaborators, and the other hand competitors.

On What Eritrea and Ethiopia stand to gain, and lessons Africa can



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learn from this

Peace is the big result of the peace accord. It is also an opportunity for the two countries to be involved in development. It is also important for the rest of Africa to look into the causes, and mechanisms of the conflict and try to learn from it. It is important that the two countries come together because we cannot bridge the ethnic difference without cooperation between the two countries.

On How Eritreans feel about the lifting of sanctions by the UN

first, the sanctions were unjustified. They are happy that those sanctions have been lifted. But there should have never been any. Despite the sanctions, Eritrea has survived and came out victorious. The fact that Eritrea is still standing,

moving an achieving development goals attest to their self-reliance.

On the impact of the self-reliance model in Eritrea

The war has really impacted development, and Eritrea has not developed as it should have. Through self-reliance, it had one of the highest growth rates in the early years. The trajectory was really going to be good in terms of transformation of the economy. However, we all know what happened with the country engaged in a 20-year war.

Could the opening up or new exposure to the outside world have an impact on this self-reliant development model that sustained Eritrea in its hour of need?

Our model can survive any condition and it is the best you can find anywhere because it is self-reliant. Eritrea is one

of the countries which is very open and extremely rich in its cultural heritage. It is not afraid of foreign ideas but also open to foreign ideas.

On the perception of democracy in Eritrea

The present movement

ongoing is a democratic one. Eritrea gained independence but it took two years for it to have a referendum. After the referendum there

was the issue of drafting a constitution using external

experts, civil society and

others. The democratic movement has been degraded because of the war. Hopefully now that Eritrea has been reestablished we will take the path we were on before.



With the lifting of sanctions, it may come as a shock to that despite the sanctions, Eritrea has fared relatively and is in better shape than many expect.

No Retreat No Surrender: Southern Africa and the Land Reform Quagmire

By Prince Kurupati

Independence is multifaceted. Independence is an umbrella word. When talking about independence, we are talking of many things. From the early 1970s to the early 1990s, most southern African countries attained their 'independence'. Unbeknown to them, however, the independence they had attained was not full independence, rather, it was just one arm of independence i.e. political independence.

After years of suffering and fighting, not many people (native southern Africans) attached too much importance to the 'form' of independence they had attained, all they cared about was the fact that they were now able to 'rule themselves'.



It took several years before southern African nations began to realize that the independence they had won was not full independence. In the wake of the realization, most southern African states immediately decided to take

steps to correct the 'independence mistake' in the hope that they would gain full independence.

In the wake of the realization, Zimbabwe decided to abandon all forms of 'land reform policy' and went

straight to forcefully take back the land as a way of attaining economic independence which she had not yet attained. The 'forceful' manner in which the government decided to take did have its shortcomings; due to these shortcomings, the government and the country paid heavily.

Namibia took a different route, in the wake of the realization, it decided to amend its land reform policy so as to expedite land redistribution.

In the wake of the realization, South Africa was a bit undecided at first. First, it took literally no action. However, following pressure from society and the civil society, the government decided to amend the land reform policy. The amendments, however, did little in expediting land redistribution and



as such, a number of civil society organizations, as well as one of the main opposition political parties i.e. the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), created their own 'alternative'. The alternative entailed taking back the land from white colonial farmers and redistributing it to the landless blacks albeit with no compensation being paid to the white farmers.

The alternative land reform policy in South Africa was hugely popular with the black community. Recognizing that their own stock was falling due to the existing land reform policy, the ruling party which in the same vein was the government of the day decided to embrace the 'alternative' land reform policy and as such, it adopted the 'Land Expropriation without Compensation' policy at party level, a couple of months later, it joined hands with the opposition (EFF) in passing a motion of 'Land Expropriation without Compensation' at parliamentary level.

In all, the conclusions that we can draw from the above is that soon after realizing that they had not attained full independence, southern African countries did (on their own as well as forcibly) took measures to correct the past wrongs by coming up with alternative land redistribution policies and actions.

Good or bad, the corrective policies and actions taken were enacted to stay. In light of this, we explore some of the reasons why despite huge condemnation and criticism, southern African nations have decided to stick with their corrective policies and actions. Note though that the following has a particular focus on South Africa.

Correcting Broken Promises

In general, it's been over 20 years since most southern African governments attained their (political) independence. Since that time, virtually all countries are still being led and governed by revolutionary parties. In the struggle for self-determination, evolutionary parties promised the citizenry that once independence is attained, they would be able to get back their land which had been stolen by white settlers.

As a result, the support afforded to the revolutionary parties pre-independence was premised on the promise that the citizenry would be given back 'their' land. Indeed, during independence talks, the land question dominated the negotiations. In the end, most if not all southern African nations (led by revolutionary parties) decided to agree with white settlers as well as the British government on the willing buyer willing seller land

reform policy. This policy simply entailed that only those white farmers willing to sell their land will be allowed to sell. At the same time, all those willing to buy could buy any land they want and the funds to buy the land would be provided by the British government (the former colonial master). In as much as this policy was good, it did fail to achieve its purpose as very few farmers were willing to sell their land hence blacks willing to buy land had nowhere to buy.

The failure of the willing buyer willing seller land reform policies in southern African nations tainted the image of the ruling revolutionary parties. Instead of being viewed as saviours, they were now viewed as 'oppressors' and 'sellouts' as they were failing to honour their promises. It is against this background that ruling revolutionary parties in southern Africa are now adamant on 'fast' land reform policies as they know that their survival lies on their ability to honour their promises which they made to the citizenry which is, redistributing land to the landless blacks. With their survival at stake, revolutionary parties in

southern Africa will neither retreat nor surrender when it comes to expediting land reform.

Electioneering

The era of the guns is gone, now, political survival solely depends on the ballot (at least when respecting the democracy doctrine). As such, in an attempt to 'survive' politically, parties do all things possible to win at the ballot. Recognizing that the land question is the major election issue among the black community (which is the largest community come election time hence the determinant of an election outcome), parties including revolutionary parties employ all sorts of tricks to win the voters' hearts. One such trick is 'giving' the masses what they have longed for, for so long i.e. land. In as much as redistributing land is correcting past injustices, when done as a way of winning votes, it is effectively electioneering.

Appeasing Global Financial Institutions

Global financial institutions largely work with countries to figure out solutions to economic challenges. In days gone by, global financial institutions used to proffer economic

solutions without consulting nation states. However, after realizing how some of the proffered solutions did little in averting what they were supposed to prevent, global financial institutions decided to take a new approach. The new approach saw global financial institutions taking a new route of working in partnership with nation-states in order to figure out solutions to economic challenges.

Listening to the proffered solutions of southern African nations to their underlying systematic constraints, global financial institutions such as the World Bank have decided to work with the proffered solutions rather than offer their own solutions. One such solution proffered by Southern African nations pertains to land redistribution as a way of addressing inequality, redistributing wealth and correcting the legacy of segregation. As such, the mere fact that global financial institutions have decided to support homegrown solutions has necessitated southern African nations to take a hardline stance in pursuing strictly the land 'new' reform policies.



Two Presidents battling with the complex issue of land reforms Hage Geingob of Namibia and Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa.

South Sudan: SPLM party retreat to halt partition

By Deng Machol



President Salva Kiir

Juba - The chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) in the world's youngest nation has said the incumbent ruling party is weak because the members are divided.

SPLM Chairman Salva Kiir, who is also the country's president, said different political ideologies and individual ambitions have caused the ruling party to derail from its objective of delivering services to the people of South Sudan.

In earlier December, the SPLM cadres converged at Lobonok County of the former Central Equatoria State (CES), south of Juba capital, on the challenges facing the party and how to re-strategize on the way forward.

SPLM established

The SPLM was established in May 1983 to fight gross injustice, marginalization and oppression of the people of southern Sudan just because they happened to be black Africans who have their beliefs and did not have power.

Under the SPLM - late John Garang de Mabior, the

people of South Sudan were fighting an internal colonial power that was built on Arab and Islamic identity to the exclusion of the many, who professed other religious beliefs and who clearly had no Arabic genealogy.

In all, the SPLM waged an arm struggle with the aim to overthrow Khartoum government so that they can establish the New Sudan and engender a new political dispensation. Though, the SPLM didn't take over the government in Khartoum, its successfully achieved the ultimate objectives of the people of South Sudan, which is independent, seven years ago.

The SPLM has been blighted by divisions among its members since an establishment. Despite the independent, under leadership of the SPLM, another civil war broke out in 2013, after two years of secession, as results of power struggling within the ruling party between president Kiir and his former deputy Dr. Machar

The ruling party leaderships retreat under the theme 'towards transformation

and modernized SPLM. The discussions were geared towards performance, evaluation and strategies of transforming the SPLM, capable of leading the prosperous nation.

Addressing the participants, the SPLM chairman Kiir has acknowledged the weakness of the historical party, which he said it needs urgently restorative to avoid further fracture.

"The SPLM is now very weak - not because we are bankrupt [but] it is weak

because we are divided to the maximum," President Kiir said

He called on the party members to wake up and defend the party legacies not to be let down by its founders.

"We must rise to protect our liberation credentials, and bring hopes to our people who pinned their future on the historical legacy of this party," Kiir added. We must rise so that the words of Prophet Isaiah ring true. The SPLM must lead, the SPLM must inspire, SPLM must unleash its liberation zeal and captivate the imagination of our people yet again. This sleeping giant must wake up and proclaim its greatness once again," he added.

Kiir further urged the SPLM cadres to defend their liberation credential from the regional and international community with aims of ending conflicts and eradicating poverty in the world's youngest nation.

"Always when you are in difficulties, remember your colleague [s] who was with you yesterday but he died because of this land,"

Kiir reminded the SPLM members.

SPLM's factions

The 2013 conflict saw the SPLM disintegrate into four factions, the mainstream SPLM, the SPLM-IO under Taban Deng, the SPLM-IO under Dr. Riek Machar and the SPLM-FDs.

However, a series of meetings were held in various countries, including Uganda, Egypt, and South Africa, in an effort to re-unify the factions, under the Arusha agreement, but ended in vain.

Only the faction under the first vice president Taban Deng rejoined the mother party in May this year, but they don't participate in the recent SPLM retreat in Lobonok, home area of the vice president Dr. James Wani Igga to discuss ways of transforming and re-organizing the 35-year-old party.

