

New Dawn In The Horizon For Africa

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A Noble Prize For Abiy With Big Lessons For Africa

By Ajong Mbapndah L

From Chief Albert Luthuli of the ANC fame, to Bishop Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Frederick De Klerk, and Wangari Mathai, Africa has had its share of Noble Peace Prize Laureates. Joining this club of distinguished Africans is Prime Minister Abiy of Ethiopia. While his predecessors may have been more established names, Abiy has barely been on the scene for two years and the feat could not have come at a more propitious moment for Africa.

At 43, Abiy represents the prototype of 21st century leadership that Africa needs. On assuming Office, Abiy took the audacious move of addressing the bloody family feud that had plagued his country Ethiopia and neighboring Eritrea. The result was a peace deal that opened the borders between the two countries for the first time in about 20 years. In images of Abiy and President exchanging hugs, exchanging visits, the first flights from Addis to Asmara and vice versa, the joy on the faces of families happily re-united, Abiy and President Aferewki provided some of the most iconic images that Africa saw in 2019.

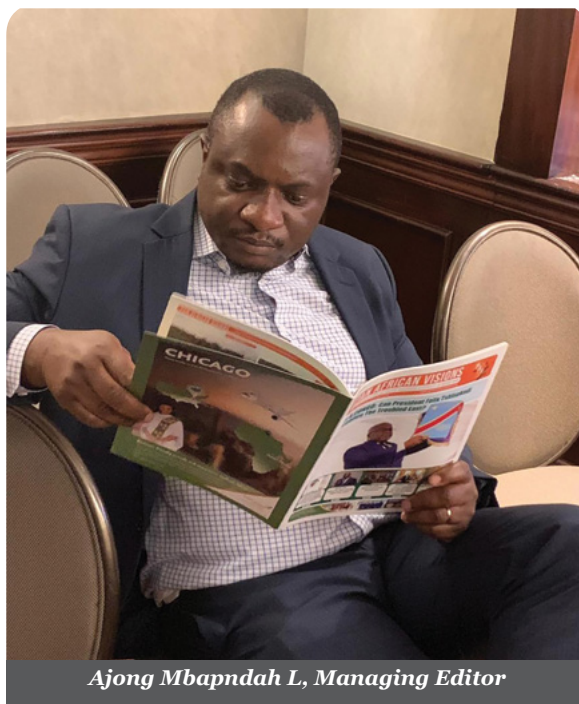
Beyond the peace accord with Eritrea, Abiy freed thousands of political prisoners and embarked on political reforms that have continued to open new perspectives for Ethiopia.

The feat achieved by Abiy in so short a time deserves a closer look on the leadership

issues in Africa. In previous issues, PAV has harped on the need of a generational change across the continent. In a continent where the median age is around 20 years, it is paradoxical that the median age of African leaders is in the 60s. There is a serious disconnect here with difference in priorities, difference in approaches, difference in ambitions, and more. At his age, how does Buhari mirror the ambitions of dynamic young Nigerians? At his age, what does Paul Biya have in common with super brilliant youth keen on building silicon mountain in Buea? In Abiy, we see dynamism, we see energy, we see optimism, someone daring and someone who incarnates hope for the creative genius of Africa.

The Nobel Prize to Abiy is also a testament to African solutions to African problems. Everyone has been talking about Abiy, but we forget that on the other end, President Aferewki of Eritrea was willing to play ball as well and definitely deserves a recognition of his own. Instead of bringing outside actors to seek solutions, both men decided to open up and do it themselves. Increasingly, we see Africans taking the lead to solve problems in South Sudan. We see Africans taking the lead to solve the problems in Sudan. Ahead of the elections in Mozambique, we saw opposition Chief Ossufo Momade signing peace accords with President Felipe Nyusi.

Africans solving their



Ajong Mbapndah L, Managing Editor

problems requires the vision, the tact, and a strong political will. While the dialogue that took place in Cameroon was a good first step, one cannot say with all certainty that it was done with the desire to seek lasting solutions or to address the Anglophone problem which has brought an incredible toll on human life and property in the North West and South West Regions of the country.

From those invited, one could see that it was largely made of people who do not think there is a problem in Cameroon, or those who have only been hanging on the fringes. Apart from a few fighters who spoke their mind, and were well known actors in the crisis, it was hard to see how those who have strenuously argued that there is no Anglophone problem could

actually be trusted with the responsibility of proffering solutions. Instead of a federal form of government that even some francophones now see as a solution, the dialogue came up with a special status for Anglophone regions. What does it mean? what will it contain? When will it start? the questions are begging for answers

Equally intriguing in the Cameroon crisis is how aloof President Biya has been. That it took three years for him to make a formal statement and to call for dialogue is baffling to say to least. Even when he called for the dialogue, he was neither present at the opening ceremony, nor did he attend the closing ceremony which would have been a great opportunity for him to forcefully embrace the recommendations of the forum and remind

Cameroonians that the recommendations will be implemented.

Without any form of endorsement before and after the forum, it remains to be seen how the resolutions will be binding on President Biya. If provisions of the 1996 constitution have not been implemented till date, what guarantee is there to see a seriousness in the implementation of recommendations from the just ended forum? How could the country move forward when key leaders of the Anglophone movement are still in jail? Indeed, the half-baked solutions from the dialogue may not be the panacea that Cameroon needs. Certainly not when the President refuses to take the bull by the horns.

The cosmetic dialogue might have bought him a bit of time, but when we see the violence in the North West and South West regions, the zest with which 1st October, considered by Anglophone as their independence day was celebrated, and calls from the international community for inclusive dialogue, it is certain that sooner or later, there may be more dialogue.

In leaders like Abiy, there is every reason to hope for Africa, a hope that sooner than later more youth who get a chance to lead, hope that Africans will learn to turn out en masse as they did recently in Guinea to send a strong message to President Alpha Conde that changing the constitution to give him a third term in office is not

palatable, hope that someday the artificial boundaries that separate Africa will give way to free circulation of goods, and people.

On a visit to Washington, DC recently, the diaspora and international partners

were dazzled at presentations from Hon Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry at the African Union. Eloquence, confidence, boldness characterized the ambitious presentations he made of progress with

African Continental Free Trade Agreement. Despite his super charged schedule, Commissioner Muchanga accepted to grant an exclusive interview with Pan African Visions which is brought to you in this issue. We also bring

you a profile of Mohammed Kagnassy and his vision of transforming Africa through Agro -Business. Equally in this issue are stories on Eliud Kipchoge who achieved a feat of his own with a record breaking marathon victory

.The issue explores the impact of the recent dialogue on the tense political landscape in Cameroon, progress towards setting up a transitional government in South Sudan, and more. Happy reading!!!

AU Trade Commissioner Muchanga on the Game Changing Prospects of the AfCFTA

-Unprecedented Political Will Across Africa To See AfCFTA Succeed

By Ajong Mbatndah L

The AU could not have sent a better person to the USA to discuss the African Continental Free Trade Agreement with the diaspora. The schedule was hectic, at every stop, and at each event, Trade and Industry Commissioner Albert Muchanga had an infectious smile on his face. He listened attentively, addressed concerns, and responded to questions as best he could.

With its wealth of knowledge, networking, and finance, the African diaspora has a huge role to play in the African Continental Free Trade area, says Commissioner Muchanga. Speaking with confidence, Commissioner Muchanga indicated that things were on track for the market to go operational by July of 2020.

When reminded that the problem of Africa has never been in the treaties or projects but rather implementation, Mr. Muchanga said things are different this time around. The political will is so strong and the leaders, and people across Africa are keenly aware of the stakes, he said. The rapidity with which countries signed and ratified the AfCFTA gives every reason to hope for the best,



It is a new dawn for Africa with the AfCFTA says AU Trade and Industry Commissioner Albert Muchanga.

Commissioner Muchanga said.

You attended the Making African Trade Easy event. How did the event go? And what message did you bring to the African Diaspora from the AU?

Commissioner Muchanga: The event went on very well. Basically, the key issues were on the emerging developments in the African continent and the diaspora are very happy because they see a role for themselves. We are saying that for us to implement the agreement

we need all stakeholders to play their part – the African Diaspora needs to play their part, they are a source of knowledge, networking, and finance, so they can organize themselves to see how they can contribute to the success of the African Continental Free Trade Area. It is the biggest and most ambitious development program so far. It lays the foundation for present and future generations to develop an Africa they want.

Specifically, with the Continental Free Trade Area, where are we at

this point?

Commissioner Muchanga: Our target is to start trading on 1st July 2020, and we are going to hit that target. At the national level, countries are producing trading documents which are going to be distributed to all the corners where there will be trading. We are sensitizing the business communities in their respective countries to be ready for the market. At the level of the African Continental Free Trade Area as a target we are finalizing work on tariffs schedules, land tariffs monetary systems, and the African

Trade Observatory. We are also engaging the regional economic communities so that we collaborate effectively on all matters on facilitating trade across all Africa. We are very confident that come 1st July 2020, the market will start operating.

Expectations are so high; it has been billed as a game changer. Can you tell us about the potential, and what it will take for this Free Trade Agreement to make the desired impact you want to see on the continent?

Commissioner Muchanga: First requirement is that each and every African country should become a state party to the agreement. 54 countries have signed, and we are left with one which is Eritrea and we are sure they will sign. 28 countries have already posted the instruments of ratification and we are remaining with 28 including Eritrea, and we are in discussion with all these 28 countries and we are confident that come July 1, 2020, all of them will sign and ratify the agreement. So, the first requirement is that we create one African market by having all the 55 African countries be part of it.

Secondly, it is a task involving many stakeholders, the African governments are involved (they are coming up with the legal frameworks, the legal documents and policies), the African private sector also has a role to play (we want investments from them so they can supply the huge market we are creating), the academia also have a role to play (they need to come up with educational materials at appropriate levels so that all Africans from kindergarten to Universities, everybody is involved with the AfCFTA), the CSOs have a role to play. The AfCFTA must filter down to the lowest level.

You are confident that Africa will succeed but Africa has not had a shortage of ideas, or projects, but there seems to be a problem with implementation. What makes you confident that the Continental Free Trade Agreement will work?

Commissioner Muchanga: First and foremost, there is a huge political will for the AfCFTA. When we started negotiations a lot of people expected the negotiations to take a minimum of six years but we were able to complete negotiations within two years which shows the huge political will. When the agreement was opened for signature, we were told it takes another five years for an AU legal instrument to be ratified, but with the support of member states we did our work in advocating for early ratification – within a period of one year we were able to get a minimum of 22 ratifications. The governments said we cannot end here and let us open the operational phase and they agreed that it should

be July 1, 2020. They have said on the day we launch the operational phase it will be called the African Integration Day which is 7 July each year.

We are also working on a Secretariat which will be given enough resources-human and financial to be able to capture the whole of Africa. That inspectorate will collaborate with the regional economic community. We are coming up with a framework of collaborations so that there is alignment of operations, transparency, and confidence with each other.

What mechanisms are there to make sure that smaller countries do not get swallowed up by big ones?

Commissioner Muchanga: The first one is political. We are bringing to the attention of leaders that as we build the AfCFTA there should be a shift in the mindset. The new domestic market for Africa is the AfCFTA, the national market is receding, and all of us should work around the AfCFTA. When the mindset is changed, the issue of working in isolation will no longer work. One of the earliest steps



AU Trade and Industry Commissioner Albert Muchanga receiving the diaspora award on behalf of AU Chair Moussa Faki in Washington, DC

we took was to come up with a protocol which is undergoing signatures so that we create a common African identity so that we ensure that Africans move in the continent without any restrictions. We are also creating an adjustment facility. It will take some time to come up with a fully fledged functional institutional arrangement. We are also working with the Afreximbank - they

have put aside \$2.5 billion for five regions in Africa – East, Central, Southern, Western, and Northern. Each one of them is going to be allocated \$500 million so that companies that want to scale up productions will be able to produce to the scale of the AfCFTA. We are putting enough things to achieve win-win outcomes.

With the advent of the Continental Free Trade, what impact will it have on trade with external partners?

Commissioner Muchanga: We are going to transform African trading with external partners. Historically Africa has always been a trader of raw materials. Now we are going to add value to the ones already in Africa with the development of value added chains. When we do that, there are two things that will be involved – the products will have greater values and the companies that invest in value addition are going to produce to the

scale of the AfCFTA. With that huge scale, they will be in a better position to be able to export to the world, and Africa is going to emerge as an exporter of manufactured goods to the rest of the world.

When you look at AGOA, there are two key problems that are faced in Africa. One is the standard (but a lot of Africa countries have not been able to meet that standard) and the other is the scale (quite a number of producers in Africa have not been able to satisfied the big US market). All of these are going to be resolved by creating the AfCFTA.

You travel the continent regularly; do you really think that African leaders and Africans get it and are willing to put in their all to make AfCFTA work?

Commissioner Muchanga: They are willing to make it work. One of the biggest problems we have in Africa is youth unemployment and Africa has a young population and the minimum age is about 19 years. Each leader knows that for them to create credibility in the eyes of the young population they should deliver decent lives to the people. It is not just about creating jobs but engaging the youths to really be entrepreneurs in their own rights. The youths are very knowledgeable with ICTs and each and every country should come up with incentives and structures to bring foreign investment to the continent.

Your boss the AU chairman was giving a Diaspora award. How much support are you getting from him?

Commissioner Muchanga: I have a very positive relationship with the



Commissioner Muchanga with Ajong Mbapndah L of PAV, the AfCFTA is a vehicle to build the Africa we want, he says.

chairman. Whenever I need support, I go to him and he has never said no. when the award came, he said he won't be able to make it but said I would be able to represent him. When I get back, I am going to his office to present the award to him not just in his honor but the AU commission he heads. It is recognition from the Diaspora that our African body is producing good results. We are a Commission with 10 elected officials, and I also have a good working relationship with the other officials. Trade is about creating industries, it is about agro processing. One of the first things I did before coming from Nigeria was producing a matrix of the functional relationship between the Secretariat of the AfCFTA and all the departments of the AU so that they are going to see how we work. So, we are working as a team.

What expectations do you have from Nigeria and South Africa which are supposed to be leaders of the continent, Nigeria



joined the AfCFTA late, and recently South Africa had this wave of xenophobic attacks, are the two continental giants playing their role?