Kiir on Taban's group

Kiir said Taban's group has used a wrong procedure to rejoin the SPLM under him,



South Sudan President, Salva Kiir Mayardiit shakes hands with SPLM-IO leader Rick Machar

they should organize themselves first before they can join the ruling party.

During the retreat, Kiir told participants that Taban Deng has been asking him when he is going to appoint them to the ruling party's political bureau.

"My colleague Taban and his other comrades have been asking when am I going to appoint them into the SPLM political bureau so that they are considered as full members. I have not been answering them until the day before our departure to come to Lobonok here," Kiir explained. I told Ezekiel [SPLM-IO Taban's spokesman] that, Ezekiel you did not do your work in your house before Gen Taban declared the dissolution of the SPLM-IO. We were expecting that you [Taban's group] would come and sit alone in your political bureau to approve the dissolution of your party and declare you are joining the SPLM."

After the outbreak of the renewed fighting in Juba in July 2016, Taban and other members of the SPLM-IO [under Dr. Machar] decided to remain in Juba to work with President Kiir. The SPLM-IO members who remained behind were then collectively categorized as IO – Taban.

In return, the president Kiir made Taban Deng as the first vice president, a position Dr. Riek Machar left

In a statement dated May 7, Taban announced the dissolution of the SPLM-IO Taban structure and chapters under his leadership, assuming that they had officially joined the ruling party. Taban indicated that the dissolution of his group is in line with the SPLM unification as stipulated in the 2015 Arusha agreement.

However, Kiir said they [Taban's group] should write to the chairman, stating their interest to join the ruling party.

The SPLM – IO Taban, when contacted, has declined to talk about the issue.

The retreat is to enable the SPLM cadres to reflect on their achievements

and challenges and to give them the inspiration that them to gather more strength and momentum to propel their party and a country forward.

Political upheaval

President Kiir said the political upheavals which the SPLM are undergoing are normal processes of shaping and forming a great nation.

"Through this process, we will get to know our allies, our friends and our enemies alike within the regional and international structures. We are also learning internally about the best ways we can manage politics and resources." Kiir said.

On the same event, the SPLM deputy chairman, James Wani Igga emphasized on the effective transformation and re-organizations of the SPLM to be capable of leading the democratic nation.

He added that for the SPLM to survive politically, it needed to acknowledge its past mistakes and carried out institutional reforms.

Wani asked the SPLM cadres, where they went wrong.

"But before you transform it, we need to ask ourselves subjectively, where have we went wrong. We need to be honest about this so that we can clean the house – that is only way forwards for the SPLM," Wani said. "If we don't transform the SPLM in this hall, [then] we will never transform the SPLM again," he added.

Meanwhile, the SPLM Acting Secretary General Ms. Jemma Nunu Kumba also emphasized on the strengthening the SPLM structures, which she says the SPLM structures have for long been neglected and disregarded in decision-making process.

She said the state institutions have been undermined by the cadres choosing to access the party chairman [president] directly without first addressing themselves to local structures.



Taban Deng Gai and Salva Kiir

"The SPLM structures need to be empowered because currently they are left out of decision making process – and are rendered redundant, for that reason, are neglected as toothless institutions by the party cadres nationwide," Nunu said. "This state of affairs' impact negatively on the image and important of the SPLM as the effective and vibrant institution working for the prosperous nation." Nunu said.

She further advised that 'anyone seeking position should not have direct access to the top authority but only those found to have track record to performance would be recommended for appointment.

Peace deal

President Kiir, his former deputy Machar and several opposition groups in September signed a new power-sharing deal aimed at ending the five-year old conflict.

Kiir said they must transform their experience of war by redefining the greatest enemy of the people, which is a poverty, a mother of illiteracy, poor health, fighting, corruption and nepotism, hatred and jealousy.

"we must without fail confront poverty head on and the SPLM must lead. We must face poverty face poverty with all our might and be guided by our principles to fight against forces of repression,

injustices, political sectarianism, ethnic chauvinism, marginalization and exploitation, religious bigotry and intolerance," Kiir said. These vices are all rooted in poverty and scarcity."

Observers often said the internal wrangles over leadership and lack of strong governance institutions have eroded the historical gains of the SPLM party.

More so, analysts said the recent SPLM is incomplete and barren as it leaved out other SPLM factions, which has signed reunification document for the SPLM in Arusha, years ago.

The failure of the SPLM is attributed to lack of strong leadership and institutions, which need serious renaissance.

Though, there are more ten political parties in South Sudan, none is capable to challenges the ruling parties at moment in spite a dissection.

This was the second SPLM leaderships retreat since the independence, as the first ruling party retreat was being held in mid – December 2013, but ended up with a [current] violence, which killed one hundred thousand people and displaced 2.5 million people from their homes before resulted into ruin economic in the country.

Strong Political Will Needed to Take Gender Issues Seriously in Sierra Leone- Naasu Fofanah

By Ishmael Sallieu Koroma

Naasu Fofanah is a Gender and women's rights activist, an expert in public policy among others. Presently she is the deputy leader of Unity Party in Sierra Leone.

In this exclusive interview with Ishmael Sallieu Koroma, Naasu takes me through the challenges and the progress made so far in championing women's rights and development. She starts by making a general assessment of women's empowerment and challenges in the country.

Ishmael: *Basically, let us start with a general appraisal of women's empowerment and challenges in Sierra Leone.*

Naasu Fofanah: Well, we have the legal frame work in terms of empowerment. So we have the policies even though I heard recently from the Ministry of Social Welfare that with the old policies which we had were not really responding to current needs. As we speak we are developing gender equality and women's empowerment policy. It's a policy when I was in the last government; we started really, in trying to develop it but it take a least much time. I think they are almost finalizing it.

I haven't perused it to see where I could make my own contribution to look at it and proffer solution and give feed back to the gender directorate and to see if there was any improvement.



Sierra Leone needs to do more on gender issues and empowerment says Naasu Fofanah

The policy is covering quite a number of issues, on education, women's political participation, women's health, violence against women, women in innovation and Technology. Its broader what we had prior to now. So I think it's very good and if that particular documents come out, it would just be the umbrella of women policies in the country in one document which will be easier for implementation. What of course development partners and other people would need to do is to align their support with that government policy. Hope fully with this policy, different institutions, government and other institutions including Ministries, Department and Agencies would be able to align their work with the key partner which is the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs because

gender is a cross cutting issue and women's empowerment is a cross cutting issue. So, if you want to empower women in agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture would now try to align policies with what the Ministry of Social Welfare is doing. In terms of their area, they work together. This is multi-sectorial policies that the Ministry of Gender, and Social Welfare and Children's will be leading in. They are the key Ministry for Gender and women's empowerment in our country.

Ishmael: *Has there been any progress in your view with regards the empowerment of women in the country?*

Naasu Fofanah: Empowerment is very broad concept. It is very, very broad; you know empowerment in which area? Empowerment is really more about establishing the frameworks to support

people to grow. So, if you are talking about women's political empowerment, you would want to say, do we have a quota? What is there? What are the structures to support me if I want to participate as a woman? Because if those structures aren't there from the central government to create the enabling environment for people to thrive .so do we have that? It depends on the area you are looking at. Political participation, we really do not have an enabling environment for women in Sierra Leone. Why I'm saying that. We have had policy statements; we have political parties that have gender policies which they don't pay attention to. For the government we do not have a quota policy. We have heard pronouncement, but we do not have a written down policy to have it within our

structures. President after president have made pronouncements but in terms of having a substantive law for example that will give women at least minimum 30% quota in governance and not just political participation but right across decision making.

We do not have that, so if you are talking about women's empowerment, from my experience in Sierra Leone, no we don't. we could see even in parliament, we have low number of representation, You will see in the cabinet low number of women representation.

Ishmael: *You were Gender Adviser to former President Koroma for three years what was your role back then in the office in pushing through for women's participation and empowerment?*

Naasu Fofanah: My very first assignment that I had when I took office under President Koroma in 2012, the first thing that he assigned me to do was, could you please get me the people who are responsible in the women's group to come for a meeting. I want an update into the 30% quota bill. It was my first assignment and the female caucus in parliament was responsible for putting together the documents. They were leading. I contacted the female parliamentary caucus, and Honourable Marie Yansaneh was the president and then late Elizabeth Alpha

Lavalie was vice president of the caucus. It was quite disappointing that when I went to parliament to actually talk with these women that the president would like to meet with you to come and give an update. Most of the women, especially at that time women in the opposition Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) gave a Luke warm response. The support that we were expecting from the female parliamentary caucus to come and give an update wasn't good. In the end we only had three people of the leadership and I remember sitting with Alpha Lavalie and Yansaneh discussing the draft bill. I would tell you, I have challenged women who say oh the former president didn't have the political will. For the 30% quota, the parliament of 2012 and up to last year if we the women had worked on it and tabled it in my opinion, professional opinion, personal opinion, I believe we would have had it.

What we didn't do is having the document ready so because people we played politics. Where is the document? Even during the last elections, when people started to talk about the quota .Where is the document? Because you cannot just say they didn't pass the 30% quota. Did we have the document that we want tabled? For me in that area, we also didn't do our job. Now, May be it would have gone through, May be it wouldn't have gone through, may be it wouldn't have gone through .we didn't test it .we have to take responsibility. That's was what I did then. We tried and we pushed but you know the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare, and Children's Affairs especially under the leadership of

Mojue Kaikai decided to take that document and do what they wanted to do with it to the extent he actually kept me out in that scene because he thought I was taking over his job. I only do things that the president requested to do and my role was also to bring to attention issues of immediate attention anything that required his immediate action.

Ishmael: As policy expert on gender issues, is the government really serious about championing the rights of women in the country?