Commissioner Muchanga: Nigeria said they needed to take a very broad-based stakeholder consultation. They went to the federal states, businesspeople, academia, youths and several people so it took them a while to undertake the process. After that they were caught up with elections and when they were ready, they signed

and hopefully they are going to ratify in no distant time. With the case of South Africa, I said authorities needed to arrest the perpetrators and prosecute them so people do not think they can do anything they want. The issue is not just about foreigners as even South Africans were attacked.

Looking at everything, at what point should the everyday Africans expect to start getting the benefits of the AfCFTA?

Commissioner Muchanga: My vision is very clear. Come

day one which is July 1, 2020, I will like to see a very active market and when that market is very active people should be able to say I am buying a product from country X. When they buy those products there should be two things the price is lower and the quality is very high. I also expect the business community to respond heavily by ensuring that they invest to produce to the scale of the AfCFTA. Without the investment of the private sector, we will achieve nothing. According to the International Chamber of Commerce, only 12 per cent

of investment across Africa is accounted for by the African private sector. They need to scale up. Once we do that, we are on our way to creating the market that we want.

Any particular events surrounding the launch in 2020?

Commissioner Muchanga: I am meeting the Ministers this October where they are going to guide me on how the event will look like. I think there will be a symbolic launch.

Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed's Nobel Peace Prize recognizes efforts in breaking two decades of frozen conflict

By Amos Fofung

News about the awarding of 2019 Nobel peace prize to the prime minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed took the entire world by shock. But to keen observers of the polity of Africa, it was well merited effort.

He did forge a peace deal with Eritrea last year putting an end to two decade of frozen conflict between the two neighboring countries.

He was named as the winner of the 100th Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, where he will receive the award in December.

A total of 301 candidates had been nominated for the prestigious award, including 223 individuals and 78 organizations.

There had been great speculation over who would win the prize, with climate activist Greta



Young, and daring, Prime Minister Abiy has taken the African leadership scene by storm.

Thunberg widely tipped as the favorite. Under the Nobel Foundation's rules, nomination shortlists are not allowed to be published for 50 years, and the organization says any speculation ahead of the announcement is «sheer guesswork».

Even US president, Donald Trump is reported to have eyed the prestigious award, commenting that it won't be a bad idea if he received it.

The award recognized Abiy's «efforts to achieve peace and international cooperation, and in particular his decisive initiative to resolve the border conflict with neighboring Eritrea», said Berit Reiss-Andersen, the Norwegian Nobel committee's chair.

Less than one year since coming into power, Abiy negotiated a peace deal putting an end nearly 20-year military stalemate with Eritrea following their 1998-2000 border war.

Abiy has also pushed through reforms at in Ethiopia, dramatically changing the atmosphere in what was regarded as a repressive state. His public renunciation of past abuses drew a line between his administration and those of his predecessors, as did the appointment of former dissidents and large numbers of women to senior roles.

Abiy said: «I am so humbled and thrilled ... thank you very much. It is a prize given to Africa, given to Ethiopia, and I can imagine how the rest of Africa's leaders will take it positively to work on the peace-building process in our continent.»

The 43-year-old, a former military officer specializing in cyber intelligence, put to good use his skills and statesmanship bringing much



Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed hold hands as they wave at the crowds in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Sunday July 15, 2018
Photo Mulugeta Ayene AP.

desired peace to the troubled countries which stood as one before Eritrea broke away.

The peace deal with Eritrea surprised and delighted tens of millions of people as it had cost both countries dearly in lives and resources and was a brake on development across much of the volatile region.

Eritrea, which has a population of about 4 million, gained independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after a 30-year guerrilla war.

The Nobel committee

acknowledged that «peace does not arise from the actions of one party alone».

It said that when Abiy «reached out his hand, President Afwerki [of Eritrea] grasped it, and helped to formalise the peace process between the two countries».

More recently Abiy played a key role in brokering a political deal in neighbouring Sudan that halted a slide into violence after Omar al-Bashir was ousted, Guardian reports.

Abiy, who often relies on bold personal initiatives and charisma to drive change instead of working through government institutions, is the country's first leader from its largest ethnic community, the Oromo, who have long complained of economic, cultural and political marginalisation.

Domestic reforms have included lifting bans on political parties, releasing imprisoned journalists and sacking a number of

previously untouchable officials, some of them accused of torture. Abiy also appointed women to half the ministerial posts in his cabinet.

Other initiatives, such as the planting of millions of trees, have won further international support, putting Ethiopia and its leaders on the limelight.

Insight into Abiy Ahmed

Abiy was born in Ethiopia in 1976 to a Muslim father and Christian mother.

He has several degrees, including a doctorate degree in peace and security issues and a master's degree in transformational leadership.

As a teenager, he joined the armed struggle against the former Derg regime - a Communist military junta that ruled Ethiopia from 1974 to 1987.

He later served as a UN peacekeeper in Rwanda.

During the 1998-2000 border dispute with Eritrea, he led a spy team on a reconnaissance mission into areas held by the Eritrean Defence Forces.

Abiy joined the resistance against the regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam as a teenager before enlisting in the armed forces, reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel. He has a doctorate in peace and security studies.

After a stint running Ethiopia's cyber intelligence service, he joined politics in 2010, becoming a member of the Oromo People's Democratic Organization, before being elected as a member of parliament.

His time as an MP coincided with clashes between Muslims and Christians. He devised a lasting solution to the problem by setting up a «Religious Forum for Peace».



The actions of Abiy will be under close scrutiny with the Nobel Prize. Photo DPA.



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Mohamed Kagnassy; The Agro-Preneur Restructuring Agriculture & Rural Development Across Africa

By Ajong Mbapndah L & Amos Fofung

With Agriculture, Africa cannot go wrong, says Mohammed Kagnassy. The population is there, the weather is there, the market is there, and with the right investments, and focus, agriculture could be one of the game changers for Africa, Kagnassy says.

The vision of Kagnassy who serves as CEO of West Wing, a company that specializes in linking private-public expertise to meet development needs in rural areas has impressed a number of leaders across the continent. For a while, he served as a Presidential adviser in his native Mali. He currently serves as Adviser on Agro business and rural development to President Alpha Conde of Guinea. Recently, he met with President Tshisekedi of D.R. Congo to explore prospects of modernizing agriculture in his country.

"My mission is to modernize the agricultural sector for better economic growth and sustainability one country at a time," says Kagnassy. With its size, climate, population and more, it is unfathomable that Africa should keep spending billions of dollars a year in importing food that can be easily grown in the continent, says Kagnassy.

In an exclusive interview granted Pan African Visions Managing Editor, Ajong Mbapndah L, recently in Washington, DC, the agro-preneur who has been advising President Conde on agro-business and rural development since



The Future of Africa lies in Rural Economy says Mohamed Kagnassy.

2016 said modernizing the agricultural sector and hence restructuring the economy of Guinea, as well as other African states, is his modus operandi. On his achievements in Guinea, Kagnassy said there have been new techniques introduced on agriculture, using better fertilizers, and more, resulting in better crop yield, better marketing, and more revenues for farmers.

To achieve all this, education needs to be ushered in first.

"The first thing is

education...We are there to communicate and rebrand agriculture. That is why we are talking of innovation...in Africa, more than 70 percent of the population lives in the rural areas. The future of Africa lies in rural economy. This should be a priority for any political action in my point of view. Today in Guinea, we have made it a priority in government actions. We cannot ask young people today to practice agriculture like traditional agriculture."

"We have seen that the

youths will not go for that kind. And that is why we are talking about modern agriculture and innovation. It characterizes various factors like mechanization, fertilizer, good seeds and methods. That is what we are promoting like other parts of the world are doing. Today we just have to go for it despite the challenges we face," he said while responding to questions from Ajong Mbapndah.

To better assist rural farmers embrace the technicalities of modernized

agriculture without embarking wholly on the sometimes-perilous journey, the entrepreneur came out with an application tagged; Kobiri.

The social platform already deployed in Guinea seeks to facilitate the acquisition of tractors available for farmers.

"They do not need to buy because of farm areas or communities that are so small, and we cannot give a loan for such a small supply. So, we need to scale up and what we need is through a digital platform we can visualize. Today in Guinea, through Kobiri, we can rent a tractor for hectare to hectare which can take time for farmers to grow their seeds. We have a data system that aids in recovery and support to farmers."

According to Kagnassy, "it is very simple. When you have mechanization, it eases the burden. For example, what you had to do with 25 guys to prepare one hectare of farmland, with a tractor you can do it at a faster and cheaper rate."

The Kobiri platform is cheap, affordable, cost effective and with profound impact it has had in transforming agriculture in Guinea, Mohammed Kagnassy thinks it is time to introduce the app to other African countries.

"We will go and offer the platform to other African countries. Each country has a distinct reality. As I said agriculture is not theory, it is a reality. Anything which is social means progress. Most of our African countries are very young. There are a



Mohamed Kagnassy is using his expertise to help President Conde in modernizing Agriculture in Guinea.

good number of challenges in Africa, and we have very few resources available. I like to show them today that some solutions can be gotten to improve on rural economy that we didn't have few years back at a very affordable cost."

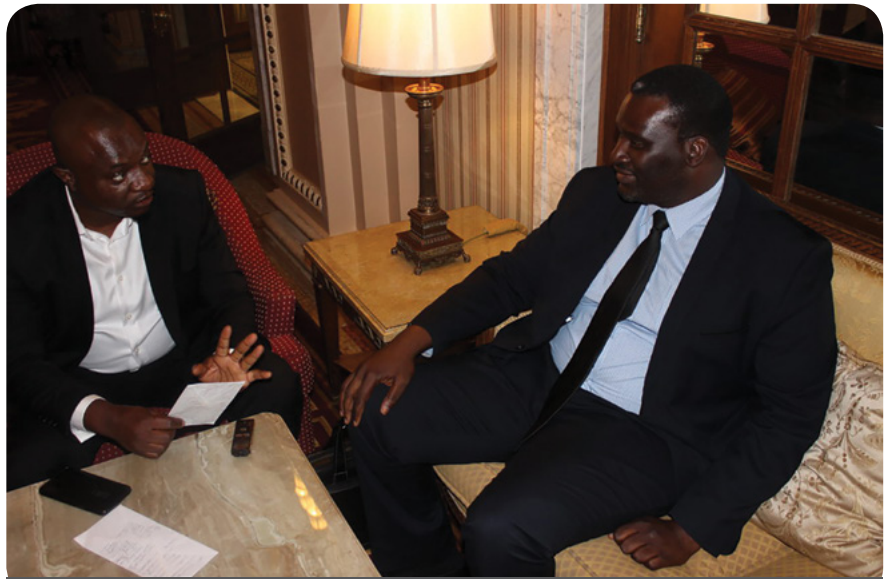
Enjoining African heads of states to invest in agriculture and agribusiness, Kagnassy urged youths to embrace agriculture rather than seeking to migrate to Europe and North America pointing to the fact that "farmers in Africa today are not like those of 50 years back. Our children go to school, and they have more knowledge of the world because of technology and the internet. Most of the immigration today is for economic reasons. I will like to tell young people to take the time to see what is available. Agriculture made America and there is no economy

without agriculture."

"Africa should invest in agriculture and agribusiness. Africa has water, land and young people. Africa has a population of more than 1 billion and by 2050; we should be the most populated continent. The future of agriculture is in Africa due to its population growth, availability of land, and our leaders must do everything to create the enabling environment, and for young people to take advantage of the huge opportunities in the sector," Kagnassy said

On his experience been from a different country and serving as Adviser to the leader of another country, Mohammed Kagnassy lauded President Alpha Conde for giving competence a chance.

"I can only say how grateful I am to President Alpha Conde, a leader who has also been President of the



By investing in agro business, African governments will not go wrong, says Kagnassy here with Ajong Mbatndah L of PAV in Washington DC.

African Union. Like Mandela, and other great men, great nations like America had Barack Obama whose father is originally from Kenya. Guinea has been the capital of Africa. When I was in West Africa, I was told that President Nkrumah was

called the President of Guinea which was of course a title. President Conde believes in an Africa which is united, and it is easy for him to look for expertise around Africa. Colours or origins do not matter for President Conde, but how useful you are for

your community whatever your nationality. For us the integration of Africa should be a reality, but the reality is that it is rare, leaders like President Conde should be saluted for their openness and strong vision," Kagnassy said.

South Sudan Peace Deal On Wobbly Stage

By Deng Machol



South Sudan President Salva Kiir shakes hands with opposition leader Riek Machar before their meeting in Juba, South, Sudan, Sept. 11, 2019.

Juba – South Sudan's peace deal is on wobbly stage as the warring parties oscillate on the formation of a new unity government on November 12, due to unresolved pre-implementation issues.

President Kiir's group vowed to form a new unity government on Nov. 12 despite immense challenges,

but the opposition group led by ex-rebel Dr. Riek Machar voiced out they will not be part of that government.

This comes amid growing fears that the 2018 peace deal was facing many obstacles as its key provisions remained unimplemented or were lagging behind.

The formation of the unity government was then extended in May by six months because the national army was not created, and the issue of the states was not finalized.

The warring parties to the revitalized peace deal failed to form the unified force by the September 30, 2019.

The Country's Cabinet

Affairs Minister, Martin Elia Lomuro, said the Pre-Transitional National Committee is making efforts towards implementing fundamental provisions that will pave way for the formation of an inclusive government as stipulated in the peace deal.

According to Minister Elia, the parties remained committed to ending violence in the country, adding that the security arrangement continues to make positive progress.

«The outstanding issues facing the revitalized peace agreement will not prevent the parties from proceeding to establish the transitional

government of national unity on Nov. 12 as the parties agreed,» Elia told stakeholders in Juba, while speaking during a two-day conference organized by the ministry of foreign affairs and international cooperation to brief foreign missions about the country's foreign policy.

Meanwhile, Angelina Teny, SPLM-IO Chairperson for Defense & Security, said the opposition parties are not ready for the formation of the unity government in November 12.

“The SPLM-IO, we are not ready to form a government on November 12th if the rest of the security arrangement and the number of states and its boundaries are not implemented. We don't want to be part of a government that will ignore those issues,” said Angelina, wife of Dr. Machar while speaking to UN radio in Juba.

The United Nation's Mission in South Sudan's Chief, David Shearer says the pre-transitional issues that remain unresolved cannot stop the formation of the transitional government on November 12.

Lam Akol, the leader of National Democratic Movement (NDM), said outstanding issues need to be addressed first before a unity government could be formed, adding that his party will not enter a coalition government in November without security sector reforms and political decisions to break the deadlock over the number of states and their boundaries.

“I do not see any logic to form a transitional government on November 12 because the key provisions haven't been implemented,” said Akol, President Kiir's critic.

Minister Elia reiterated



Security challenges remain part of the issues to be addressed.

that the country will develop curriculum and syllabi for the training of the security forces.

«The pre-transitional issues that remain unresolved cannot stop the parties to the revitalized peace agreement from forming a unified government by the Nov. 12 deadline,» said Elia.

Machar's wife says the regime compromised some of the elements in SSOA, G10 and OPP that is why they are calling for formation of the new government on 12/11/2019 without implementing security arrangements and the number of the states – we will not be part of it.

“Dateline to train the unified army for South Sudan is already missed by the parties, you cannot train a country's national army in less than month, it is impossible,” said Ms. Angelina. However, the agreement is calling for training of the unified army for South Sudan before the formation of transitional government.

Ms. Angelina further said the role of peace guarantors is critical but has not been expected in the agreement.

“We feel the agreement is being undone slowly. Peace guarantors failed to do their duty to follow

the implementation of the R-ARCISS in latter and spirit as per agreement and they leaved the whole process of implementation of the R-ARCSS to the parties without monitoring the process,” said Angelina.

An analyst says the issue of states and their boundaries should not extend the formation of a unity government, adding that this matter will be resolved after the establishment of transitional government.

Akol, who is also the Secretary General of the South Sudan Opposition Alliance (SSOA), said the umbrella has not yet agreed on the formation of the unity government. The umbrella is made up of six opposition factions.

“The coalition is yet to meet in order to take a decision on the matter. Also, the parties which are members of the opposition alliance have the rights to express their views individually,” said Akol.

Of recent, President Trump's administration says they would not accept or recognize any transitional government without the leader of opposition, Dr. Machar.

U. N Security Council

The UN Security Council is calling on the parties to the peace agreement in South Sudan to quickly implement the pre-transitional security arrangements, ahead of its visit to Juba.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the 15-member Security Council said the peace agreement must be implemented fully to end the civil war and provide the much needed sustainable peace and stability in South Sudan. The Council said that the current peace deal remains “a window of opportunity” to end conflicts in South Sudan.

The statement further said the Council looks forward to seeing “substantial progress” on the security arrangement, and other issues during its visit to South Sudan at the end of this month.

It urges the leaders to also promptly resolve the contention on the number of states.

The Security Council urged the hold-out groups to seek a political resolution to their concerns. It called on the parties that have not signed the agreement “to renounce violence and adhere to cessation of hostilities agreements signed in 2017.

South Sudan descended

into conflict in December 2013 after President Kiir sacked his deputy Machar leading to fighting between soldiers loyal to both leaders. The five-year conflict killed tens of thousands and uprooted millions people both internally and externally from their homes.

A peace deal signed in 2015 collapsed after renewed violence in July 2016 forcing Machar to flee the capital Juba. But in September 2018, the warring parties signed a new peace deal, in which Dr. Machar will take up one of the four vice presidency positions in the transitional government that will run for 36 months.

Hon. Tut Gatluak, Chairperson of the National Pre-Transitional Committee (NPTC), a body tasked with the implementation of revitalized peace agreement, said there will be no more delay for the formation of a unity government on November 12 as they completed all the process.

«All arrangements about the implementation of peace agreement are done and we are ready to transitional government on time without any delay - there is nothing ahead of us apart from the formation of transitional government only,» Gatluak told reporters on recently in Juba.

He said the issue of states and its boundaries will not delay the formation of a new unity government.

Gatluak, also presidential advisor on security affairs revealed that president Kiir, ex-rebel leader Machar and other signatories to the peace deal will meet soon to review the implementation process.

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Promises of Cameroon's Major National Dialogue to restore peace in troubled English-speaking regions

By Amos Fofung

Participants of the Decentralization and Local Government committee at the just ended Major National Dialogue have proposed that a "special status" within decentralization be granted to the North West and South West Regions as a response to more autonomy and request to changing the form of government into a federation.

The recommendation forwarded to the head of state for consideration is based on Section 61 and 62 of the constitution which provides for such exceptions.

One of the members of the committee Barrister Felix Agbor Nkongho who long campaigned for a return to federation is quoted by le journal du Cameroun to have said "if this proposal was to have any effect, the constitution must be amended to enshrine this special status."

To Cameroon's long-time opposition party, the Social Democratic Front, SDF the special status needs transcend into complete autonomy. An example of what takes place in Canada's French-region, Quebec.

The Major National Dialogue which sought to find common grounds and put an end to the country's three-years-long civil unrest, had the following as proposals at the end of its weeklong deliberation:

- the adoption of a special status for the two Anglophone regions
- the restoration of the House of Traditional Chiefs



Cameroonians hopeful that the National Dialogue will bring peace to Anglophone Cameroon.

- the election of local governors
- the immediate relaunch of certain airport and seaport projects in the two regions
- the rapid integration of ex-combatants into society
- the name of the country be returned to former name, the United Republic of Cameroon
- implement the law that government officials

declare their assets, in order to tackle corruption

Despite the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue, the question now is, will it make any difference or put an end to Cameroon's three-year-long simmering conflict?

Cameroon's Anglophone crisis dates back to October 2016 when English-speaking lawyers took to the streets to protest the appointment of French-speaking judges to

English-oriented courts.

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

Their demands centered on an end to decades of under-investment and discriminatory government policies against the country's English-speaking regions. Due to response from the country's octogenarian president, Paul Biya, the crisis escalated in to an armed

conflict, with armed groups sprouting up throughout the English-speaking North West and South West regions.

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

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

Though many have been clamoring for dialogue to proffer a lasting solution to the crisis, many believe the just ended major national dialogue called by president Paul Biya fell short of expectations but backers like Elvis Ngolle Ngolle, a senior figure with the ruling party, thinks that it is a «decisive step in the right direction».

«It will enhance participatory development across the country,» he told the BBC.

«We believe that these proposals will calm down minds and restore peace.»

But Akere Muna, a political leader and former Cameroon representative of Transparency International,



Assistant Secretary of the ruling CPDM Gregoire Owona in discussion with Cardinal, while SDF chairman Fru Ndi looks on.

walked out of the talks in protest over what he said were attempts to stifle debate.

«Speakers were pre-arranged. You couldn't even ask a question. It was stage-managed. So, they were actually looking for spectators, not participants.»

Separatist leaders on their part had long distanced themselves from the ongoing dialogue describing it as a no-event. With some throwing weight behind the Swiss-led



Cameroon Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute chaired the dialogue.

negotiations, hardliners such as Ivo Tapang, a spokesman for 13 armed groups called the Contender Forces of Ambazonia, has made it clear that the concessions made so far are not enough to deter them from their fight for freedom.

«We will not accept an olive branch from someone whose troops are still in our territory,» he said. «We will intensify our struggle with guns and bullets.»

Will Cameroon's National Dialogue actually solve anything in NW, SWRs?

North West and South West Regions allocated “special status”

Popularize the Head of State's offer of amnesty to combatants who drop their weapons and enter the reintegration processe.

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

Weeks after the conclusion of the Major National Dialogue convened by Cameroon's President, the talk in bars, meeting spot, and other areas remain the fallouts of the major national dialogue and whether any meaningful issue has been achieved to bring peace in the North West and South West Regions.

Cameroon's English-speaking regions that have been ravaged by armed separatist since 2017. In a report published last week, International Crisis Group (ICG) estimated that around 3,000 people have been killed by separatist violence and the military crackdown.

Delegates ditched the call for federation that was the goal of many personalities in favour of effective decentralization. According to officials, federation will go a long way to appease



Delegates recommended special status for the North West and South West Regions during the Grand National Dialogue.

and quell the violence in the North West and South West Regions.

After the dialogue, President Biya assured the population that the recommendations arrived at will be taken into consideration and examined for possible implementation.

In a tweet, he said, “The major National Dialogue that has just ended in Yaounde afforded you the opportunity to reaffirm once more your attachment to peace and concord in your country, as well as its unity and progress.” “I can assure you that all of them will be considered

attentively and diligently with a view to implementing them, taking into account their relevance and feasibility.”

One of the major recommendations to come out of the Dialogue was for the affected Regions are granted “special status” in conformity with Section 62

Sub Two of the Constitution which states that the law may take into consideration the specifications of certain Regions with regard to their organization and functioning.

Conflict-affected areas will be reconstructed and developed and victims of the war compensated. The

education and judiciary systems will also be restructured to reflect the bilingual and multicultural nature of Cameroon, Mbayu said.

The leader of main opposition, Social Democratic Front (SDF), John Fru Ndi told Xinhua the proposals were a step toward restoring peace in the English-speaking regions, where SDF is deeply rooted. "We hope that the recommendations will be implemented with immediate effect to stop the killings in the regions," Ndi said.

Separatists skip talks calling for international mediation to resolve the crisis

Even before the Major National Dialogue began, it ran into trouble with many activists arrested and experts voicing skepticism that it would yield tangible results. Mark Bareta, one of the separatists leaders very active on social media announced that he was pulling out, saying that, "the only way to have real negotiations is to hold them on neutral territory."

"Some of us were even lenient to say ok you have called for dialogue in Yaoundé, and we can come and say we are for independence, but we can do that through our leadership in jail. But till now, Biya has not taken any step...", Eric Tataw said to TRT World while adding that, "The US government wants dialogue, and we think that we should go for dialogue but Paul Biya cannot tell us that we are insulting Cameroon because we are not Cameroonians. We are two separate countries, he knows that and the world

knows that."

"We are not forming our country; we are just restoring our country. The right to self-determination is just what we are asking. We want the world to assist us in carrying out decolonization of southern Cameroon.

The leaders have expressed willingness to hold talks with the government but in the presence of an international mediator and in a foreign country with the terms for secession the main item on the agenda, according to the ICG.

Kamto, other MRC Militants released

Major fallout of the Dialogue was the release of political prisoners and members of the opposition MRC Party and others who were in jail in connection with the Anglophone crisis. The first sign of good faith was President Biya's discontinuing of the cases of 333 persons in jailed. This was quickly followed by that of the MRC Leader Maurice Kamto and his allies.

Kamto was arrested and jailed in January along with more than 200 of his supporters after they refuted the victory of Cameroon's long time President Paul Biya at the 2018 Presidential election. Kamto organized a nationwide peaceful protest and equally indicated that he was the winner of the election and not the incumbent. His decision to protest led to him arrested and several others

The dialogue was held under eight tenets such as bilingualism and multiculturalism, Educational System and judicial system, the Return of Refugees and



President Biya has remained largely silent after the dialogue.

Internally Displaced Persons, Reconstruction and Development of Conflict-Affected Areas, Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants, Role of the Diaspora in the Crisis, and in the Country's Development, Decentralization and Local Development. Notably recommendations included;

Bilingualism, cultural diversity, and social cohesion

Enhancing the practice of Bilingualism on all segments of society through the creation and implementation of programs starting from preschool ages; En-rooting Cultural Diversity through a strict implementation of regional balance and equitable access to public service and security forces; Conceive and implement a curriculum on Inter Community Fellowship, Rebuilding Fraternal Trust and Civic Engagement in an effort to strengthen National Social Cohesion. Pass legislation that spells out the equitable use of both official languages in all areas of national life; Develop and

codify principles for social dialogue, social cohesion and living together.

Educational system

Ensure that educational reforms integrate the need to keep the two educational subsystems afloat, buoyant, and futuristic, recognizing the unique strengths and specification of each subsystem, building on the strengths of each one to train well-rounded and excellent Cameroonian graduates who will excel wherever they go Ensure that Teachers' Trade Unions should work in collaboration with the Government Regulate the proliferation of Teachers Trade Unions and promote better organization of the Trade Unions to ensure synergy from the regional to national level.

Role of the Diaspora in the Crisis, and in the Country's Development

The revision-reform of the nationality code such that dual, or multiple nationalities be authorized: The creation of a High Council of the Diaspora in the host countries with elected leaders, membership

being conditioned by the possession of a consular card.

Other notable recommendations include: Take specific measures to ensure equality of English and French on all aspects of national life; Reinforce the autonomy of Decentralized Local Entities; Improve upon the infrastructure of judicial services throughout the country; Strengthen the Humanitarian Assistance Program to better serve internally displaced persons; Institute a special plan to reconstruct the conflict affected areas; Popularize the Head of State's offer of amnesty to combatants who drop their weapons and enter the reintegration process; and, Create a team responsible for mediation with radicalized members of our Diaspora.

Since 2017, Anglophone separatists have been trying to form a breakaway state called "Ambazonia" in the majority French-speaking country's two minority English-speaking regions. Hundreds have been killed and over 530,000 displaced internally by the conflict.



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How the 1996 constitution can take care of the nw/sw exception: a legal perspective of a 'third option'.

BY: ASHU NYENTY (Ph.D.).*

As delegates to the major national dialogue, especially those from the two regions that triggered the dialogue in the first place, converge on the Conference Centre beginning this Monday, and judging from the tenor of proposals in the consultations engineered by Prime Minister, Chief Dr. Joseph Dion Ngute, the debate has largely focused on two potentially rancorous and divisive concepts: Unitarism v Federalism. It is on these two concepts that most of the attention is focused, as if to say it is either one or the other, as a solution to the crisis in the NW and SW regions.

The mistake that may be ineluctable if care is not taking is that delegates get into what I call an ideological blockage and fail to adequately explore an alternative that appears to be at arm's length, but which seems to have been long forgotten. This is mainly so because of lack of familiarity with the various territorial or regional organization models available to Cameroon.

The purpose of this paper, as my own contribution to the major national dialogue, is therefore, to inform public opinion that these two are not the only alternatives and that they should watch out for the potency of a possible 'third option' or model that may send everybody home happy—the NW and SW, the other eight regions and of course the government. The issues discussed here would be more relevant to the commission on decentralization and local development, though they may necessarily have



Dr Ashu Nyenty.

ramifications on the work of other commissions such as education and justice system. The reason is that this is the most politically sensitive area of the discussions that may have legal repercussions after the dialogue.

What is the current status of the issues at stake?

Writing on the issues at stake in the national dialogue, Barrister Paul Simo, who has over 20 years' experience working on countries undergoing peace-processes and political transitions across the world, opined that the discussion has often been tailored in terms of three options, to wit, "separatism, federalism and unitarism".