Naasu Fofanah: You know, my experience is we have a government, this government and the last government which is very much male -led and there are lots of challenges when you get to the top when you actually start talking about these issues at policy level. So as somebody who spearheaded the gender equality and women's empowerment pillar, in the last administration for the Agenda for Prosperity which concludes by the end of this month. Trying to even get that pillar was extremely difficult as a policy document. I had seven male colleagues; I was the only female pillar lead. When I tried to introduce, the Gender Equality and women's Empowerment pillar it wasn't easy. I went through technical presentation which was good, because I want them to understand the rationale and the reason why we needed to pay attention on these issues and eventually pillar 8 become one of the most funded pillars in a number of ways. I created a whole awareness in terms of gender issues and participation but there were a lot of challenges because people, certain policy makers and ministers

were focusing on certain areas and every time you want to try to let them incorporate gender issues they wouldn't. They would take it not important but that's because the Gender Ministry from a policy perspective also sometimes doesn't quite understand that their role is cross cutting and its coordination as well that we need to be able to work with other ministries to integrate gender perspectives into their plans. So, you can't say oh something about women's in agriculture, you have to do it. Women and Energy you have to do it .No! You partner, so I remember working in the state House what I used to do, if there was a Programme, and the president was interested, because what he tried to do was putting gender issues in his spaces and he tried that by appointing lots of women within the presidency .He appointed the first female Chief State of Protocol, I was there first Gender Adviser and other senior civil servants. I believe, I'm saying this genuinely; former President Koroma really wanted to appoint women with in his government. Remember let's not forget about politics, now he could have taken some actions, he could have and he should have; you understand. But he listened heavily to his political party and some of the appointment he did,



Naasu Fofanah says even as Special Adviser to former President Ernest Bah Koroma gender issues were a huge challenge.

annoyed some of his party members. For example, when he appointed me as gender adviser, I wasn't a member of any political party when I was appointed it shocked people. So if he had taken few of those bold steps and appointed people because they were competent, I think he would have left a very great legacy. But I'm telling you that there were a lot of pressures when he took that forefront. I don't know if you remember that time, he was very in the fore front on gender issues. People within the establishment, didn't quite like it. So it's really easy to say that sometimes our leaders aren't serious. Political parties are the gate keepers. I'm sure that the president might want to get 50/50 cabinet but then, the political party. The holder that our political

party has on our leadership and governance structure is something that people don't quite understand and for you to be able to make those decisions without reference to them, I mean its takes a lot of guts. Most people don't want to lose face with their political party. But the policies we don't even need policies because we have enough policies for the next fifty years .we can just may add a little bit there to upgrade because we have the Sierra Leone Conference on Transformation which informs to chart the way forward for the next fifty years. So the women's issue are not just been a politician, the role of the political parties is one thing we don't deal with when we are talking about governance in this country. This is the most



Naasu Fofanah with former President Sirleaf Johnson of Liberia.

powerful. This is where the bottle necks are. This is where they squeezed the decision making and this is why some of us for me with all the experience I have gathered , the president can appoint , we can have some beautiful

policies and when it comes to implementation of course our systems are weak . We cannot do that properly

But the gatekeepers of governance and leadership are the political parties, they decides how this country

runs.

Ishmael: In the days running up to the 16 days of activism, we got an upsurge in the number of rape cases in the country .what's your comment?

Naasu Fofanah: You see,

this is just one enabling environment that they have created in terms of empowerment where people are able to report because of three gender acts and most importantly Sexual Offences Act 2012. So people are able to report when they are violated sexually and I'm telling you that when you look at the trend, every year it's going up, I look at the trend analysis from Rainbow Centre and I could see that. It is not new. We are actually seeing may be 10% of real things that are happening in our country .The reported cases is like the finger tips because of these cases are not reported .90% don't get reported at all. Some who do report, not all these cases there are no mechanism to charge most of them. What this tells you is that our systems aren't there to support the implementation of these laws that we are making. So I was saying, the government is not serious about combating sexual violence. When I mean government, not these

governments alone even the past government over the years. It is my opinion that they are not serious. Why am I saying they are not serious, if I get my rights violated today, the first place I will go to is the Family Support Unit (FSU) which is the first point of contact. The FSU is one the least underfunded divisions in the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) most FSU's are dirty, they are under resourced, the people aren't mostly trained. They turned them, they recycled them. When the government says, I have a law on Sexual offences Act; we will jail perpetrators and then the investigative arm of this implementation, is so weak that the government and I'm speaking of when I was Gender Adviser when I was at the last government only \$1,000 budget, and the government for the entire period could only assign \$4,000. We have over 70 FSU stations in the country.

Ishmael: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure talking to you

Naasu Fofanah: It's a pleasure talking to you Ishmael.



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Finding My Way and Becoming QueenMother: An American Journey

By Nana Akua Kalia Adayé of the Royal Brong Kingdom
(Prof. Kelley Page Jibrell)

The day that Africa realizes that her most value asset is not her land, but her people, she will be victorious. What has made me a success was not solely my professional nor academic nor civic achievements. What has made me succeed, and ultimately become enstooled as QueenMother is trusting in my spiritual journey and personal purpose. For those who know a bit of my journey, they say my becoming has been the real “Wakanda”. Many wonder, myself included, how I became one of the first, if not the first, foreign women to be enstooled QueenMother in Cote d’Ivoire. I was recently crowned Her Majesty QueenMother Nanan Akua Kalia Adayé of the Royal Brong (Abron) Kingdom. My recent enstoolment as Queen Mother came as a surprise and huge honor.

The village where I was first enstooled, Tabagne, is the ancestral and traditional gathering place for Akan Royal Kings and Chiefs. It is in Tabagne that we have annual Yam Festival and Adayé Kessie Festival, the celebration of the new year according to the traditional Akan calendar. This year was particularly special as my stool had been elevated beyond village to the Royal Kingdom in Gontougo and across into the Ghana border. When the Elders informed me they wanted me to speak, I worked tirelessly so I could address the crowd from both the Ghanaian and Ivorian sides of the border in our traditional language, Abron.

It was very important that the first words from an American-born QueenMother spoke the language of our common ancestor. Across all boundaries, connecting with and engaging the Ivorian people, traditional rulers and government has been particularly wonderful and welcoming.

My professional expertise is what led me to the land of what I would later discover was a part of my ancestral fabric. As a successful Washington-based global strategist, I was invited to sit on the AGOA Advisory Committee to help win a 10-year legislative extension through Congress. Shortly after our victory, the annual AGOA conference was held in Libreville, Gabon where I was a speaker. My words resonated with those in the audience and was invited to work on shea sector initiatives in Côte d’Ivoire. After a year and a half of great progress and continued efforts, the Ivorians sent for me to come for meetings in the shea region. A week before my arrival, I discovered that the region I had been working was the land of my ancestors! Unbeknownst to me, I was working with my people long before my DNA told me that was part of my roots.

My name is Kelley Page Jibrell. I grew up in a university town in New England, where intellect, discovery and pushing the boundaries of knowledge were the norm. It is hard to pinpoint what started my love affair with Africa. Growing up, I studied classical ballet, West

African dance and Afro-contemporary dance like the works of Alvin Ailey. This helped me to see the value of European, African and African-American expressions on the same plane. Overtime, the African element became more elevated as I grew in my understanding of the power and transcendence of the African spirit. Through cultural exploration and intellect, I never felt shame or inferiority. But I knew my sentiment was the exception and not the proverbial rule.

After years working for a global corporation, I wanted to better position myself to become a formidable Advisor to elected, appointed and traditional world leaders. I founded SACHEM Global, LLC, a global strategy consultancy advising visionaries and decision-makers around the world and across industries. I have been able to work with the largest of personalities, in the most dire of countries, the most promising people and the largest and quickly diminishing budgets, alike. All the while, I have managed to carve out this niche of being a Change Agent for Visionaries on a referral basis. I enjoy giving the people the



Nana Akua Kalia Adayé of the Royal Brong Kingdom.

tools to feel empowered who in turn, empower others. And this is what I was doing with the 10,000 women we organized for improved shea production and conditions in Côte d’Ivoire. To some extent, I thrive as an insider/outsider who can compassionately, and intelligently give a fresh perspective as a trusted advisor and keep accountability at the forefront.

In many ways, I see myself as the embodiment of Africa in all of her glory and paradox. Much of who I am, I owe to my family.

Many have wondered how I, who had to learn the Waltz for my Debutante Cotillion could relate to and work so tirelessly for old women living in African villages. My father was born in a small shack built in the middle of the tobacco plantation in the Jim Crow south. The building where he was born lost its battle with nature, but I remember visiting it as a little girl. Many African-Americans, Afro-Caribbeans and Africans alike, have family gatherings in “the country” similar to going back to “the village”. This small home, was swept

clean and full of pride and little else. I remember it so clearly, because I would walk around looking for the bathroom, and there wasn't one. In confusion and frustration, one of my elders guessed what I was looking for and pointed to a small structure in the yard. I wore white linen that day, quite symbolic for the day I gained consciousness and lost my fresh, young, idealized perspective. With all the advancements of electricity, technology, sanitation and even liberation, why was my own family still living in the similar conditions as when we were in bondage? And at that point, I understood the importance of economic opportunity and freedom. What I would come to understand later is that they were rich in faith and in knowledge of nature.

Earlier I spoke of paradox. And many you from the continent, and her descendants in the Americas, will be able to relate to the meager, hard-working rural life way of life similar to my father's early upbringing. But my Mother's side of the family exposed me to the glamorous life of galas, etiquette and protocol in the upper echelons of Power Brokers. My maternal Grandparents founded the first Black-owned bank in one of the richest states in the USA. My Grandfather also oversaw the construction of the bank and my Grandmother decorated the bank with her own private art collection. Watching my Grandparents literally and figuratively build these institutions had a profound effect on me. I believe this is why I see leadership, projects, community development and nation building from a holistic perspective.

The bank, serving as an economic institution, also created a space for artistic expression and representation. The construction of the building was built to serve the people and as a monument of progress while simultaneously establishing job creation. The most significant aspect was not that my Grandparents

founded a bank, but rather what they did with it as pioneers. When my Grandparent's bank opened its doors, the doors were open wide. There was a commitment to using that bank to open doors of opportunity to others who may not have had a chance. The bank opened for hard working people like my father's family.

That was how the rural agricultural world of one side of my family coincided with the political, economic and cultural influencers of the other side of my family. It is my belief that my exposure and relationship with both sides has prepared me to become an enstooled QueenMother.

Many people ask me why I choose to keep going back to the continent, and I reply, "The continent chose me". Not everyone, whether it is her descendants or even recent migrants

may be ready, but many of us are ready right now. I wanted to share a glimpse of where I come from to help people understanding my inspirations and my motivations for what I do. I spent years of my life making others really successful and I wanted to do it for Africa. The journey is not easy as we have been beaten and bruised and lost our path. But now, we are not looking externally, we are beginning to look within. We are also beginning to connect in new and meaningful ways.

Not surprisingly with the influence of my Grandmother, I am an avid art collector. African art serves historic pieces and physical manifestations of oral traditions and philosophies. The world seems to value it more than her own children. I often speak of Africa as one entity. And in all of its diversity

and for all of her vast differences, in every region I go, there is a feeling, a power that is not felt anywhere else in the world. The ingenuity, the importance of oral traditions, the expressions through movement, color and/or adornment, and the omnipresence of ancestors are what I have found to be constants.