In this analysis, I deliberately leave out separatism, because in the context of a national dialogue, that option is dead on arrival. I will proceed to discuss the other two. Federalism in the present state of discussions has two variables. First, an "arrangement similar to the 1961-1972 federation, or in another, to a new multiple federated-

state configuration". The inconvenience of this is that if either of the two configurations is adopted it would lead to a sudden and drastic transformation of the administrative configuration of the state that may force the other eight regions into an arrangement they never asked for or for which their base did not mobilize for; many in the other regions do not yet understand the contours and ramifications of a federation. If there could be an agreement on that fine, but in my view, still coming out of a three-year gruesome war, be sure this option will be resisted with vigour.

Unitarism on the other hand is considered, even by many in the other regions as largely responsible for the despicable state of affairs in the North West and South West regions. Many in the other regions also feel the pinch of Unitarism even though they have not been as vocal as their counterparts' from the two regions. It is clear that Unitarism as it is currently perceived and practiced may not satisfy or meet "the high aspirations

of the people of the NW and SW" and also "of all the other components of our nation", who clearly want to have a greater say in the management of their local affairs. If these two concepts, in the current state of affairs may be resisted or rejected, what then is the way out?

What is the 'third option'?

The crux of the matter is that because of their peculiarities (to be discussed shortly) the NW and SW regions desire an arrangement that would provide them with a greater hand in what goes on in their respective regions. That is what leads us to what I have termed the third option (its political and administrative advantages will also be elucidated shortly). In discussions of this nature and based on our immediate past history, I think it would be counter-productive to appear intransigent or take a zero-sum posture of this or nothing. It seems to me that it is advisable to be flexible, weigh the different options and then give and take. That is the very essence of a

dialogue.

In my view, the third option is found in the current Constitution of Cameroon. Since the 1996 Constitution was adopted, one provision that has often been ignored and indeed even overlooked, since the search for solutions to the crisis started, is the last Section of Part X devoted to Regional and Local Authorities. That Section 62(2) stipulates that:

"Without prejudice to the provisions of this Part, the law may take into consideration the specificities of certain Regions with regard to their organization and functioning".

The underlying notion in that section is what is known in modern constitutional engineering as "territorial asymmetry", which is consonant in countries that have an entrenched minority factor as is the case of the NW and SW regions. According to Barrister Simo, this is an arrangement "in which some regions...would be granted certain attributes and competences different from those granted to other regions", because the latter regions do not have the same specificities. This model has been practiced with success in countries such as India and even China over Hong Kong, in what is known as the one country two systems paradigm. Even though not everybody in Cameroon espouses this variable geometry in the treatment of regions, the beauty of this asymmetric treatment is that it also works well in a unitary form of state. The example of China and

its asymmetric treatment of Hong Kong, and which is a much more centralized system than Cameroon is necessary to point to again. This means that the present Decentralized Unitary system could be maintained, while at the same time the NW and SW find satisfaction in the management of their local affairs. Besides, given that the present Constitution of Cameroon allows for the continuous application of the Common Law, it is recognition of the exceptions that constitute the NW and SW regions. Apart from the examples already given, two of Cameroon's colonial masters, whose double heritage the Cameroon of today enjoys, that is, Britain and France are plausible other examples. In the case of the United Kingdom, there is a separate status each for Wales, Scotland and even Northern Ireland within the same unitary state. In France, the Corse has a special status. It must be pointed out that it were calls for greater autonomy and threats of breakaway that among other factors pushed the French authorities to give a separate administrative status to that region.

Furthermore, in the couching of the provisions of Section 62(2), it would appear the drafters were foresighted enough to preempt the possibility of considering variations between the different regions in the extent of the powers they should have, depending on their ability and history. My understanding of that section is that the drafters of the Constitution of Cameroon had already envisaged a situation where some regions could be allowed to sail in different boats within a

unitary state framework, based on their linguistic, historical, cultural or even demographic peculiarity. The case of the two regions is a very good example, where these conditions of peculiarity are amply fulfilled.

How are the NW and SW peculiar?

To amply justify the need for a special status each for the North West and South West, it would be necessary, in my view, to demonstrate the peculiarity of these two regions. It is clear to everybody of good faith in Cameroon that there are fundamental differences between the NW and the SW on the one hand, and the other eight regions on the other. However, some detail analysis of a few examples would be necessary to make the point. The fact that francophone parents in their numbers send their children to English speaking schools is an eloquent testimony to the fact that there are differences in the educational systems between the two components. It is not simply the language of instruction, the culture of teaching and learning is also fundamentally different.

In addition, in the legal domain, the common law is practiced in the English speaking regions while the civil law holds sway in the other regions. Though some attempt has been made at harmonizing some aspects of the two, they still remain far apart. The Constitution of Cameroon clearly recognizes this legal disparity. It is instructive that it is the perceived adulteration of the educational and legal systems that is the immediate cause of the current crisis.

Again, the colonial past



People gather at the Congress Palace during the opening session of the National Dialogue called by President Paul Biya, in Yaounde, Cameroon, Sept. 30, 2019.

of the two components is different. While the British practiced indirect rule and the Native authority which gave the people much leverage in the management of local affairs, the French system of assimilation, paternalism and the Jacobin-style strong state authority did not afford much of that. So in matters of governance the colonial experiences of the two components differed and this heritage which has been transferred to younger generation has now met zones of friction and conflict.

Even though there are many other examples, these few, in my view sufficiently make the case for the NW/SW exception, within the bigger Cameroonian picture.

What should be the content of the special status arrangement?

Since the current constitution already mentions that possibility, it sounds reasonable that the main worry now for the delegates, if this third option were to be adopted, is to present a basket of what should go into the special status arrangement. What powers do the two regions want to

have for themselves exclusive from the central state authorities? Before I proceed to discuss what this basket could contain, it is germane to point out that the special status arrangement could be applied exclusively to the two regions concerned as a matter of priority. However, in order to allay the fears of geometric treatment of regions, which I mentioned, earlier, these powers could also be extended, of course in relative degrees to the other regions if they find no objection for the time being.

Having said that emphasis should at this juncture be focused on the package deal or what I will call the content of the basket. That is what I think the commission on decentralization and local development should be able to do. This is because as I said earlier this is the most political of all the eight commissions. The other issues to be canvassed by the other commissions could only come to add up to that. The basket would certainly be for the delegates to fill but based on my own experience in the understanding of the conflict, the package deal may include but not limited to the

management of the education system, the protection of the common law legal system, the proportion of the use of the two official languages in the regions. That basket will include the powers that the regions want to control and the powers of the local councils as well. The central government should be clear on what it intends to irreversibly relinquish to both the regions and the councils.

In addition to the merit of this model mentioned already, this model is neither to the right nor to the left of the debate spectrum. It is at the Centre. It accommodates the desires of those who are opposed to a change of the form of state and also satisfies those who seek greater autonomy. There is no doubt about it; we have already seen that special status arrangements work perfectly well in a unitary state arrangement. In that way everybody is satisfied and consensus is easy to reach on both sides.

Some of these changes if adopted would obviously necessitate legislative, administrative, policy or even constitutional reform. If the commissions consensually

agree on what to do then they can easily propose the kind of reform that may suit their agenda so as to protect what they may have proposed.

I submit that the tenor of section 62 discussed above requiring the law to “take into consideration the specificities of certain Regions” is weak. I would rather propose that based on comparative constitutional law, and even Cameroonian history, such fundamental aspects are better guaranteed in the highest legal norm in the hierarchy. In this case it is the Constitution. If that were the case a constitutional revision could be sought to the extent that those guarantees are entrenched.

Is a constitutional amendment possible?

In the run up to the convening of the dialogue and even after the fundamental question on many lips was whether proposals and or conclusions arrived at may be translated into constitutional reform. To this question and analyzing the tenor of President Paul Biya’s 10 September speech, convening

the dialogue, some legal experts have argued that such reform was “neither mandatorily required of, nor specifically excluded from the purview of the Dialogue process”.

But that possibility comes to life when you read other portions of the speech together with legal and constitutional provisions in force. On page 14 of the English language version of the speech, he announced his decision to convene a national dialogue “in line with our Constitution”, to “enable us to seek ways and means of meeting the high aspirations of the people of the North West and South West Regions”. My understanding is that if the high aspirations of the people in those two regions are to take charge of those affairs as we have discussed above, and possibly other arrangements agreed to in other commissions, it means that based on what the President said we have to go into the Constitution to seek to satisfy them. Either the Constitution has the answer directly or it points at the direction we must take.

If the Constitution does not have a direct response then a constitutional revision may be necessary to accommodate the issues at stake. And if a proposal is made in this regard, it seems to me that it does not overstep the confines of the Constitution. Provided the revision is pursued in a procedure that is in line with the Constitution of Cameroon, which the President swore to uphold.

On this score, it should be noted that the ‘National Dialogue’ if it is working within the Constitution, does not have the locus standi or power to deliver “binding resolutions” or seek Constitutional amendments. It may only propose. Based on the President’s speech, which for now is the guiding instrument on the purview of the Dialogue’s powers, it has the power to propose whatever it wants to propose, if these can address the concerns and aspirations of the people in those two regions. But it is not within its powers to insist, to push amendment to Parliament, otherwise it would be acting ultra vires and out of tune

with the fundamental law of the land.

Who has the power to seek a constitutional amendment in Cameroon? According to section 63(1), “Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed either by the President of the Republic or by Parliament. These are the only two authorities that are constitutionally empowered to seek an amendment of the Constitution. This may of course be through a government bill from the President of the Republic to Parliament or a Private Members bill in Parliament. However, The President of the Republic may also decide to bypass Parliament and directly “submit any bill to amend the Constitution to a referendum; in which case the amendment shall be adopted by a simple majority of the votes cast” and that will be constitutionally correct. .

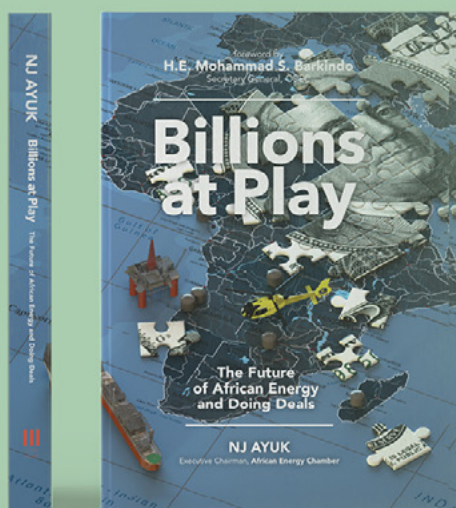
While a constitutional amendment is not illegal, there are some amendments that will be inadmissible.

According to section 64 “No procedure for the amendment of the Constitution affecting the republican form, unity

and territorial integrity of the State and the democratic principles which govern the Republic shall be accepted”. This means in clear terms that any amendment that seeks to change the state from a Republic to a monarchy, transfer part of our territory to another state or institute a one-party state shall not be accepted.

In fine, given the positions held by the different protagonists in the national dialogue and leveraging on my understanding that more consensual conclusions and recommendations may be viewed in a better light, I submit unequivocally, that a third option as I have discussed should be given a thought and explored, if all the parties must take back something to their bases.

***The author of this article is a Doctor in Law and Political Scientist. (The content are his personal views) .The article was previously published in the Median Newspaper on 30 September before the National Dialogue started in Cameroon _____**



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Why President Buhari Was Right To Visit South Africa in the Wake of the Recent Xenophobia Attacks

By Prince Kurupati

Earlier this month, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari travelled to South Africa to meet his counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa. President Buhari's trip to South Africa was in response to the recent xenophobic attacks which saw local South Africans attack foreign nationals for being the cause of most social problems in the country especially unemployment and crime.

Out of a foreign population of slightly less than 2.5 million people, most of whom are nationals from neighbouring Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Lesotho, Nigerians living in South Africa were largely targeted in the xenophobic attacks. The recent attacks which reached the same levels as those experienced in 2008 and 2015 were according to most South Africans a result of scarce jobs and an ever-increasing crime rate. The locals accuse the foreigners of positioning themselves for the few jobs available by lowering their wage demands. In the same vein, they accuse foreigners of playing a huge part in increasing the crime rate in the country by participating in human trafficking as well as selling dangerous drugs to the youths.

While many South Africans including top political officials hold the view that foreigners are a major challenge in the country when it comes to the issue of employment and crime, reports have shown that this view does not hold water. It has been reported that "South African politicians have consistently complained



The visit of Buhari came after Nigerians were targeted for attacks in South Africa.

about the influx of foreign citizens, with some claiming they were burdening sectors including the national healthcare system. However, data from the government agency Statistics South Africa showed there were 2.1 million international migrants in South Africa out of a population of 51.7 million in 2011. (Population figures have since jumped to 55.7 million). The figures of foreign nationals in comparison to the locals certainly prove that whatever the ills being carried out and/or perpetrated by the foreigners, they are immaterial when

applied on a macro scale. The unemployment and high crime rate challenges, therefore, emanate from another problem which certainly isn't the influx of foreign nationals. It ought to be noted though that this is in no way downplaying the 29% unemployment rate impacting an estimated 6.7 million people as well as the over 21,000 deaths recorded in the year that ended on March 2019 alone.

While the topic of who or what is responsible for South Africa's high unemployment and crime is of great significance as it paves the

way to finding a lasting solution to the problem of xenophobia at large, this article is largely going to look at the significance of President Buhari's visit to South Africa in the wake of the 2018 xenophobia attacks. It ought to be noted that President Buhari's trip to South Africa was not the first official response taken by Nigeria in the wake of the attacks. As the first measures, the Nigerian government cancelled the scheduled appearance of deputy president Yemi Osinbajo at the World Economic Forum event that was held in Cape

Town, the government also recalled the Nigerian High Commissioner to Southern Africa while some 600+ willing Nigerians were repatriated back to Nigeria.

Easing the Rising Tensions

The first and probably most important reason behind President Buhari's visit to South Africa was to ease the tensions that were rising both in South Africa between Nigerians in the country and the locals and also in Nigeria between the locals and South African corporations operating in the country. While Nigerians were being attacked in South Africa, Nigerians in Nigeria reacted strongly to the reports of the attacks on their fellow nationals in South Africa by breaking in and looting shops owned by South Africa retail giant Shoprite and the South African telecommunications giant MTN. On this front, President Buhari's visit to South Africa certainly paid dividends as tension in both countries quelled down.

Strengthen economic ties

The xenophobic attacks in South Africa and the subsequent reprisal attacks in Nigeria did affect economic ties between the two countries. It was imperative therefore that the two countries retain cordial relations in the shortest possible amount of time as sustained 'economic breakdown' was detrimental to the fortunes of both countries.

Over 120 South African countries operate in Nigeria.



Looters run from a shop in Turffontein, east of Johannesburg, on September 2, 2019. Photo CNN.



Some Nigerian victims of xenophobia in South Africa returning home. Photo culled from CNN.

On the other hand, South Africa is one of the biggest importers of Nigerian oil while hundreds of Nigerian businessmen and professionals operate in South Africa. Continued tensions between the two countries would then have severely threatened the economies of both countries.

While in South Africa, President Buhari took time to sign major trade and investment accords that further open West African markets to South African businesses, while simultaneously aiming to increase South African

investment in roads, mining and other sectors in Nigeria. The visit underscored what the two countries can offer each other economically, but also how xenophobic violence can undermine trust.

Appease Nigerians

It is the conviction of Olayinka Ajala that Nigerians have had concerns with the government's ability to protect its citizens abroad. By travelling to South Africa, President Buhari took a decisive step in assuring the nation that the government is wholly committed to protecting its citizens based

in foreign countries. The visit could, therefore, be seen in context of addressing the displeasure of Nigerians at home and also to assure those living in South Africa that the government takes their welfare seriously.

Looking for ways to prevent future violence

As part of his mission to South Africa, President Buhari also managed to come up with a proposal on how foreign nationals living in South Africa can be protected in the face of other violent attacks. The proposal led to the identification of an early

warning system that is going to be used to determine the likelihood of another attack and in the process, help the government stop it before there are any damages to people and property. As stated by Alex Thurston, To assuage Nigerian concerns, Ramaphosa pledged to Buhari that South Africa will set up an early warning system to head off future episodes of violence. He also promised to prosecute anyone involved in xenophobic attacks. Although the early warning proposal is short on details, Buhari seemed at least partly reassured. He told a town hall of Nigerian expatriates that the violence was "an embarrassment to the continent," but added, "The authorities have expressed their apologies over the incidents and have resolved to take necessary steps to end this ugly trend in the interest of our relationship."

While the decision taken by President Buhari is heralded for maintaining

the good relations that exist between Nigeria and South Africa, there is a need for the Nigerian president to reduce poverty and unemployment in his country so that there are a few economic migrants who seek greener pastures in foreign lands. There is need also for the Nigerian president to keep reassuring South African businesses at all times that their investments are safe and well protected in the country so as to maintain the good economic relations that exist between the two countries. In the same vein, the South African president also has to reassure Nigerian businessmen operating in South Africa that their operations are safe and well-protected at all times. In addition, the South African president has to see to it that the rhetoric that foreigners are responsible for the social ills in the country is put to an end once and for all as this often times incite more xenophobic violence.

African Diaspora Endorses the Continental Free Trade Agreement

By Ajong Mbapndah L

A major outcome of the recent Making African Trade Easy Forum in Washington, DC was the resounding endorsement from the African Diaspora towards both Prosper Africa initiative and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

At the heavily attended policy experts, trade professionals, government officials, participants agreed that with its enormous potentials, much was still needed for Africa to enjoy the game changing benefits of trade. In this light, the groundbreaking development



Founder and President Believe in Africa Foundation Angelle Kwemo poses with panelist at one of the presentations during MATE 2019.

in the creation and rapid ratification of the African Continental Trade Agreement

was hailed as a harbinger of hope for the future.

Speaking the event, African

majority of African countries have ratified it with the exception of Eritrea which

Union Trade and Industry Commissioner Muchanga said Africa means business in every sense of the word with the AfCFTA. Typically, agreements like the AfCFTA take about five years to ratify, but the rapidity within a year of its creation, a

is still working on doing so. Mr. Muchanga harped on the great work that has been put in and the myriad of benefits that effective implementation could have on the people of Africa. Speaking with great optimism, Mr. Muchanga said political will from the leaders was strong, and there was overwhelming support from the Africans across the continent for the AfCFTA. With its Secretariat in Ghana, Mr. Muchanga lauded the partnership of institutions like the African Development Bank and financial institutions like the Afrexim Bank, a cosponsor of MATE

2019, which are helping to put the AFCFTA on the right path.

In appreciation and salute of the progress and renewed optimism that the AFCFTA is bringing to the continent, the African Diaspora represented by Angelle Kwemo Founder and President of Believe in Africa Foundation expressed satisfaction and encouraged African leaders to do all to ensure that the AFCFTA lives up to its game changing potentials for the continent. A seasoned international Trade Professional and Chair of the organizing committee of MATE 2019, Angelle Kwemo presented an award to African Union President Moussa Faki in recognition of the great work that he and his team have put in towards making free trade a reality in Africa. The African diaspora with all its potential will throw its weight behind the AFCFTA and do its part to ensure that it works for the benefit of Africa, said Angelle Kwemo.

Accepting the award on behalf Moussa Faki, Trade and Industry Commissioner Muchanga expressed gratitude for the recognition. The leadership of AUC Faki has been instrumental in facilitating progress made by the AFCFTA and the award will spur them to keep up the hard work. All hands must be on deck for the AFCFTA to succeed, and the diaspora remains one of the most important partners Commissioner Muchanga said. Other awardees are prominent business leader like 'Samba Bathily, founder of ADS Group who received the "Pan-African Award for his investments across the continent and Gloria Herndon, Founder GH Global Group with the Africa



Dr Gloria Herndon, Founder GH Global Group (in White) was honored with the Africa Diaspora Award.

Diaspora Award.

Organized to coincide with the 5th anniversary of Believe in Africa Foundation, the Making African Trade Easy Forum was organized in partnership with USAID and Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center to promote Prosper Africa and the AFCFTA MATE was opened by Andrew Gelfuso, VP of the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Ian Steff, Director Global Market Bureau at U.S. Department of Commerce and keynote by Ramsey Day, Senior Deputy

Assistant Administrator for Africa, USAID. They all recognized the importance of the Diaspora in fostering trade with Africa.

It was two full days of intense panel discussions and exhibitions.

From panels on African Economic Outlook, to Building Africa's Manufacturing Sector, the African Continental Free Trade area, Facilitating Finance in Africa, Investing and building Africa's health industry, Building Diaspora Trade and Innovation, Making the African Digital

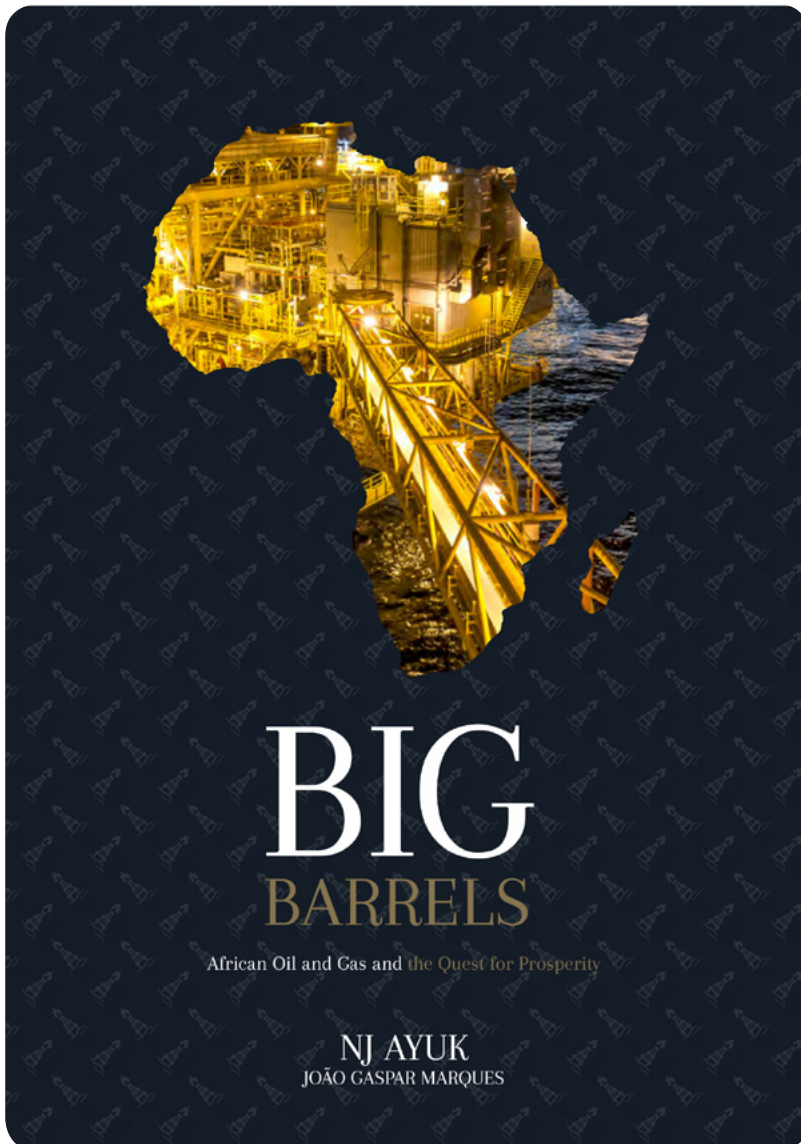
Revolution a reality, Investing in Africa, Growing Sustainable jobs under AGOA, Democratizing Africa's energy sector and Growing Africa's Agricultural Industry, participants had more than a full dose of potentials, realities, challenges, and what must be done to improve doing trade in and with Africa.

Led by Capitol Hill Veterans Angelle Kwemo, Founder and President of Believe in Africa Foundation and Gregory Simpkins, Senior Advisor at USAID the MATE Forum brought together the crème

de la crème of African trade and advocacy professionals in the USA including Matthew Rees, Coordinator, Prosper Africa, David Weld, Senior Director for Africa, MCC, Jeremy Streatfield, Director for Africa at USTR, Heather Lannigan, Regional Director for SubSahara Africa at TDA, C.D. Glin, President and CEO, USADF, Dr. Albert Zeufack, Chief Economist for Africa, The World Bank Group, Leila Ndiaye, President and CEO, IGD, Flori Liser, President & CEO, CCA, Dr. Menna Demessie, Secretary, Ethiopian Diaspora Trust Fund, Jeannine Scott, Board Chair, CFA, Dr. Sharon Freeman, President & CEO, Gems of Wisdom Consulting, Mariama Camara, Mariama Fashion Production Dr. Mima Nedelcovith, Partner, Africa Global, Maureen Umeh, Fox5 news, Oren Wyche-Shw, Deputy Assistant Administrator at USAID, Alison Germack, Director of Corporate Development, International Development Finance Corporation, Prof. Landry Signe, Fellow Brookings institutions, Yousuf Daya, Senior Director Trade policy, market Access, Research and International Cooperation, Afrexim Bank, Steve Lande, VP, Manchester Trade, Tamra Raye Stevenson, CEO, WANDA, Kimberley Brown, Amethyst Technologies, Betty Adera, Betty Adera Foundation, Ollowo-N'Djo Tchalla, CEO Alafia, Salma Seetaro-Bonafoux, Ivoirienne de Noix de Cajou, Rahama Wright, Shea Yeleen Katie Auth, Acting Deputy Coordinator, Power Africa and delegations from many African countries.



A lot of hard work was put in by the Mate Organizing Team for the successful event.



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Analysts call African leaders to cater for their citizens as Rwanda receives migrants from Libya

By Mohammed M Mupenda

Rwanda, the landlocked and hilly country made headlines a fortnight ago when it welcomed 66 Eritreans and Somali migrants who were trapped in Libya on their way to Europe. The heroic humanitarian action by a tiny East African country brought a smile to the refugees whose life was at risk in Libyan detentions, oppressed, hopeless, and desperate as a number of adjectives may describe the situation of torture, sexual abuses and all sorts of evil the migrants endured in the hands of human traffickers in Libya.

Rwanda's gesture, however, ignited mixed reactions all over the world especially in the East African countries with some social media users terming it a business while others went further to say that the country would engage the refugees in wars around the region like those raging in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Some analysts, however, have got a different view.

The fact that the superpower countries such as France, Germany, the United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden have cut the numbers of resettlement, this has affected a big number of refugees who are facing harassment, persecution, war, hunger and torture.

«I think that Rwanda has done a good thing to welcome these refugees. For as you know, they have been living under terrible conditions in Libya and the west no



Immigrants arriving at Kigali International Airport

longer welcomes refugees as it used to do due to the rise of populism and populist politicians in Europe», Said Dr. Christopher Kayumba, senior lecturer of School of Journalism and Communication at the University of Rwanda.

He added that Africa should step up and take responsibility for its citizens. This will advance its leaders' mantra of «Africans finding

solutions to their own problems. So, other African countries should take in the rest of migrants.»

Dr Kayumba stressed that it's absurd to claim Rwanda is taking in these refugees for other reasons other than humanitarianism and pan-Africanism. «Why should it be a humanitarian act when European countries take in refugees but other reasons when it's African countries?»

He questioned. «Are Africans incapable of doing good?»

Dr. Frederick Golooba Mutebi, a researcher, analyst and anthropologist clarified that all countries hosting refugees get funding from UNHCR and other agencies as well as foreign governments.

«So, the idea that because Rwanda is receiving funding to look after the refugees from Libya is business, is outright silly.»

According to Dr. Mutebi said, Rwanda volunteered to host them because many Rwandans understand the suffering refugees undergo, having been refugees themselves for a long time.

According to Rwanda government, offering refuge to African migrants stuck in Libyan detention camps, it is showing leadership by providing African solutions to African problems.

Elise Villechalane, the United Nations High Commission for Refugee external relations officer for Rwanda, told Pan African Visions that Rwanda's discussion that led to the signature of the MoU between the GoR, UNHCR and the AU was not stuck at all. It actually went remarkably fast considering the complexity of this issue.

«Out of the 500 refugees to be welcomed in Rwanda, 66 were evacuated only 10 days after the signature of the MoU and another flight is planned soon with over 100 more people», Villechalane said before the second group of 123 migrants arrived in Rwanda on October 10, two weeks later since the arrival of the first group.