Professionally, I am a Management Consultant and Strategist. For more than 2 decades, I have made good organizations great and help the vision of leaders become reality. It is my gift and I have trained, studied and worked hard to hone it. I have helped to implement Presidential mandates, restructure multi-billion dollar organizations, and helped organizations win huge contracts and grants through leveraging strengths and addressing any weaknesses. Those weaknesses ultimately became a strength or an area of key partnership. My work has often been with "the Big Boys" as I have worked in some of the most dominant and influential industries such as Defense, Aerospace, Economic Development, Diplomacy, Energy and Museums.

After working around the world on 5 continents as a global consultant in high demand, I noticed that the "norms", "solutions" or "formulas" did not work on the African continent. Ultimately, I worked in every region of the continent, across Universities, private sector, government and NGOs. The external approaches (many well-intended) have failed. As an African-American, I saw both sides of what was happening. As an American, I was given certain access and benefit of the doubt as other Westerners spoke to me openly about those "Africans". But as a Black woman, I was keenly aware of the poor treatment and regard of elders and the working poor people by expats and sometimes Africans themselves.

After a decade of success as a global practitioner, I was invited into academia as an Adjunct Professor for MBA graduate students. I take great



enjoyment in cultivating my students to prepare them to become conscious global citizens while also enjoying professional and economic success. The two are not mutually exclusive if you employ the right strategies and intentions. I blend my experience as a practitioner with pedagogical approaches as I work with and engage leaders as an Advisor.

My passion falls in line with which both sides of my family represents. First, it is important to support those who have been forgotten by society, like my father's family of the old, rural American South. And secondly, to empower visionaries and leaders on the continent and her vast diaspora. With authentic knowledge and approaches, we can enjoy more achievements with lasting impact and ultimately build upon them as a solid foundation for continued growth and success. Right now, I am pursuing my PhD to establish African-centric frameworks that our Leaders can apply that were missing throughout my professional career.

When I was growing up, I had no idea this would be my life's work and that I would have Kings and Chiefs, CEOs, Ministers, Generals, Governors, Griots, Mayors, and Ambassadors on speed-dial. But somehow, thanks to my ancestors, relentless focus and measurable results, I do. As QueenMother, it is important I bring the perspective and talents of women to the table. My presence as one of a few women leaders in traditional African society is similar to my experience as a woman in the powerful ranks of corporate private sector. I also recognize that we have

a collective responsibility to engage those of us who have come back from the "Door of No Return". This serves as evidence there is still a great force and connection between us and all good things are possible.

Many of my thoughts and learnings have been published in newspapers, magazines, journals and conference proceedings. But I have also used poetry to collect and document my thoughts, experience and growing wisdom. In 2019, I will release my first full poetry collection, entitled, "Plight" as Queen Kalia. The 2019 launch will commemorate 400-year anniversary of the first documented Africans brought to Jamestown, VA, and English colony that would become the United States of America. We have come a long way and we have some ways to go, but we can do it together.

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Economic Liberalization and Democracy As The Way Forward for Africa

By Nevson Mpofu



Kwame Nkrumah.

To those of us who have read the book by Walter Rodney, *How Europe under-developed Africa* published in 1973 in London will conclude with the fact why a Revolutionary political move in Africa was inevitable in the early 1960s. Those who have read Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* sheds ray of light on the structure of our African customs, tradition and culture. How these came to fall apart together with great heroes of the village of Umuofia like Okonkwo brings us to the climax of the bad of colonisation.

The infusion of Christianity, the story of a man holding a gun. The start of Feudalism after slavery. The coming in of Imperialism and then colonialism. The writer divulges how Africa's resources were of benefit to European countries like Britain, Germany, France and Belgium which were the main colonisers. By the 15th century at the peak of the late Stone Age, Africa had lineated its path to its Economic Development.

The coming in of European countries then led to the scramble and partitioning of the African continent. With time all the bad of Europe was documented..

The act of slavery and servitude under-developed Africa of which its human resources were an impact towards the development of America. Slavery was eventually abolished by the push effort of people like William Wilberforce and Abraham Lincoln in 1863 through a declaration called the Emancipation Proclamation.

The great work of Civil Rights Activists like Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, Phillip Randolph's, George Mason and other Afro-Americans instilled the same spirit in their African counter-parts of the 1950', 60s to 70s generation. These are people like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Patrice Lumumba of former Zaire now Democratic Republic of Congo, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Steve Biko of South AFRICA and Nelson Mandela, Eduardo Mondlane of Mozambique, Josiah

Tongogara of Zimbabwe including Joshua Nkomo, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and a few unnamed.

The rise of Africa Revolution started in Ghana propelled by Kwame Nkrumah in 1964. This was the first African country to take its Independence from Britain in 1957. Nkrumah still stepped up that Africa was not yet still Independent. His quote still lives in the Archives of our History. The first Black Ghanaian President, the Icon of Ghana and Africa's Independence was quoted many years back at Ghana's Independence.

"The Independence of Ghana is meaningless unless the whole of Africa is free". Nkrumah and other African Leaders, founding fathers set up the Organisation of African Union now called AU, African Unity. The organisation stood to make sure that every country under colonialism was set free, liberal and

Independent.

Africa is now Politically Independent, but it is not yet Economically Independent. This poses challenges to it as a continent at the moment. There are mountains to climb ahead of it. The continent with a shooting 1, 2 billion people, it has the highest number of those in poverty and vulnerability. About 3,00,000 of its population is exposed to climate change vulnerability, 7,00,000 needs economic empowerment in terms of Education and economic Human Development and expertise. Health wise, it has the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rate. It has 35 to 40 million people living HIV positive out of World total of 50 million living HIV positive.

It needs Economic Independence for it to wake off the slumber on its face.

As it moves, it takes reactive steps towards a modern developed Empowered Economy with high Growth per capita and Gross Domestic and National Products. Back home several challenges impinge its fast

forward push. The new era of political dispensations is mixed with avarice, greedy and flush life expectations. These have contributed to grant corruption over the past decades of political and economic challenges.

It has experienced despotic, corrupt dictators before the era of modern style Leaders. Traditional style Leadership. There have been a spate of civil wars, political conflicts, displacements, coups and unnecessary assassinations. A number of political commentators, social and economic Analysts have asked plethora of rhetoric and unrhetorical questions.

"Where would Africa be now if Nkwame Nkrumah the father of Africa was not deposed through a coup in 1966? He died a lonely politician in Romania in 1972 and was buried in his home country. Many Revolutionaries died in the pain of assassinations, pulled down in coups and overtaken power by opposition and close allies. Good examples are countries like Mozambique where Eduardo Mondlane



Presidents Modibo Keita of Mali, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Sekou Toure of Guinea.

was assassinated in 1975. It is believed to be by Samora Machel who took over power from then until his death in plane crash in 1987 in South Africa.

The same happened to Patrice Lumumba who was shot dead while at a parade with soldiers. After his death, Mobutu Seseseko took over until he was removed from power by Laurent Kabila. The last fatal incident of the death of Josiah Tongogara of Zimbabwe in 1979, a few days before Independence shook the rest of Africa. Those who have lived with the ideology of assassination have become adamant Dictators who caused a lot of unbearable trouble.

A ZANU PF Top-Shutter, Politician of high profile in contributing to the building of the Zimbabwe Constitution Paul Mangwana who supports implementation of Devolution said, time for Dictatorship has moved out. There is paradigm shift to have the need for Economic Empowerment through Devolution. It is possible because there is need for communities to have standalone voices, democratic commercial activities and development at traditional grassroots.

“The new Africa we want is an Economically Independent one with new crop of leaders who have the mind to build towards empowerment of the young people. The new crop of our Leaders must be seen promoting Devolution as the way to go in developing a new better World, better place to be.”

“The problem, 40 to 50 to 60 years Africa politically liberated but still in terms of its Economy, it is in the hands

of the erstwhile colonisers. That alone does not mean our Economic Independence. There must be strategic better framed out ways of economically decolonising us. The other way could be devolution”

Africa is still haunted by neo-colonialism. The White supremacy is still more taking economic powers. A crop of a selection of Leaders like Robert Mugabe has created the Land Reform in Zimbabwe. The same path is on its linear up pattern with South Africa. Cyril Ramaphosa might be on the right track to bring land for the people of South Africa. There are however battling mountain challenges. African countries along the same narrow path to the new Land Revolution have to think twice.

“So should the Economic Wealth remain with White People throughout the whole of Africa?”

On the eve of a Land Summit held in Zimbabwe in 2016, an Economist by Profession John Robertson strongly criticised the idea of Land Reform by African countries.

Though “politically independent, Africa needs to be economically independent”, Robertson pointed out, ‘. He then continued in disbelief.

“It’s too early for Africa to be economically independent. They first of all need to be fully educated, financially empowered, with all the resources, best state of the art Infrastructure and expertise of International standards”.

“The question of Zimbabwe is tough in terms of ailing economy. The farmer on the

Zimbabwean land is disabled. The fact is that these people lack farming equipment, full knowledge, all the resources needed and foreign funding.”

“For the rest of Africa it could be the similar story told. The case of Zimbabwe could be spread to all of Africa but you will be creating endless problems for the current generations. These will then cascade to future generations. No matter at what age you start these reforms, you will have killed the livelihoods of the current generation and the future. Even though, tried and tested, it takes couple of years, more labour force, funding, domestic funding and needs time, expertise”.

A white South African prominent Farmer Godfrey Grey lamented on the need for Africa to take a look at the Zimbabwean situation at hand. He said the situation of Land Reform in South Africa if it succeeds is likely to cause mayhem in social fabric, economic problems and lack of confidence with the International community at large.

“At the moment we are afraid of our children to roam about. The prevalence rate of killings in South Africa has

now gone high with “Africans rising against White people”. We might not have had a big number of death but the near future is not safe for us. Yes, the land is for Africans but, the way it is done

is totally un-planned. If African rises against African in xenophobia, what’s more with the rise against Whites? .”, pointed out Gibson.

The Land Reform has moved more to a lengthened pace with Zimbabwe which started it slowly from 1982. It became stronger after the year 2000 when ZANU PF was beaten in a yes, no referendum by MDC Opposition. The issue of empowering Blacks has benefitted a few African people under ZANU PF at large.