She revealed that these refugees are now safe in Rwanda and can be provided with protection services and humanitarian assistance while solutions are being sought including repatriation, resettlement to a third country, return to first country of asylum if any, family reunification.

«The Emergency Transit Mechanism in Rwanda is



Immigrants were escorted to Gashora Camp in the south East of Rwanda

an example of the kind of humanitarian interventions needed to rescue vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers who are caught up in the escalating conflict inside Libya and need hope and concrete solutions," she said.

Ms. Villechalané called for urgent action from other countries to step forward to help in getting people out of trouble and offer solutions.

Rwanda is in charge of

the Emergency Transit Mechanism, while the AU is providing overall strategic and high-level political support, as well as advocacy.

The UNHCR is bearing the cost of the evacuation flights, transport to the transit facility in the Eastern Rwanda's Bugesera District, the basic needs of protection and humanitarian assistance while working on durable solutions

Human traffickers have taken advantage of the state of war and general lawlessness in Libya to offer immigrants from the country a transit route to Europe through the country's 1,770km unpoliced coastline.

About 182,000 African migrants transiting through Libya have landed in Italy in the past two years, exacerbating an already critical refugee problem

spilling out of Syria and other parts of the Middle East, according to the International Organisation for Migration.

The Eritreans and Somali refugees from Libya hosted by Rwanda have the right to safe lives, access to medical care, school and work, and the government in close collaboration with UNHCR will ensure they become self-reliant.

The refugees are

required to respect the laws and regulations of the host country. Freedom of movement is granted provided they inform the authorities when they move outside of the district, said the United Nations High Commission for Refugee external relations officer for Rwanda.

Schools: Useful in Theory, Useless in Practice?

By John Nkennji, Ph.D*

If you could be wealthy without going to school would you spend the time and resources to go to school for education? While formal education (schooling) is critical for national development and stability, the program of studies (curriculum) has barely changed from the days of the "Saber-Tooth Curriculum" (teaching hunting and gathering skills). The school system predominantly lectures to age-determined students and has hardly evolved, despite galloping changes in research, communication, society, technology, and culture. The schools' lack of adaptation, rising costs, and unrealistic expectations related to immediate gains from schooling cause people today, especially on social media, to wonder if schools are necessary. (<https://happinessishereblog.com/>)

Students who drop out of primary school and are lucky enough to have lucrative careers often believe there is no need for formal education. Many drop-outs argue that employment and money are the reasons for formal education and that schools



Prof John Nkennji.

exist merely to prepare students for a job or career. Consequently, some people wonder if students are wasting time and resources by sitting in age-determined groups, listening to lectures, and memorizing facts that can easily be looked up from computerized databases.

Critics of formal education usually forget that education is important for reasons

beyond career preparation. Formal education develops disciplined minds, transmits the culture and helps students function in society. Enlightened leaders like Mandela alluded to the fact that "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." A UNESCO document "Education transforms lives," highlights the following:

- Each year of liberal education reduces the risk of conflict in society by 20%.

- Each year of schooling increases a person's potential income by 10%.

- Increased access to education decreases the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

I agree with critics who believe that formal education needs reform to match our evolving society. Fundamentally, the curriculum of formal education has not kept up with the times. Technology has rapidly evolved, and it is challenging for some teachers and parents. However, I disagree with the assertion that society no longer needs formal education, especially beyond high school. With a well-developed curriculum and an appropriate interactive delivery system, formal education whether private, public, home-school, online, or via apprenticeship is supposed to produce a community builder who actively and positively contributes to the community. It is also designed to pass on culture and produce liberated citizens who are inquisitive, productive and reflective.

We need schools to educate mindful, ethical, compassionate citizens. Imagine what would happen to handicapped individuals if there were no schools to accommodate their needs, advocate for them and educate them to make them more self-reliant and independent? Formal education helps to provide or equalize opportunities for many people regardless of ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, or age. Societies with inequalities and disparities are not usually stable or peaceful. A good educational system provides individualized learning, authentic problem solving skills, and social development. Education also helps reduce the unemployment rate and the prison population. People learn when they recognize that education will help to give them autonomy, empowerment, and emancipation. Education is good for self-development and social cohesion.

For schools to succeed, a committed partnership between students, teachers, parents, government, and society must exist. Some

critics of formal education expect schools to cure all societal ills – environmental destruction, drug abuse, racism, gun violence, teenage pregnancy, obesity, sexual abuse, etc. That is not practical, especially with “hands-off parents” working round the clock. Educators cannot do it all.

In schools where the curriculum is based on local needs and not a foreign system, the learners develop good self-concept, collaboration, integrity, human dignity, patience, empathy, and other important values of the society. That is why nations like the Southern Cameroons and other developing states fight to change the school system to fit local demands. The people put off any form

of colonial or foreign design with the belief that “Back to School” at the appropriate time will pay off. For about three years, students in the Southern Cameroons have not been to school. They are hoping for a better tomorrow, so they can be taught using an up-to-date curriculum by teachers who understand their language and culture. Colonial education is set up to make the colonized subservient. The teaching materials and methods lead to minimal gains for the development of society.

Good school systems are not static but keep changing and adapting to the times and the needs of all the citizens. Technology is there to facilitate education in formal settings since most research and development is



File Picture ,South African children in class.

done in formal institutions of learning. Technology will not replace schools. Formal education is necessary and needed by every citizen. Formal education breeds the love for life-long learning for

the good of citizens, nations, and the world at large since there are global problems that need collaborative-solutions from educated minds. Social media critics provide a catalyst for useful

school theory and practice in keeping with the changing times.

* The writer is Professor Emeritus, Educational Technology.

Investments in rail transport essential for the success of Africa's free-trade area

By Aubrey Lekwane*

Africa is on the cusp of launching a free-trade zone that could meaningfully boost economic growth and unlock the continent's vast potential.

Perhaps the most pressing requirement to improve economy in the region is the need for better transportation links between African states, particularly in the form of rail networks.

The establishment of a continent-wide trade bloc is an ambitious project, and one that could move the needle in terms of reducing poverty and promoting Africa's industrialisation. Other regions, including the European Union (EU), offer good case studies on the benefits of economic integration, trade

liberalisation, customs efficiencies, and the seamless movement of capital, goods and people across borders.

With its strong road, rail and air-transport links, the EU model reflects just how important it is to remove non-tariff barriers to trade. According to a May 2019 report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), non-tariff barriers in Africa are high “and represent a critical obstacle to trade”. The IMF says a reduction in ground transportation costs is “especially critical” to encouraging intra-regional trade and making a success of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The development of a comprehensive African rail



Aubrey Lekwane is Managing Director, South Africa, Bombardier Transportation.

network is the single biggest opportunity in that regard.

A reliable rail network would allow for the efficient

movement of goods, businesspeople and tourists across the continent, while also improving Africa's links

to the rest of the world, particularly the continent's landlocked nations. Rail is also a sustainable solution

given that it is far more environmentally friendly than road and air transport – Africa's natural environment is one of its greatest assets, and it must be protected. Rail investments stimulate economies while reducing carbon emissions and urban congestion – a major issue and growth impediment in many African cities.

As Africa is making investments in rail industry, green transportation and sustainable mobility should be a priority. Backed by new regulations and environmental groups, the global trend towards greener forms of transport is affecting multiple industries including the rail industry.

Several alternatives to diesel trains are currently

being developed worldwide including:

- Hydrogen fuel cells in trains: work by generating power through an onboard fuel cell that combines hydrogen and oxygen

- Battery-powered locomotives: battery system that can be recharged by overhead wires on electrified tracks or by charging stations on non-electrified routes

- Liquefied natural gas: (LNG) is being used in the rail industry as an option for dual-fuel locomotives

These investments will help develop a zero-emission, energy-efficient and cost-effective alternative to diesel trains. Deploying fuel cell and battery technology for rail transportation will usher in a new era for non-electrified

routes.

Bombardier Transportation, which designed and supplied a fleet of 96 rail vehicles for South Africa's world-class Gautrain system, sees a golden era ahead for Africa's rail sector, which has suffered from chronic under-investment in recent decades.

Today, African freight and passenger transport is heavily reliant on road infrastructure. In South Africa, the continent's most advanced economy, nearly 90% of freight is moved by road, for example. That is a staggering proportion, and this overreliance means that our roads need to be constantly repaired while traffic congestion worsens in the face of urbanisation.

Worse still, the lack of focus on rail until recently has placed a drag on South Africa's exports.

Thankfully, the South African government is re-investing in the country's rail links – a move that Bombardier Transportation fully supports. Going forward, these efforts need to be increasingly coordinated with the country's neighbours.

South Africa also has an opportunity to become a major rail manufacturing hub as the continent invests in railway infrastructure, including new trains, signalling systems and general maintenance. Rail will play an important role in Africa's future, and Bombardier Transportation is keen to apply its global

expertise and solutions to propel the continent forward.

Ultimately, rail's contribution towards an integrated transport network will help Africa to attract investment and to be competitive in the global trade arena. Rail is the only sustainable transportation solution to many of today's environmental, social and economic challenges and Bombardier is looking forward to moving millions daily safely in the African region

*Aubrey Lekwane is Managing Director, South Africa, Bombardier Transportation

Rwanda's satellite RWASAT-1 to hit the orbit next month

By Jean d'Amour Mugabo

First ever Rwanda's owned satellite RWASAT-1 has got into the international space and is expected to be launched into the orbit on November 18, according to officials.

Revelations about RWASAT-1, in technical terms, were made on October 8 in Kigali at a joint press briefing by the Ministry of ICT and Innovation, Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) and the Japanese Embassy in Rwanda.

The satellite was built by three Rwandan engineers and a team of Japanese at Tokyo University under the Japan-Rwanda partnership inked on May 9, 2018.

Lt. Col Patrick Nyirishema, RURA Director-General, said RWASAT-1 was sent to the International Space Station (ISS) on September 24. The rocket carrying this satellite



ICT Minister Ingabire, RURA DG Nyirishema and Japan Ambassador Takayuki Miyashita briefing the media about RWASAT 1

was launched from the Tanegashima Space Centre by the Japanese Aerospace and Exploration Agency (JAXA).

Speaking at the press

briefing, Takayoshi Fukuyo, one of the RWASAT-1 developers, said the HTV-8 "Koutonori 8", a cargo ship which stores RWASAT-1 was

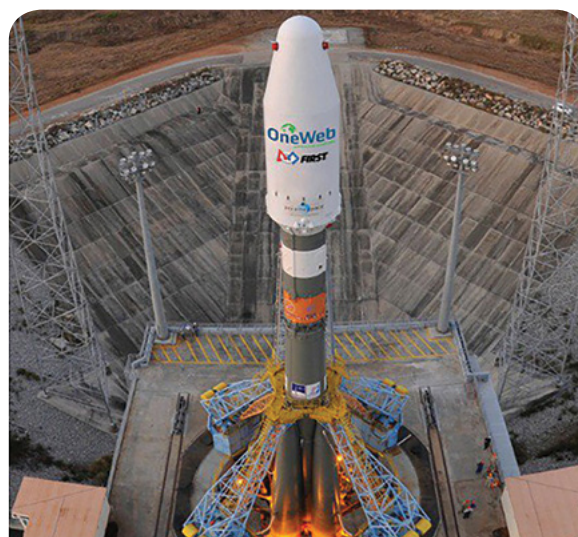
captured on September 28 by the ISS robotic arm, awaiting the satellite's alignment with the selected orbit.

The 10 x 10 cm satellite,

weighing no more than 1.2 kg, is the type of CubeSats which are commonly tiny satellites that are usually deployed into low earth orbit from where



OneWeb base at the spaceport on the Atlantic coast of French Guiana.



OneWeb launched Icyerekezo satellite in collaboration with Rwanda in February 2019 from the spaceport on the Atlantic coast of French Guiana.

they can send information to ground stations.

Paula Ingabire, the Minister for ICT and Innovation said that about 50 Rwandan engineers have been trained in space technologies since Rwanda entered into a partnership with Tokyo University mid last year.

“Since we signed the agreement with the University of Tokyo, it has opened doors to Rwandan engineers to use their laboratories for assembly, integration, and testing of RWASAT-1,” she said.

Lt. Col Nyirishema said Rwanda is new on the journey of lean space technology but the country chose to build capacities on this initial journey.

“In the past, satellite technology was in bulk satellites that cost hundreds of millions of dollars. We are now going into a time where it’s possible to build low-cost satellites that can achieve many applications,” he said, adding that RWASAT-1 is in line with the bigger National Space Programme and is expected to reduce the cost of data.

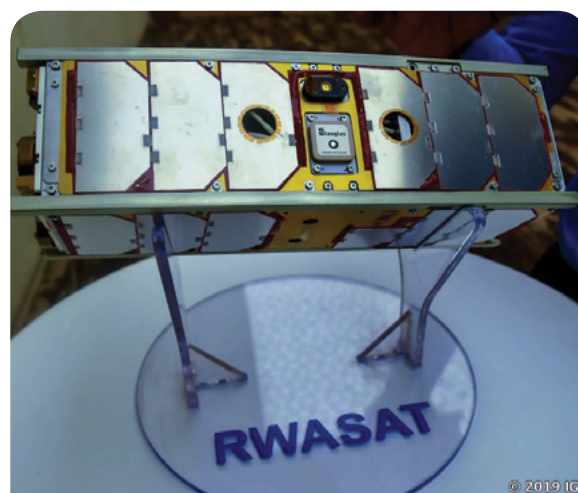
Officials said that RWASAT-1 project has cost \$925,000 with Rwanda and Japan providing \$250,000 and \$675,000 respectively.

Designed for the space research, RWASAT-1 will help the government monitor water resources, natural disasters, agriculture and meteorology. The data will be collected in the sky using

the two RWASAT-1 onboard multispectral cameras and will then be transmitted to ground control centres where they will be used to make informed decisions.

Reports indicate that Rwanda became the 10th African country to send a satellite in the space in February, 2019 when OneWeb, a UK based company, worked with Rwanda to launch a satellite named “Icyerekezo” that provides broadband internet to Rwandan schools in remote areas.

Other African countries with satellites in the space are Algeria, Angola, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa.



Rwanda's first owned satellite RWASAT 1 to be launched in the space next month. Photo IGIHE.



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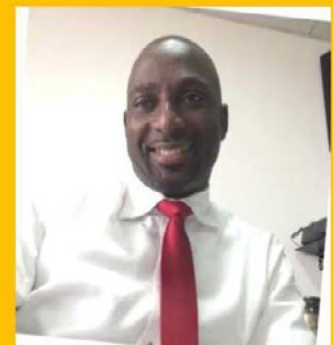
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With MPower, African Students Can Dare to Dream Big- Georgetown Alum Grace Chimezie

By Ajong Mbandah L

Grace Chimezie was at the end stretch of her studies at Georgetown University in Washington with financial challenges struck hard. She was unable to complete her tuition, and her application to traditional borrowers were not gaining much traction.

Faced with the real threat of putting her studies on hold, Grace Chimezie, originally from Nigeria was advised by someone in her to give MPower Financing a try. The application was hassle free, and Grace was granted the loan which enabled her to complete her studies. Upon Graduation, Grace had a job with the World Bank, and is now with the National Democratic Institute in Washington, DC.

Dynamic and ambitious, Grace started repaying the loan even before she officially graduated. Asked if she was under any pressure to start repaying the loans so soon, Grace indicated that the decision was solely hers. For African students who dream big and do not have the means, MPower can help turn those dreams to reality, she said.

How did you hear about Empower Financing?

Grace Chimezie: I was studying in Georgetown University (Washington, DC, USA), and I had paid my first year tuition because I had like a two year degree program I applied for. I was in Georgetown for a Masters degree in Communications, Culture, and Technology and my focus was between Technology and Public Policy. So I had done my first year payment and I



Thanks to a loan from MPower Financing, Grace Chimezie was able to complete her studies at Georgetown University.

needed payment for the second year and I went to my school advisory board and they recommended MPower Financing as an organization that could help me get a loan. **How was your experience going through the loan process? What did you have to do?**

Grace Chimezie: If you are getting a loan from an American bank, you needed a reference or someone who will support you. For MPower,

you just needed to show approval that like possibility of repaying the loans or your statement of account that is the amount you are going to get from them and your resume. It was a very easy process compared to what I would have gone through if I was going through a federal or financial aid because I did not have collateral or someone who would provide that for me.

Based on the experience

that you had, is it a service that you are going to recommend to people?

Grace Chimezie: Definitely because they came at a time when I really needed it. I had one tuition left to kind of graduate and if I did not get that loan approved, I was not going to graduate, and this is someone who had done almost all her courses and having that one little fee I would not have graduated.

So I really do recommend them because within the first two weeks I had already gotten an answer about the loan process.

You graduated in May this year, when are you going to start repaying the loan?

Grace Chimezie: I have already started repaying the loan

It is some 5 months after you graduated, did you get a job or were you pressured to start repaying the loan?

Grace Chimezie: I decided to kind of start repaying the loan as soon as possible. It is kind of important to know the budget for the schools you are going to and the loans you are borrowing because that will give you an understanding of what you have to do and the repayment of the loan is not as burdensome as someone will assume. The best advice I will say is do your budget to know that when you borrow the loan and what you have in your own account so you do not start offsetting that in your own account. I was not pressured to have a job as I am already working right now so it is just easier to start doing that (paying the loan) now.

So, the decision to start paying the loan was solely yours and not because Empower Financing pressured you?

Grace Chimezie: Oh no, They did not put pressure. You have to get into an agreement with them that this is when you will start repaying the loan. The repayment plan is not burdensome depending on how much you borrow.

When you say it is not



Grace with Maureen Klovers. Dreams can become realities for young African students through MPower Financing, says Grace.

burdensome, what do you mean?

Grace Chimezie: I borrowed \$20K, and my repayment plan is around \$193 a month so I think that is kind of lenient considering the amount I borrowed. And you have like an 11 to 12 year plan to repay the loan.

With regards to the fixed payments that are done

monthly, if there is a possibility to pay earlier is that an option?

Maureen Klover chimes in: One of our features is that there is no prepaid penalty. Some lenders actually charge you to pay early because it is in the borrowers' best interest because we kind of end up benefiting less overall. But again our motto is when

the borrower succeeds we succeeds so borrowers can end paying us early that is fine and they end up paying less overall because they are paying under the principle or early. If someone gets an amazing job out of school and earns a hundred thousand dollars, they could pay the whole amount right away and that will be fine.

You come from a country and continent with so many young people, what advice do you have for the young people with this kind of opportunity MPower provides?

Grace Chimezie: The message will be do not limit your dreams because once your dreams are big enough

there is always an answer for it and the bigger your dreams the bigger the opportunities for you to kind of achieve all of them. I will advice people to dream big because the more you dream big the more prospective answers you will have for the dreams.

A Lifeline for African and International Students In MPower Financing

By Ajong Mbapndah L

For international students, and those who aspire to study in the USA and Canada, one of the biggest challenges remains how to secure funds. Traditional student loans end up been very costly and eligibility conditions are often stringent for them. In MPower Financing, international students and those from Africa aspiring to study in Canada and the USA now have a partner to help them live their dreams.

From the application, to eligibility criteria, and repayment, MPower is shaping up to be a dependable vehicle for them to fulfil their dreams of quality education.

"Any student from any African country except Sudan is eligible to apply provided that they go to one of our 350 schools in the US and Canada," says Maureen Klovers, Director of Social Impact with MPower Financing. Interviewed in Washington,DC, Maureen Klovers said MPower is gaining grounds in countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya and Cameroon . Our motto is "when the borrower succeeds, we succeed," said Maureen Klovers as she expressed the hope to see



Maureen Klovers says she will like to see MPower be of more benefit to young African students.

more African students benefit from the unique services offered by MPower.

You are Director of Social Impact with MPower Financing. What is MPower Financing and what do you do?

Maureen Klovers: We are the world's only lender that provides fix rate education loans to international students from all over the world without requiring a US collateral or a US credit history. That is very unique and Nigeria is our second biggest market while Ghana is rising in the ranks- I think our 6th largest. So Africa is

really important to us and we are happy to talk to you.

Do you provide funding for students only in the US or do you also provide funding to students in Africa who are in need of funding?

Maureen Klovers: Most of our students are based in Africa and other parts of the world and are coming to the US for graduate degrees. So 80% of our students are pursuing graduate degrees. We can make loans to students pursuing graduate degrees or students in their last two years of undergraduate. We do have

some students from the Diaspora who are permanent or are already working here who also get loans.

What is the cap or limit students can get?

Maureen Klovers: We can loan up to \$25K at one time and \$50K overall for any student.

What are the criteria for students to benefit from the loans?

Maureen Klovers: You first need to be eligible and we have very broad criteria. So any student from any African country except Sudan is eligible to apply provided that they go to one of our 350

schools in the US and Canada. You need to be within two years of graduation and for an MBA that is fine as it is a two year degree. For any kind of two year degree it will cover that and then if you are at your last two years of your undergraduate. Very simple and eligibility criteria and you can do a 30sec eligibility check on our website and it will tell you if you are eligible or not. It is just 3 questions and they will ask you about the cost of your degrees, where you are going and what you are studying. What is really unique about us is that we do not make our credit decision base on your family's income or asset and so it is not a collateral loan. We make our decision base on your future earning potential so we are looking at your past earning history, your past professional experience, the school you are going to, the degree you are going to get and so if you are going to get an MBA degree, or an Engineering degree we are confident that you are going to get a good earning potential and be able to pay us back.

How different are you from the other loan structures that are out



there?

Maureen Klovers: Very different because most Africans right now are either using funding from their families which mean we are talking about wealthy individuals or while other lenders will ask you to mortgage your home for example. What is unique about us is that we do not require you to mortgage or to rely on your parents. Again, we are focusing on the future earning potential.

Any idea of the number of African students you currently have?

Maureen Klovers: We have roughly 500 at the moment. Our biggest market is India but our second biggest market is Nigeria. Our 6th biggest market right now is Ghana, and other African countries include South Africa Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya and Cameroon.

With regards to loan payments, at what point do you require students to start repaying?

Maureen Klovers: Our loan product is unique in that students pay interests while they are in school interest only and then for 6 months after graduation. A lot of our students get like an on campus job to help make

those small payments. The benefit is that you are not paying interest on interest so people do not realize that if you do not pay while you are in school it accrues and you end up paying more and the other thing is that it allows you to build your US credit history so that when you graduate you can get a credit card, car loan and pass a credit check for employment. After that 6 months grace period, there is a ten year repayment period where you repay the interest in principle.

With the experience that you have had, how prompt is the repayment process? How flexible are you when it comes to these repayments?

Maureen Klovers: We try to be really flexible because we are a social benefit corporation which means we are for profit, we are not a non-profit organization but we have social point objectives and our motto is. So what we do is that when a student gets into trouble, we can put them on forbearance for up to 24 months so we can put their payments on pause and we can also offer them a \$25 credit billing option where they make \$25 payment a month and we continue to report the loan

current to the credit bureau. So we can do a variety of things and we also have a path to success initiative where we can do a free review of the student's resume; how to ace an interview and those are for international students.

With regards to the students who live Africa and come here, do you help them with visa application?

Maureen Klovers: Thanks for asking. We provide visa support and the processes is that you go through most of our loan process and we conditionally approve you then we will provide you a letter to take to the US Embassy that says yes, this student has enough funds to be in the US. The process to get a student visa is that you need to show you have sufficient financial support, so we will provide a letter that we are providing loans and together with other savings and amounts that should be sufficient.

What are you doing to broaden your outreach in Africa since you have been in existence for five years now?

Maureen Klovers: This interview is a start and we are also trying to bring more of our Nigerian borrowers

and scholarship winners to raise our profile. We have a lot of scholarship programs but honestly Africans have dominated the winner's list. We have had winners from Nigeria, Malawi, and Kenya and so through our scholarship program we are getting the word out there. We started a new Facebook group, and Africans are by far the number one demographics in that group and we have also been doing focus groups through our consulting firm to better understand the challenges facing African students and women. Only 35 per cent of our borrowers from Nigeria are females, so that is what we have been focusing on. In terms of overcoming the barriers for women in Africa we have recently partnered with the Malala Fund and we are going to be donating \$25 from each of our loans to them to support access to secondary education for girls in India, Nigeria and other places around the world.

Which fields of study will easily make students to meet your eligibility criteria?

Maureen Klovers: Actually we do not have any limit in the fields of study, you could be in any degree program but you

are more likely to be approved at least for more money if you are in an MBA program or any STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) degree just because your future earning potential is that much better. But I do not want to dissuade anyone from applying because even if you are a communications major or in the Arts or in some other field you can still get funding. But it is just more likely if you are in a business or STEM field.

In the course of your studies maybe the cost becomes more than you anticipated, are there prospects for applying for additional loans?

Maureen Klovers: Our lifetime cap for borrowers is \$50K. A typical borrower borrows 31K, so they are below that. So, let us say you borrow 30K and you have a shortfall, you could apply to borrow another \$20K and we see that a lot. We have some students like in one of our scholarship we have people like Fulbright scholars, and they get a hundred per cent scholarship and they can get a loan from us like \$20K to cover their lodging, food and everything.



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Is Oil Discovery In Kenya A Blessings Or A Curse?

By Samuel Ouma |@journalist_27

In August 2019 Kenya joined the rank of the petroleum exporting countries after it released its first batch of 200,000 barrels to the international market under the Early Oil Pilot Scheme (EOPS). However, the East African country will wait until 2024 to reach the level of their African counterparts such as Nigeria, Angola, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon when the full exploration is expected to begin.

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta flagged off Kenya's first crude oil export as Kenyan expects more benefits associated with the product. The oil was dispatched by the China National Chemical Corporation Ltd (ChemChina) at a cost of \$12 million.

"The government will ensure that the local communities benefit from the oil and that the fruits of the resource are also shared in an equitable and sustainable manner. I urge all those in charge to avoid any misuse of the resource that would deny others from its benefit," said President Kenyatta.

ChemChina outran seven other international firms from Asia and Europe to land the multi-billion tender according to Kenya's ministry of petroleum.

"ChemChina UK Ltd was selected following a competitive tender process through which an invitation to bid was issued to prospective buyers on July 26, 2019 and to which there was strong response with 8 bids received from international companies representing European and Asian refineries. ChemChina was selected on the basis of their offered process



FILE PHOTO. A worker walks at a Tullow Oil explorational drilling site in Lokichar, Turkana County, Kenya, February 8, 2018. REUTERS Baz Ratner File Photo.

and according to standard international terms," read the statement from the ministry.

Commercially viable oil was first discovered in 2012 by British firm Tullow in Turkana, the country's northwest followed by discovery of hydrocarbon in offshore Lamu basin in the coastal region. Forty wells have been drilled since then but only Twig 1 South, Ngamia 1, Ekale 1 and Etuko in the tertiary rift are the only wells under exploration. The firm previously unearthed oil in Uganda and Tanzania.

Tullow began the oil search alongside Africa Oil Corp and now there are a number of traders such as Shell, Kenol Kobil, Mogas, Hass, Hashi Energy, Gulf Energy, Olympic, Dalbin

petroleum and Petrocam. The exploration is regulated by the Energy Regulation Commission and the Ministry of Mining.

The firm said the onshore fields in Turkana have approximately 560 million barrels, which has translated to 60,000-80,000 barrels per day and 100,000 barrels daily are expected by 2024. Before the shipment transfer of crude oil to Mombasa by road was launched early June 2018.

Shipment of crude oil is set to generate revenue to the government, employment and development to people. The Petroleum Exploration and Production Bill underline how revenue will be shared between the national and county governments and

people. 75 per cent of it is allotted to the national government, 20 per cent to Turkana County government and 5 per cent to local community.

"This shipment is the first under the Early Oil Pilot Scheme (EOPS) and trucking will continue for the next 18-24 months. For project Oil Kenya, the Kenya Joint Venture Partners in collaboration with the Government of Kenya target to reach a final investment decision in 2020," reiterated Tullow Oil CEO Paul McDade.

People from all walks of life expect the oil exportation to change the face of Turkana people who are among the poorest in the country. The region is one of the areas that experience consistent drought annually submitting the residents to severe famine. There are suggestions that the revenue generated be used to initiate development projects to improve the livelihoods of the community who are pastoralists. The realization of the full benefits will

commence in 2024.

In the midst of cheers and celebration that marred the shipment of the maiden oil there is anxiety about the future. Kenya would not wish to follow the footsteps of petroleum producing nations which are well-known for wars. Conflict is likely to erupt in such countries over the ownership of oil fields. For instance, South Sudan and Sudan have engaged in long term conflict fighting for oil fields. Many were killed and thousands displaced during 1983-2005 war fought between the two.