An Economic ANALYST from Lesotho who had visited Zimbabwe for a Food Security meeting asked to comment, Silife Sikhosana said, the land distribution exercise started with Julius Mwalimu Nyerere of Tanzania after their Independence in 1964. He said some countries must have guidance from the failed exercise in Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

“A new crop of African leaders is still dragged in neo-colonialism. Though the point, still we need to work with the International community which does fund many sustainable livelihoods projects which

lifts up Humanitarian sectors, food security, Health and Education. The idea of African Revolutionaries is brilliant but the challenges after that are big biting in the long run” .

The new crop of African Leaders like like Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe, Nana Akufo Addo is quite aware of the sins of the Revolutionary fathers. African Leaders still need financial donor funding to flow into Africa. The new crop of African Leaders is moving with times in a changing World. Even President Emmerson Mnangagwa pointed it out early this year that Zimbabwe will continue to look for friends from outside though we own land. He however pointed it out the other time that the Land Reform by Robert Mugabe was a great mistake. Number of African countries cherish Economic Independence. They have seen political freedom but they do not want to tarnish their new image with their new International friends. One such country is Ghana led by Nana Akufo Ado .



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America Gets Tough on Africa

By Prince Kurupati

On 13 December 2018, Ambassador John R. Bolton delivered the Trump administration's new Africa Strategy which 'immediately' comes into operation. For Africa, the new Africa Strategy is bad news. Delivering the Africa Strategy, Ambassador John R. Bolton read out one statement which aptly describes Trump administration's new approach to Africa. The statement reads,

"Under our new approach, every decision we make, every policy we pursue, and every dollar of aid we spend will further U.S. priorities in the region."

Effectively, what this new approach entails is that African countries either have to side with the U.S. (and get preferential treatment) or they are enemies of the U.S. (thereby alienating themselves from U.S. support- any form of support from military to aid).

Truth be told, the new Africa Strategy is Trump's answer to the growing influence of China and Russia in Africa. Whether this answer is going to bear fruitful results for Trump or not, it's to be seen. However, what's clear is that Africa now has to choose (between the West and the East), there is no longer a middle ground.

Benefits for Siding with the U.S.

The new Africa Strategy is premised on four tenets and all African countries which do decide to partner with the U.S. will benefit on all four fronts. The four tenets are trade and commercial ties, countering terrorism (with a special focus on Radical Islamic Terrorism), aid and peacekeeping.

When it comes to trade and commercial ties, Ambassador John R. Bolton states that the U.S. wants a reciprocal rather than a subservience relationship. This entails that both the U.S. and the African countries put the same efforts in order to achieve success. On the U.S. side, the U.S. will focus on and strive to improve 'opportunities for American workers and businesses.' At the same time, the U.S. will ensure that it safeguards 'the economic independence of African states.'

To illustrate in clearer terms how it (U.S.) wants the trade to be like with Africa, Ambassador John R. Bolton in the new Africa Strategy juxtaposition the U.S. new approach with that of China. In Africa, "China uses bribes, opaque agreements, and the strategic use of debt to hold states in Africa captive to Beijing's wishes and demands. Its investment ventures are riddled with corruption, and do not meet the same environmental or ethical standards as U.S. development



National Security Adviser Ambassador John Bolton spelt out the strategy on behalf of the American government.

projects." In essence, the U.S. states that China's approach in Africa is 'predatory' as it is a "One Belt, One Road" strategy whose ultimate goal is advancing China's global dominance. In exemplifying this, Ambassador John R. Bolton highlights the unfortunate cases of Zambia and Djibouti, two countries which have 'lost' (on the verge of losing) key strategic national institutions.

While delivering the new Africa Strategy, Ambassador John R. Bolton says that the same 'predatory' approach being used by China is the same approach being used by Russia in its bid to get 'votes' at the United Nations.

In essence, the U.S., therefore, is promising a more inclusive trade and commercial relationship, something which is beneficial not just to the U.S. but to individual African countries.

In relation to the second tenet of countering terrorism, Ambassador John R. Bolton states that many countries in Africa have been ravaged by Radical Islamic terrorist groups. As such, she (U.S.) seeks to continue fighting these terrorist groups but only if individual African countries do opt to work with the U.S. over working with China and Russia. Without mincing words, Ambassador John R. Bolton stated that the U.S. will only help to fight terrorism in countries that are in support of the U.S.

Coming to the third and fourth tenets (i.e. aid and peacekeeping), the

new Africa Strategy pursues a new path. In simple terms, the new path entails that "the United States will not tolerate this longstanding pattern of aid without effect, assistance without accountability, and relief without reform." In essence, this means that in order for a country to receive aid, it needs to outline that the aid is going to be used effectively and efficiently. Therefore, the U.S. is now prioritizing accountability before, during and after availing aid. The same applies to peacekeeping, the new Africa Strategy states that "the United States will also reevaluate its support for U.N. peacekeeping missions. We will only back effective and efficient operations, and we will seek to streamline, reconfigure, or terminate missions that are unable to meet their own mandate or facilitate lasting peace. Our objective is to resolve conflicts, not freeze them in perpetuity."

The rationale behind the move to create a new path for aid and peacekeeping in Africa according to Ambassador John R. Bolton is to address the perennial problem of pouring billions upon billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars without achieving the 'desired effects'. In the new Africa Strategy document, it revealed that "between 1995 and 2006, U.S. aid to Africa was roughly equal to the amount of assistance provided by all other donors combined." Irrespective of this, the aid has "not stopped



President Trump with African leaders it is no longer going to be business as usual per the new American policy.

the scourge of terrorism, radicalism, and violence.” As such, the move to create a new path for aid and peacekeeping is necessitated by the need to achieve the ‘intended results’ which in this case is

to improve the healthcare system, improve the levels of human rights, food security as well as help in stabilizing countries in turmoil.

Overall, though it’s not explicitly stated in the new

Africa Strategy document (but continuously muted by Trump in passing), the one main factor which will make the U.S. know which African countries are ‘with it’ and which countries are

against it, the U.S. will look at the voting patterns of individual countries at the UN. Countries that regularly vote on the same side with the U.S. will be regarded as U.S. friends thereby becoming

worthy recipients of all U.S. benefits. At the same time, countries that regularly vote against the U.S. (or its interests) at the UN will be deemed enemies and as such, not worthy of U.S. benefits.

Kenya At 55: The Promise Lives On Amid The Odds

By Samuel Ouma



President Uhuru Kenyatta With former President John Mahama.

Kenyans on Wednesday, December 12, turned out in large numbers to commemorate their country’s 55th anniversary since they attained independence from the British colony.

President Uhuru Kenyatta led the occasion in full military gear, unlike in the past when has put on suits. Several high-profile dignitaries graced the event. They include the deputy president William Ruto, First lady Margaret Kenyatta, top opposition principals led by the African Union envoy and Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga.

In his speech, the Head of State called upon the Judiciary not to protect impunity in the ongoing crackdown on graft. He put on notice those who abuse office and engage in fraud that they will face the full force of law.

“Kenyan spirits are dampened when we witness suspects released on ridiculously low bail terms, interference in legislative processes, and the use of the court to delay justice. All the arms of government must work together to ensure our nation gets rid of this menace,” he said.

On trade, he said the

government is working on making Kenya easier for good, honest and investors to do business.

The President warned youths against getting into trappings of corruption and easy money. He urged them to work hard and treat farming as an income generating activity.

“You have acquired knowledge and have access to much useful information that can help transform the farms of your parents, I urge our youth to seek support from various commercial banks,” he noted.

On service delivery in government institutions, Mr.

Kenyatta warned the office holders against harassing ordinary citizens who seek services in their offices. He directed regulatory agencies to shed their gate-keeping roles to ensure citizens get access to government services without strain.

Kenya has greatly developed since she attained independence. She has had improvement in every sector such as economy, health and education.

Health

Mortality rate in 1963 showed about 175 children under age five wdying per 1000 live births and now

the number has fallen to 23. Even though Kenya still lags behind in healthcare coverage for services such as immunization, water and sanitation and family planning, there has been a tremendous progress that the East African country has made in the health sector.

The 2010 constitution devolved primary and secondary healthcare services to the 47 counties. The country level hospitals have increased access to hospitals. Revamping the national health insurance scheme to comprise everyone capable of paying premiums, rather than only those in formal

employment has also saved many the agony of selling their property or organize a fundraising in case in case a disease strikes.

Linda mama (protect mother), free maternal care program launched in 2013 averts more than 2,000 maternal deaths and 30,000 child deaths every year.

Public-private partnership has also design innovative solutions to promote health. For instance, Safaricom, dominant mobile operator, has linked up with the National Hospital Insurance Fund to provide healthcare insurance to 2,000 households through M-Tiba. The program enables users send, save, and receive funds and benefits to access healthcare services using their mobile phones at selected healthcare facilities and currently the government launched Universal Health Care aiming at improving access to primary care.

Economy

Kenya boasts of the best economy in the Eastern Africa. Agriculture sector has continued to be expanded enabling Kenyans to produce both cash and food crops. Increase of foreigners in the country has given a boost to tourism sector. Expansion of trade, internal and external is earning revenue to the

government.

Many local and foreign based industries have been established in the country which has resulted to creation of employment to a number of people. Financial institutions such as banks and insurance companies are on the rise.

Kenya transport sector has undergone many changes over the past five decades and has reached arguably its most illustrious level. The government has put much effort to maintain and rehabilitate existing roads and upgrading roads to bitumen. The country also owns modern airports and airstrips. The current construction of Standard Gauge Railways that connects Nairobi to coast region has facilitated faster transport between the two regions.

The level of literacy has risen as more than half of the population can both read and write. Introduction of free primary and secondary

Education

education has opened an avenue for those who could not cater for their own studies to pursue their dreams. Every year thousands of people graduate from the universities and colleges compared to 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.

Due to high demand of education, government and private schools, colleges, universities have been established to cater for the rising number of learners.

Poverty

After independence, Kenya mad significant steps in reducing absolute poverty in the 1960, however, this momentum warned off in the late 70s. Currently, half of the population lives in extreme poverty. Most of the Kenya's poor people live in rural areas where they depend on subsistence agriculture for their livelihoods. Hunger continues to rear its head from time to time. Corruption is a major factor that contributes to a high rate of poverty. According to

Transparency International, Kenya is among the most corrupt countries in the world. Large proportion of government money intended for development ends up in the pockets of few individuals. Bribery, fraud and tribal favoritism are common within all levels of government departments. Other factors are adverse climatic condition, HIV/AIDS pandemic, explosive population growth and limited economic diversity.



President Uhuru Kenyatta greets AU Envoy Raila Odinga , Deputy President William Ruto, Chief Justice David Maraga, Governor Mike Sonko and Wiper leader Kalonzo look on.

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Zimbabwe's Ruling Party Propose to Raise the Minimum Presidential Age Limit

By Prince Kurupati



Two of the four wings that make up ZANU (PF), Zimbabwe's ruling party have decided and adopted resolutions to increase the presidential age limit from 40 to 52. The two wings that have passed the resolution are the war veterans' wing and the women's league. The youth wing has not yet deliberated on the issue thus no official communication has come from their side but independent views from different youth leaders suggest there is discord in the youth wing owing to the proposal to increase the presidential age limit. The other wing which is the main wing (which consists of all 'others' be it the youths, women, war veterans and men in general) is yet to deliberate on the 'hot topic'.

The proposal to raise the presidential age limit

was first deliberated by the war veterans' wing. After nationwide consultations (as reported by some officials though their claims cannot be authenticated), the war veterans wing so it fit to raise the presidential age limit through a constitutional amendment. Almost a week later, the women's league executive sitting for the final time before heading to the 17th Zanu-PF Annual People's Conference also adopted the proposal to raise the presidential age limit.

The rationale behind the Move

In passing their resolutions, both the war veterans and the women's league cited one reason as the reason behind the decision to raise the presidential age limit. These two wings said that they seek to "raise the presidential age limit from 40 to 52 years to

ensure anyone who contests for the presidency is mature enough to fully grasp the gravity of what it means to run a country."

What the Critics Say

Soon after the announcement by both wings, a lot of people, especially from the opposition side, heavily criticized the resolutions to raise the presidential age limit. To the critics, the reason cited by both wings is by no means the real reason behind the move. Rather, many believe raising the presidential age limit is a plot to eliminate the main opposition political party leader, Nelson Chamisa from competing in the next presidential elections.

Nelson Chamisa in the recently conducted harmonized elections managed to push the incumbent Emmerson

Mnangagwa all the way. Though Chamisa was ultimately defeated (at least according to the courts), he had done a remarkable job in garnering over 2 million votes. This is more convincing when one considers that he had just been appointed the leader of the opposition barely five months before the elections hence he had 'limited' time to really roll out a strong campaign in that short timeframe.

The decision by the war veterans' wing and the women's league, therefore, is necessitated by the need to win the next elections through a technicality as they know that whosoever is going to be picked as the presidential candidate for the next election will not be as popular as the current 'youthful' leader. The decision also according to many critics is necessitated by fear by

the ruling party fear that Chamisa is going to build his stock in the coming few years such that by the time the next elections come in 2023, he will be a much bigger force and a bigger threat to the ruling party.

What the Constitution Say

The current Zimbabwean Constitution can into effect in 2013. The new constitution replaced the constitution which had been in place since independence. Before its annulment, the old constitution had been amended a whopping 20 times, something which had angered constitutional scholars who argued that many amendments compromised the sacrosanct of the constitution.

As such, in a bid to preserve the sacrosanct of the constitution,



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa greets supporters of his ruling Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) party.

constitutionalists are against any amendments to the current constitution but with the proposal to raise the presidential age limit muted by some wings of the ruling party, it's inevitable that the new constitution is to be amended (for the second time with the first amendment coming in January 2017 when Section 180 of the constitution was amended to allow the appointment procedure of the Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice and the Judge President to be done by the President after consultation with the Judicial Service Commission.)

To amend the constitution, the party which wants to change any parts of the constitution will first have to inform the Speaker of Parliament. The Speaker of Parliament under section 328(4) of the Constitution will then give notice of

a Constitutional Bill. Afterwards, the Parliament “must” invite members of the public to express their views on the proposed Bill in public meetings and through written submissions, “and must convene meetings and provide facilities to enable the public to do so”.

Once public consultations are done, the next step will see the Bill being debated in either house (House of Assembly and the Senate). Subsequently, if two-thirds of all sitting members say yes, then the Bill passes Parliament and it's presented to the president for assent from which point, the Bill becomes an Act of Law.

From the above, looking at the resources at the disposal of Zanu (PF) as well as the numbers in Parliament, Zanu (PF) which has over a two-thirds majority in Parliament on its own does

possess the power to amend the constitution to allow for the raising of the presidential age limit.

Still Awaiting the Youth League Resolution

At this point, the Zanu (PF) Youth League has not as yet deliberated on the move to raise the presidential age limit thus there is no resolution on that front. While awaiting deliberations, individual members from the Youth League have aired their views independently on various platforms including social media. From the individual views, it's clear to see that there is no consensus among the leaders of the Youth League. The Zanu PF Youth League secretary Pupurai Togarepi (who is 54 and some would say too old to be a youth leader) is said to be in favour of the proposal while Zanu-PF Youth League

national secretary Tendai Chinyau through his recent social media posts is ‘seemingly’ against the proposal.

The Main Wing Resolution

The Zanu (PF) Main Wing unlike the other three wings (i.e. the war veterans, women's league and the youth league) only meets annually at the Conference or as is the case in other years, at the Congress (the Congress is held once every five years though

just members of the Main Wing and not affiliated to other wings. It is such members who are going to be pivotal when it comes to passing the resolution to raise the presidential age limit. Already, some of these members have shown that they are of a different view to that of the war veterans and women's league. Just to put this into perspective, below is a tweet from Energy Mutodi, a senior Zanu (PF) official and current Deputy Minister of Information, Publicity & Broadcasting Services:

“Let me make it clear that His Excellency President ED Mnangagwa will not seek to outdo his rival in the last election Nelson Chamisa by increasing the age limit for Presidential candidates. Instead, his policies and actions will do the bidding for his next term.”

Verdict

The ongoing Zanu (PF) Conference is the only ‘obstacle’ standing in the way of the proposal to raise the presidential age limit from becoming an Act of Law. Once the Zanu (PF) Conference adopts the proposal, then no other party organ will be able to stop the proposal from becoming an Act of Law. At the same time, thanks to Zanu (PF)'s two-thirds majority, the constitutional amendment process will move smoothly through Parliament unless the unthinkable happens i.e. Zanu (PF) Members of Parliament voting against a motion raised by their own party.

extraordinary Congress gatherings may be called at any point). As such, any decision to adopt or decline the proposal to raise the presidential age limit by the Main Wing will be passed when the Conference main event kicks off. This year's 17th Zanu-PF Annual People's Conference kicked off on the 11th of December but the main event will only roar into life on Friday the 14th and it is during the main event that decisions on the proposal will be adopted or rejected. As some of the members who are part of the war veterans' wing and the women's league are also part of the Main Wing, it means that already, there are some in the Main Wing who are in full support of the proposal to raise the presidential age limit.

On the other hand, there are also others who are

Africa's Gloomy Outlook Of Cholera Contributes To Global Health Crisis.

By Nevson Mpofo

The World Health Organisation has commitments to end cholera by 2030. The burden is by 2016, the outbreak heavily impacted this contributing to Global Crisis. The average costs to patients and house- hold Health in facilities and treatments in 2016 alone was US\$65,6 and \$59,7 with Global equivalence of \$249,9 and \$227,5 US million dollars .

Africa is the leading continent plunged into a Health crisis. It is likely to see the growth and development of some of its countries failing to win United Nation Global Sustainable Development Goals on Health, Education and poverty reduction.

This can be inevitable if the World Health Organization [WHO] fails to come up with Global Health interventions, strategies, policies and monitoring and evaluation measures. At a greater note, African countries must take a snap shot focus on Public Health surveillance to safe – guard their economies. The urgent focus is challenged to highly Cholera burdened ones hit by communicable diseases because of failure to get adequate drugs.

These countries failed to implement Global Health policies and Quality Standards. These are Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, Ghana and partly South Africa. Cholera since the beginning of the new millennium has hit Zimbabwe seriously. The number of death in 2008 was almost 4,000. There arose several admissions of cholera diagnosed people at

Treatment centres reaching more than the number of death and losses incurred in less than 3 months.

The epidemic hit the most populated city of Harare. The city had by then a population of 2 million people. As of now its total population is as high as 3 million people.

The increase, Demographers note has been caused by rural to urban migration since 1990. UNICEF was the leading partner in containing the water Bourne disease. The organisation drilled bore-holes, supplied drugs and clean water in the urban communities to save mainly children.

Ten years down the line, the outbreak rose again. The 2018 outbreak is better than how it was in 2008. In record for 2018, 50 people have been recorded dead in Harare’s densely populated suburbs. However 2018 interventions were much stronger than 2008. A lot of issues remained unsolved since 2008. Politics took centre stage than Health, water and sanitation delivery.

Cholera was declared on 6 September 2018. On 11 September, it was declare state of emergency .The City of Harare in some suburbs in high and low areas have gone for years without water. If provided it used to be dirty water. Cholera broke out again. It had a fatality rate ratio of 0, 73% . The country appealed for US \$63 million



Health Officials at work in Zimbabwe.

from domestic and foreign donors.

Zimbabwe managed to contain cholera only recently. Several donor partners working in the country came to the rescue by providing finance, \$ 3 million and 400,000 Euro in dollars from the International community. Also they provided technical assistance, equipment, drugs, water supply, education, Public and Community health trainings. The giants in the whole work were World Health Organisation [WHO] , UNICEF , International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and European Union .

In an interview, Minister of Heath and Child Care Dr Obediah Moyo said the support of the donor World had gone a long way since 2008. He said although a big number of donors came in this year with their interventions, many people died in 2008 than 2018.

“The Government of Zimbabwe thanks the Donor World already known

in their interventions in various support. We have as the Ministry come up with ways of how to eliminate communicable diseases. We need the support of the communities, City of Harare and ZINWA.

“In-fact the stronger solution is to look at International standards used in the Health delivery systems. We have to take a stronger look at countries like USA , UK , Canada , Netherlands and others developed .”

“We need to look at daily water supply, clean water supply that is uninterrupted. Secondly, the issue of refuse collection goes beyond the work of Environmental Management Agency to monitor and evaluate work done. It is the obligation of the councillors to remain inspective rather than talking politics all the time “.

Cholera finally came to an end when the Cholera oral vaccine [OCV] was introduced in September. Director of Epidemiology, Dr Portia Manangazira of the

Ministry of Health and Child Care said they borrowed the idea from Zambia through the work done perfectly by World Health Organisation which employed a lot of interventions in the whole system.

“As a country, we managed to come up with Oral Cholera Vaccination. Cholera resisted our 1st line treatment of Ciprofloxacin. The other effective drug azithromycin was not at our reach .Zambia our neighbour had the similar health challenge.

“Cholera finally ended with the introduction of the vaccine. A number of interventions were employed. The problem ended as well. We now need to regularly monitor and evaluate the communicable disease spread especially in High population areas in towns and cities”, said the Epidemiologist “.

ZAMBIA..

The Southern African country was seriously hit in 2017. It started on 28 September. It had 15 death

and 547 cases. Its fatality rate was at 1,8% . About 136 cases were reported in November. The affected areas were Chipata and Kanyama districts. It then spread to Lusaka the capital city and the peri-urban communities of Metero and Bulumi . Of the tested water sources, 42% of them were faecal contaminated.

The Minister of Health, Lawrence John Sechalwe said before the oral cholera vaccine came, they had located patients to 5 cholera centres where they got quick treatment. He pointed out that the role played by community Health workers heightened knowledge and education by bringing three communication interventions .These are awareness, sensitisation and advocacy.

“We thank GAVI, WHO and UNICEF for coming to the rescue to palliate the pain we had. We managed to contain the spread as well through several interventions. One of the program is WASH, Water and Sanitation Health. We promoted it in all the affected places. But still we had to contain the spread as well in the urban, rural and peri-urban communities.”

“Operating procedures, facilities, surveillance and Health Education helped us to move well forward to eradicate the challenge. We managed to close all contaminated areas. We introduced new health interventions like managing WASH and hygiene .We also provided house-hold chlorine and disinfections .Our total budget reached K 100 million.

“The water purification program was followed by quality water purification and close monitoring in all the affected areas. However Intensification of garbage

collection and emptying septic tanks could not be left out”.

Zambia managed to contain the water Bourne disease which finally ended by the end of December of the same year. The spread was mainly caused by contaminated food, poor hygiene and poor sanitation .The blow was feared deadly if it spread out because Zambia hosts 60,000 refugees from Democratic Republic of CONGO.

NIGERIA

The State Ministry of Health of Nigeria managed as well to eradicate the spread of the disease in Yobe . There were 989 cases of cholera. They was total of 91 death by 20 September 2018. In Borno they were 2,137 cases and 36 death by that same month as well. The fatality rate ratio of cholera was at 1, 6% . Some areas affected are Hausa , Kanun and Shuwa .

The challenges it faced was lack of communication. The areas are far away from Infrastructure related to Information Communication Technology. The Geographical position of the area contributed to the nasty problem. In order to finish the problem, the need for Transport network and community health workers stood important. Nigeria focused on key issues.

- 1, treatment centres
- 2, Regeneration of the Infrastructure
- 3, Skills Development
- 4, Health Education
- 5, Water and Sanitation Health and location of Emergent Operation Centres..

GHANA

This was the most hit country since the early 1970, 1999 and in 2014. At least



20 million people are at greater risk. In 1999 it had 250 deaths and 900 cases of the epidemic. The most affected community is Accra and Brong Ahafo Region. It had 1035 cases , 550 male at 53% and 485 female at 47% .The most affected were of the ages 20 to 29 years at the rate of 23,5% .The attack rate was 7 persons per 100, 000 population with a total fatality rate of 2,4% . The most affected is Asutifu with case fatality rate of 9,1% .

Despite Africa facing the most challenging burden, the World has some parts also

at risk. There are 3,5 million cases , 100,000 deaths to 120,000 death due to cholera recorded annually . Cholera is an acute Communicable Water Bourne Infection of the Intestine caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with Bacterium Vibrio-Cholera. It is characterised by watery diarrhoea, leads to dehydration. It affects low immunity people, those malnourished, HIV positive and those with poor sewer settings. Symptoms are watery diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea, drowsiness, convulsions and coma.

In terms of prevention, it needs provision of safe water, good sanitation and enhanced water and food hygiene all the times. It affects poor, low and middle income countries. Its Incubation period is few hours to 5 days. About 69 countries have been identified most cholera endemic. In these countries, 1, 3 billion population is at risk. Annually 1,3 to 4,0 million cases occur. This at Global level is linked to Demographic, socio-economic, cultural, environmental and behavioural factors.



Global anti-corruption laurel for Nuhu Ribadu

By Chido Onumah

On Friday, December 7, 2018, Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, pioneer chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) stood before a global audience in Putrajaya, Malaysia—at the 2018 International Anti-corruption Day celebrations—as joint winner, with Leonard McCarthy, a former Vice President of Institutional Integrity at the World Bank Group, of this year’s Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani International Anti-Corruption Excellence Award in the Lifetime/Outstanding Achievement category.

The Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani International Anti-Corruption Excellence Award is presented annually on International Anti-Corruption Day (9th December) in “recognition and appreciation to those who have contributed to the global campaign against corruption. The Award recognizes individuals and organizations who have dedicated themselves to combat corruption in some capacity.

“The greater purpose of the Award is to serve as a tool that highlights exemplary and noteworthy actions and good practices on a global scale, to recognize, promote, collect and disseminate anti-corruption models from around the world; to raise awareness, support and solidarity to the fight against corruption; as well as to encourage and inspire

similar and new initiatives towards a corruption-free society.

“The Award hopes that through its public image, the visibility of those who are fighting corruption is not only enhanced but also celebrated across the world and hopes to motivate governments, academic institutions, the media and civil society to adopt and understand the principles of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and collaborate towards its implementation.”

It was an honour well-deserved and few people would have been surprised that Mallam Ribadu was the centre of attention of the global anti-corruption movement at the grand ceremony at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre, which had in attendance the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dr Mahathir Bin Mohamad, and Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

The organisers said Mallam Ribadu’s “nomination was carefully reviewed by the Assessment Advisory Board and the High-Level Award Committee and was considered to contain and exemplify the values and virtues that this Award stands for.”

As head of EFCC between 2003 and early 2008, Mallam Ribadu put the EFCC on the global anti-corruption map and left no one in doubt that he not only knows his onions when it comes tackling corruption



Ribadu.

but that he has the courage to boot. Many things prepared Mallam Ribadu for his role at EFCC and the honour accorded him.

After studying law at Ahmadu Bello University and graduating from the Nigerian Law School in 1984, he opted for a career in law enforcement. He joined the Nigerian Police where he served both as a general duty policeman and a prosecutor. As a policeman, he engaged criminals in the streets of Lagos, and as a prosecutor, he was involved in almost all high-profile cases the police worked on.

But the EFCC presented a different challenge. When the Commission was created in 2003, Nigeria’s image was at the lowest ebb in terms of cooperation with foreign law enforcement agencies to deal with money laundering and other financial crimes. This made

it difficult for the county to be integrated into the global financial system. Mallam Ribadu and his team had to start from the scratch to clean up the image of the country and tackle a monster that was giving Nigeria the most headache at the time—the proliferation of cross-border financial scam, known as 419 after the section of the criminal code that deals with advance fee fraud. A small cartel of Nigerians leveraged on loose law enforcement and financial regulations to defraud foreigners who were eager to make a killing from the country.

The criminals and their collaborators in banks created a reputation burden for Nigeria. No one wanted to do business with the country. Within the first few weeks of starting the EFCC, Mallam Ribadu decided to take on this group of powerful criminals. Some

were brought to justice, while others are still facing criminal charges.

After halting the spread of the immediate problem, the Commission shifted its focus on sanitizing institutions. It targeted banks, financial institutions and law enforcement agencies, ushering a banking reform that created a new dawn and sanity in the financial sector.

While taking on criminals and their accomplices who had compromised law enforcement was daunting, the Commission had an even bigger problem to contend with—confronting powerful and well-heeled politically exposed persons (PEPs) whose corruption and mindless profligacy had mired the country in poverty and underdevelopment. The EFCC under Mallam Ribadu investigated and prosecuted governors, ministers, and members of the national assembly,

actions that almost cost him his life.

Beyond Nigeria, the EFCC under Mallam Ribadu also investigated the operations of multinationals in the country. Of note is the Halliburton investigation, a complex bribery scandal that spanned almost a decade, between 1995 and 2004. During this period, the company, through its affiliates paid about \$182 million to senior government officials as bribe for the award of a gas contract. Through the efforts of the EFCC, Halliburton was brought to justice in the United States. The company paid penalties totaling \$579 million. EFCC also investigated Bilfinger, Siemens, and other multinationals.

Under Mallam Ribadu, training was key to the success of the EFCC. He established the EFCC Academy and brought experts from around the world to train staff on all aspects of financial crime investigations. He also placed premium on establishing working relationship with sister organisations around the world and enrolled Nigeria into the Egmont Group through the creation of the Nigeria Financial



Ribadu.

Intelligence Unit (NFIU). He established fruitful relationship with the FBI, the Metropolitan Police, UK, the BKA, the Federal Criminal Police Office of Germany, among others. Within the sub region, the EFCC supported the activities of the West African Intergovernmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa or GIABA—a specialised institution of the Economic Community of West African States responsible for facilitating the adoption and implementation of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) in West Africa—and seconded staff from the Commission to the institution.

Even though it has been a decade since he was forced out of the EFCC, Mallam Ribadu continues to advance the cause of anti-corruption and accountability in Nigeria. He continues to mentor young Nigerians in organisations engaged in anti-corruption work. The African Centre for Media and Information Literacy (AFRICMIL) has benefited tremendously from his experience in managing its accountability project, Corruption Anonymous, which seeks to protect and amplify the role of whistle blowers in the fight against corruption. He knows the role whistle blowers played in the success of the EFCC during his leadership.

It was only fitting, therefore, that when AFRICMIL nominated him for this year's Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani International Anti-Corruption Excellence Award in the Lifetime/ Outstanding Achievement category, the organizers, the Qatar-based Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre (ROLACC), the current secretariat of the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA), had no problems conferring him with the honour.

The Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Centre (ROLACC) was established under Qatari leadership in 2013 “to construct and develop specialized

knowledge and skills for use by individual practitioners and institutions, which would lead to the strengthening of the rule of law and fight corruption in line with international standards and national needs.”

This honour for Mallam Ribadu is a testimony to integrity, hard work and dedication.

Chido Onumah, Coordinator of the African Centre for Media & Information Literacy (AFRICMIL), served as head of the civil society and crime prevention unit at the EFCC under Mallam Nuhu Ribadu.



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Cameroon: Football in continuous limping

By Boris Esono (Buea-Cameroon)

From a fail in Russia leading to the normalization committee set up by FIFA, late start of the National inter pool competition, appointment of a new head coach for the National team to Cameroon stripped off its rights to host the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations, the football scene in Cameroon has been something unlike in the past.

Football in the country has been likening to a chess game where any and everything can happen. The year 2018 started on a bad footing and according to many sports pundits in the country, it will surely end on a bad footing.

The Cameroon national Team, known as the Indomitable Lions under then head coach Hugo Broos in 2017 won the AFCON after a brilliant performance in the competition against arch rivals Egypt. However, the champions failed to qualify for the FIFA World

cup in Russia leading to the sacking of the coach. Bizarrely, Hugo Broos who was sacked only left when his contract expired in the month of February.

His (Broos) sacking ushered in a new politicking in Cameroon. Applications were opened for those who will want to coach Cameroon. From about 71 candidates the number reduced to 5 and the public was made aware of Swede Sven Goran Erikson. However it is reported that negotiations broke down leading to him not to get the job. Up steps Clarence Seedorf from the bleus, appointed as coach the same way as Hugo Broos was appointed.

When one thought things won't get worse, CAF decided to strip Cameroon from hosting the 2019 AFCON, a decision that was received with mixed feelings in various quarters. After four CAF inspection teams that visited Cameroon, the

country was judged unfit security and infrastructural wise.

According to government's spokesman Issa Tchiroma, CAF's decision was unfair to the country. To various government officials Cameroon would be ready by the deadline given by CAF as work continues across the regions hosting matches.

It had been reported that Cameroon planned to take the case to the Court of Arbitration for Sports, CAS, and a route that CAF has warned Cameroon from going. However the plan was aborted during a meeting chaired by PM Yang.

Governors of some of the hosting venues were on the field shortly after CAF's decision to show that Cameroon will be ready for the competition. Governor Okalia Bilai of the South West Region made a stop at the Molyko Omni sport stadium and



the Victoria centenary and Limbe Omni sport stadia showing that Cameroon and the South West are very much prepared to host matches at any second. The officials have indicated that works at the various sites will continue despite the decision from CAF.

The rehabilitation of

the stadium in Garoua by Prime Protomac is expected to be handed to the government by the end of the year while that of the Olembe stadium is expected by January 2019.

The whole chaos and politics that has ensured the Cameroon sporting scene saw Cameroon losing a place in this year's CAF Confederation cup as Cameroon could not provide a team before the deadline as prescribed by CAF. The reason, the Head of state had not indicated when the finals of the cup of Cameroon will be played. Cameroon is one of the only countries whose president must be present to conclude the sporting year.

The Head of state has always closed the football season leading to clubs having to wait on the civil cabinet to make known the date of the finals.



President Biya and CAF President Ahmed Ahmed, the withdrawal of the hosting rights of the 2019 Nations cup from Cameroon was considered a national disgrace.

This made Lion Blesse and Eding Sport who had qualified for the finals to wait more than 2 months for the final to be played.

The question that many sports pundits have been and are still asking is that must the Head of state be present before the Cup of Cameroon is played? According to Edward Mwambo, this should not be the case. He said: "It is sad that the cup of Cameroon will only be played when the head of state is present. That is why we had to lose a place in the CONFED cup because we could not provide a team whereas the teams to play the final were ready a long time ago".

Did the Normalization

committee achieve its goal?

After Tombi A Roko Sidiki left his post as president of FECAFOOT after many contest of his ineligibility, World football governing body FIFA set up a normalization committee headed by Barrister Diuedonne Happi. Their task was to bring normalcy to Cameroon football by organizing election to FECAFOOT and creating a harmonize calendar for football in the country. After their mandate expired in August this year, FIFA extended it again until December 16 this year to achieve their goals: A goal which for many has still not been achieved.

Cameroon has had bad

memories of Normalization committees as in 2013 Cameroon was under a Normalization committee headed by Joseph Owona. His mandate left a bad taste for many sport lovers in the country who had prayed not to ever see another committee in the country. The goal of having a harmonized football calendar as proposed by Barrister Happi hasn't even been achieved. Cameroon's football doesn't even have a precise date it starts and ends.

The 2018/2019 football season should have commenced by now but after various postponements, the league has been program for this December with the date

still to be made known. With their mandate finishing this December with the coming of a new president of FECAFOOT, the wish for many is that the word "Normalization committee" will not be associated with Cameroon again.

Rare Successes

The year will not only be remembered as a bad year but many athletes shun brightly. Unfortunately Cameroon could not win their maiden Africa women's Championship this year but they managed to pick up a ticket for the FIFA World Cup in France next year by winning the third place against Mali. The Lionesses will be hoping to do better than

they did at the 2015 FIFA World Cup in Canada. During the tournament, the girls of then head coach Enow Gatchu were knocked out at the group stages.

Eding Sport of the Lekie also picked up their maiden cup of Cameroon after beaten Lion Blesses 1 goal to zero. The team which was created in 2012 is coming up as a force to reckon with in the Cameroon football landscape. In 2016/2017 MTN Elite One football championship, the side outsmarted favorite Coton sport of Garoua to claim the championship.



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A year of engagement in Africa with the Merck Foundation.

In the past year, the Merck Foundation was all over Africa. PAV shares this album highlighting the commitment and sustained efforts of the Foundation to positively engage with stakeholders to shore up the healthcare sector in Africa.



Dr Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation (right); H.E. Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dr Samia Suluhu Hassan (left)



Merck Foundation met the President of Niger H.E. MAHAMADOU ISSOUFOU to discuss and underscore our long-term commitment to healthcare capacity building, and empowering women and youth in Niger through our impactful programs; Merck Cancer Access Program and Merck More Than a Mother in partnership with the First Lady of Niger H.E. AISSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU



Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees (L-R), First Lady of Niger H.E. Mrs. AISSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU and Dr. Rasha Kelej, the CEO of Merck Foundation discussing Merck Foundation's long-term commitment to building healthcare capacity in Niger



Dr. Rasha Kelej, the CEO of Merck Foundation, Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees (L-R) and First Lady of Niger H.E. Mrs. AISSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU and discussing Merck Foundation's long-term commitment to building healthcare capacity in Niger



(L-R) Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees, Dr. Rasha Kelej, the CEO of Merck Foundation and Her Excellency, the First Lady of Niger, H.E. Mrs. AISSATA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU



Dr. Rasha Kelej CEO of Merck Foundation meets First Lady of Gambia , H.E. Fatoumattah Bah-Barrow, First Lady of Lesotho H.E. Maesiah Thabane, First Lady of Botswana H.E. Neo Masisi, and First Lady of Zimbabwe H.E. Auxillia Mngagwa to discuss Merck Cancer Access Program and Merck Foundation long term partnership to build capacity in their countries.



Uganda Prime Minister, His Excellency Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda (third right) and Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees (second right). Uganda Minister of State for Health Hon. Sarah Opendi (third left), Dr Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation (second left) and other government officials during their meeting with Uganda Prime Minister.

H.E. Madam HINDA DEBY ITNO, the First Lady of Chad and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation





Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with H.E. Dr. LALLA MALIKA ISSOUFOU MAHAMADOU, the First Lady of Niger during the meeting to discuss the selection of the right candidates for the one year online diabetes diploma.



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with H.E. ESTHER LUNGU, the First Lady of Zambia during the meeting to discuss the selection of the right candidates for the one year online diabetes diploma



During the high-level meeting between the president of Chad, His Excellency IDRIS DEBY ITNO, Guest of Honor Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees and Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO Merck Foundation, Merck Foundation confirmed their commitment to long-term partnership with the government of Chad to build healthcare Capacity and improve access to innovative and equitable healthcare solutions across the country.



Merck Foundation–African First Ladies panel chaired by Merck Foundation CEO, Dr. Rasha Kelej at the 4th edition of Merck Africa Asia Luminary 2017, Egypt. The high-level panel included (from left to right): Hon. Chairperson of National Council of Namibia, Margaret Mensah-Williams; Her Excellency First Lady of Central African Republic Madame Brigitte Touadera; Her Excellency First Lady of Chad Madame Hinda Deby Itno; Dr Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation, Her Excellency First Lady of the Republic of Niger Madame Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou; and Her Excellency First Lady of the Republic of Guinea Madame Conde Djene



Dignitaries at the Merck Africa Luminary 2016 (from left to right): Hon. Joyce Lay, Member of Parliament, Kenya; Hon. Julia Duncan-Cassell, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Liberia; Hon. Sarah Opendi, Minister of Health, Uganda; Hon. Raymond Goudou Coffie, Minister of Health, Cote D'Ivoire; HE Dominique Ouattara, First Lady, Cote D'Ivoire; HE Madame Brigitte Touadera, First Lady, Central African Republic; Dr Belen Garijo, CEO, Merck Healthcare; Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation; Yiannis Vrontos, Head Intercontinental Region, Merck Healthcare; and Hon. Virginie Baiokua, Minister of Social Affairs & National Reconciliation, Central African Republic



Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees (L-R), First Lady of Niger H.E. Mrs. Aissata Issoufou Mahamadou Hon. Dr. Idi Illiassou Mainassara, Minister of Public Health for Niger, and Dr. Rasha Kelej, the CEO of Merck Foundation discussing Merck Foundation's long-term commitment to building healthcare capacity in Niger



Courtesy visit with Kenya's First Lady: From left to right: Lina Ekomo, Central African Republic; Hon. Virgine Baiokua, Minister of Social Affairs and National Reconciliation, Central African Republic; H.E. Madame Brigitte Touadera, First Lady, Central African Republic; H.E. Margaret Kenyatta, First Lady, Republic of Kenya; Dr. Belen Garijo, CEO, Merck Healthcare; Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and Leonard Saika, Director - Regional Head of Social Responsibility & Market Development – Africa, Merck



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation with H.E. REBBECA AKUFO-ADDO, the First Lady of Ghana during the meeting to discuss the selection of the right candidates for the one-year online diabetes diploma.



Prof. Dr. Frank Stangenberg Haverkamp, Chairman of the Executive Board of E. Merck KG and the Chairman of Merck Foundation Board of Trustees, Dr Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and Minister of State of Health Uganda, Hon. Sarah Opendi with 'Merck More Than a Mother' women groups opening the chicken farm in rural Uganda



Dr. Rasha Kelej, CEO of Merck Foundation and President of Merck More Than a Mother with The First Lady of Gambia H.E. FATOUMATTA BARROW



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