In the past there has been tension between the local community and Tullow Oil Company, the locals held protests over a number of unresolved issues. They accused the company of sidelining them when issuing tenders and in employment. There was also a protest against land confiscation without compensation.

However, President Kenyatta had warned Kenyans against imitating war-torn countries saying there is effective resource management to curb such menaces.

"The negative competition for oil and other natural resources have seen peaceful countries go to war. It has seen brothers take arms against each other as mothers bury their children with no hope for the future. I pray that we will not be visited with the same curse. I also pray that we will view the discovery of oil and gas as a blessing that will manage effectively and efficiently for the benefit of future generations," said Kenyatta



President Uhuru Kenyatta during the official flagging off of the Kenya's first oil shipment.

Academics Urge US Government To Channel More Resources Towards Education And Scientific Research In Africa

By Amos Fofung

Professor Nkem Khumbah, Chairman of Africa Development Futures Group, ADFG, has urged the United States government to channel its foreign investment, resources and policies meant to develop Africa into fostering and professionalizing higher education in the continent.

The educationist cum lecturer at the University of Michigan outlined that Africa faces many challenges which can duly be addressed if more attention and resources are invested in its higher education systems, permitting Africans to better carry out scientific research, and finding solutions to their own problems without waiting and hoping on foreign aid.

Speaking last week at the launch of the North American office of the Association of African Universities, AAU, in Washington, DC, Prof Nkem Khumbah did applaud US support to Africa but reiterated that it will be more beneficial if redirected into enhancing higher education in the continent, given that “it is the caliber of African universities’ graduates that will produce and manage the knowledge that gives relevance to its other institutions – government, trade, defense, agriculture, health, finance, energy and diplomacy”, that it is by “supporting Africa to vitalize its Higher Education systems that the continent may turn its increasing demographics into a dividend to drive its development agendas and enhance its democracies”.

In his address during the pre-launch season of the regional office, Prof



Prof Nkem Khumbah flanked by Ambassador Tibor P. Nagy, Hon. Amro Adly, Deputy Minister of Education, Egypt, and Dr. Menna Demessie.

Khumbah, who was sharing the stage with US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Tibor Nagy, pointed to the fact that attention is only paid to Africa based on its colonial past and its inefficiencies. Dissecting the continent's inability to better bargain for itself due to the small size of its countries as opposed to those in Asia, he maintained that, thanks to the African Union, the continent now has that one voice, to better represent her regional interests.

“The challenge that I see is that resources and policy, have not so much accompanied the level of latent interest in that area... the US is the one singular country in the world that has the deepest roots in Africa and if you look around the continent, Africa is seen in terms of big brother, younger brother and this determines the policies that accompany actions.”

Holding at the premises of the African Union Mission to the United State, attendees included dignitaries from Africa and American Diplomats, academic and professional associations, higher education stakeholders in North America, and from

Africa, including a large representation of the African diaspora; Nkem Khumbah said higher education was one of the major keys to unlocking Africa's enormous potentials.

Advocating for the harmonization of African educational systems so as to permit the exchange of ideas and research topics, thus facilitating intercontinental exchange of knowledge, Nkem Khumbah used the story of the Koreans' to better disseminate his idea.

“We often talk about how Korea was receiving aid in the 1950s from Ghana and Cameroon; what turned the stakes around was higher education and scientific manpower, with significant US support through higher education and research cooperation,” he said.

He expressed hope that establishing the North American regional office of the Association of African Universities will strengthen the interface for linking higher education institutions and enterprises in the USA with their African counterparts.

Higher education “can be a powerful, strategic winning area for US foreign policy.

While China is building the roads, putting Billions of Dollars on infrastructure and winning the hearts of African heads of states, helping develop its higher education can win the hearts of the entire population,” he said.

With better cooperation between the US and Africa in higher education expected to shift gear with the establishment of the North American office, speakers and moderators at the launch were all unanimous that the bilateral relation between the two continents will flourish.

Speakers included H.E. Sarah Ayang-Mbi

Commissioner, Human Resources, Science and Technology at African Union Commission, who shared information about regional cooperation in African Higher Education and relevant lessons for further collaboration, Ambassador Arikana Chimbori of the AU Mission to the USA, Prof. Orlando Quilambo, AAU President and Vice Chancellor at the University of Maputo, Mozambique in company of Prof. Rungano Zvobgo, Southern Africa member.

Dr. Beatrice Khamati Njenga, Head of Education Africa Union Commission-Human Resource Science Technology, chaired the session centered on “Strengthening US-Africa Governments Academic Diplomacy and Research Cooperation Policies” which had as panelist Ambassador Tibor P. Nagy (Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, US Department of State), Hon. Amro Adly (Deputy Minister of Education, Egypt), Prof. Nkem Khumbah (Prof. and



Prof Nkem Khumbah with Ambassador Tibor P. Nagy, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, US Department of State at the AAU launch in Washington, DC.

Steering Committee, STEM-Africa Initiative, University of Michigan) and Dr. Menna Demessie, (Vice President, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc).

Forging "Strategic Partnerships among Key Stakeholders in Academia, Professional Associations & Research Institutions" was the focus of the third session moderated by Niamani Mutima, Executive Director Africa Grantmakers'

Affinity Group. Sharing insights on the topic were, Alma L. Golden (Executive Director, USAID Global Development Lab), Norman Fortenberry (Executive Director, American Society for Engineering Education, ASEE), John Boright (Executive Director, International Activities, US National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine), Tag Demment (Vice President, Association

of Public and Land Grant Universities, APLU), Prof. Nicholas Nsowah-Nuamah (AAU Vice President for West Africa).

On how to better galvanize the Diaspora comprising some 20,000 African-born Academics, 105,000 African-American academics, 105 HBCUs and a larger community that Africa seeks to involve in its development, panelist presented view points on the topic; Advancing

African Diaspora's Academic Relation in a session chaired by Prof. Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang, Ghana's Former Minister of Education .

The panel discussions and sessions were crowned by the official launching of the regional office by H.E. Sarah Ayang-Mbi Commissioner, Human Resources, Science and Technology at African Union Commission) and Prof Orlando Quilambo, AAU President and Vice

Chancellor Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique.

With the establishment of the regional office, AAU stakeholders hope to boast continental ties between Africa and North America and to identify key areas of partnership that can drive positive change in Africa through Higher Education, among others.

Revisiting The Controversial Legacy of Robert Mugabe

By Nevson Mpofo



Despite his flaws, Robert Mugabe was still highly respected by many across Africa.

Africa is coming close to the end tunnel of colonial -pan-Africanists. With the death of Robert Gabriel Mugabe on 6 September 2019 in Singapore at Gleneagles Hospital, Africa is now left with only three, 3 , colonial Pan-Africanists that is Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia , Sam Nujoma of Namibia and Dos Santos of Angola .

Following the long illness death of Robert Mugabe, many people pose endless number of questions. Is it the end of Pan-Africanism? The answer is NO. There is more to it than meets the naked

eye. There is need to reflect on New Pan-Africanism like what Julius Malema says. He is followed by others like Patrice Lumumba a true leading Pan-Africanist

"Totally no. The death of Robert Mugabe is creation of another new or other new Pan-Africanists. Every generation, centenary and century has its plenipotentiaries who mould and weave a new World to be left for posterity.

" It's a bone to swallow not to chew. It's not difficult like how it is taken falsely by many people. Its only there are some who are his feelers

of pain. Yes, true, Mugabe was a true Pan-Africanist but he has his loop-holes he left unclosed.

"He stayed in snuggled power comfort forgetting to build on his demise future. He built his History but alas it was destroyed by what he used as tactics to remain in monarch power. This could be where he is pointed as an abuser of human rights."

A number of African loyalists to Pan-Africanism still pinning their support on Robert Mugabe whom they acclaim Pan-African heroism though he received

less recognition in his home country support the values, principles and policies he crafted. He is said to be good to policy crafting but bad with implementation. This contributed heavily to his fall and failure. Although he preached he could not put Pan-Africanism across for success. May-be he failed to understand it.

The connotative definition of Pan-Africanism is that it is a movement to encourage, persuade and strengthen strong bonds of African solidarity between indigenous and diaspora ethnical groups of people who are of African descent and origin who have their vestiges in the African soil. It up-holds Unity of purpose to vitalise social, economic and political progress. The goal is to lift up African people out of poverty, vulnerability so that they can see the vision of their way to social, economic and political emancipation.

Grass-Roots Pan-Africanists like Malcolm X, Walter Rodney and Marcus Garvey hailed from Africa by blood but have their navels in the USA left their legacy. Their ancestors were taken from Africa during the time

of Slave Trade which was later abolished by Abraham Lincoln in 1836. Yester-Year Diaspora Pan-Africanists led their Black counterparts to Liberalism.

Fathers of Pan-Africanism in Africa are Haile Selassie , Julius Nyerere , Kwame Khurumah , Ahmed Sekou Toure , king Sobusa , Thomas Sankara and Muammar Gadaafi . These fathers most likely Kwame Khurumah moulded an anti-hill of African solidarity with the formation of the Organisation of African Union [OAU] in 1964 .

Like the massive support Robert Mugabe receives from some up-rooting African Leaders, the likes of Julius Malema, Robert Mugabe is hailed for the role he played during the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe. Robert Mugabe as a political activist, his active role shone its colours after his release from imprisonment in 1975. He straight away left for Mozambique in the company of Reikai Tangwena his spiritual guidance and Edgar Tekere a politician who later became the first Black Minister of Man-Power Planning and Economic Development in 1980.

Julius Malema visited Zimbabwe a week after the death of Robert Mugabe to pay his homage to his purported icon. Malema lamented the need for young African leaders to follow the foot-prints of the late hero whom he claimed was a true Pan-Africanist.

"He was a true Pan-Africanist who had a comedic start in the 1980s, however his tragic end is nasty. He was hounded by his followers who led him astray by the ensued coup of 17 November. This saw him denigrated and left in the political cold until his subsequent. Probably, that was his time but he was hounded until his death.

"I simply urge young Africans to follow his foot-prints. Africa, for it to prosper, it needs a crop of new Pan-Africanists. For Africa to develop socially, economically and politically it needs new fresh blood dedicated to take the path and lift up the burden to develop their continent with love, passion, peace and unity.

"Africa like ever before, it needs perseverance and dedication of its young people to take lead in new development strategies. The goal we cry for is to alleviate poverty. Our vision is to move towards economic freedom. Thus why my political party is called Economic Freedom Fighters".

Robert Mugabe's seeds of Pan-Africanism according to some people with the same tongue like Julius Malema is that Mugabe dedicated himself to liberate his people from colonial rule of Ian Douglas Smith of Unilateral Declaration For Independence [UDI].

Malema continued to praise and ululate Robert Mugabe whom he says



Mugabe was part of a venerated generation of African leaders who fought for independence.

decolonised the mind by bringing Education to his people from the early 1980's. He said Mugabe supported Indigenisation of his people.

"Mugabe, I assure you all, he was that bold hero who acted on Land Redistribution since 1980. The land reform program of 2002 was his final notion of versatility in Pan-African values of solidarity with all the people.

"I doubt him not, he was a hero enough to liberate his people twice by giving land to them. This is brought to clear evidence by some other works he did during his time. Although some take him as a villain, he stands great in his whole work as a hero among some other heroes in Africa. This is Pan-Africanism".

Robert Mugabe Famous Inputs and Fallen Success Programs..

Since 1980 Robert Mugabe has been pushing for very intelligent lucrative projects and policies which to some extents some never yielded positive results in his life time. This is where he loses taste with many people.

In 1980 he called for

Reconciliation between Blacks and Whites. Next he took time to be-friend White people. He even positioned 3 of them in his cabinet. These were David Smith Minister of Industry, Dennis Norman for Agriculture, Timothy Stamps, Health and Fay Chung, Education.

Mugabe introduced GENDER EQUALITY. This was accompanied by 15 Legal Instruments to support women. He became very popular in election plat-foams. He looked at main Humanitarian sectors Education, Health, food-security and three economic sectors Agriculture, Mining and Manufacturing Industry.

In 1987 he united two Liberation Political Parties ZANU PF and ZAPU PF into one Party. This was the Historic Unity Accord of 21 December 1987. He ended the long protracted battle known as Gukurahundi which resulted in the death of estimated 20,000 civilians in Midlands and Matebeleland Provinces.

ESAP- the Economic Structural Adjustment Program of 1985 to early

1990'. This was followed by the ZIMPREST, Zimbabwe Economic Program for Economic and Social Transformation of 1989.

Intervention into the Mozambique Civil War between FRELIMO and RENAMO.

Economic Deregulation Program of 1995.

Intervention into DRC WAR of 1997 along-side Laurent Kabila.

Land Reform Program of 2002.

Operation Clean Up Campaign of 2004

Look East Policy with China

Government of NATIONAL UNITY, ZANU-PF and MDC Party 2009.

Mixed Feelings Labelling Mugabe as Villain..

He has been on the other side taken as Machiavellian politician who had dictatorial tactics meant to overthrow his enemies. During his tenure of office since 1980, a lot of human rights abuses described him as one of the most despotic leader who lacked charismatic qualities.

Where Mugabe kick started

with a bang of negative critic was the Gukurahundi war mentioned at the top which massacred 20,000 innocent lives. His intervention in Mozambique, DRC and Somalia wars received heavy critic talk from those who opposed Governments of these countries. Zimbabwe Central Intelligence personnel tracked and killed/ assassinated Jonas Savimbi who had given Dos Santos long time civil un-rest and political in-stability.

A number of people disappearances have been blamed on his dictatorship. A number of Journalists were tortured, injured, abused and done cruelty. Among them is the unfortunate Itai Dzamara who disappeared in Harare. A number of Government officials like Ministers were involved in orchestrated car accidents. One good example is Maurice Nyagumbo who is suspected to have been forced to take poison in 1989. He was involved in Toyota Cressida scandal which involved him Mugabe and his first wife Sally who was from Ghana.

Grant Corruption, Capital Flight and Totalitarian Rule and Monarchic Leadership.

Grant Corruption has costed Zimbabwe billions still to be accounted for but the most surfacing is in the Mining sector where a total amount of US 15 billion worth resources disappeared. Much capital flight has been heavily blame put on Mugabe and link with Chinese. A source in the Mining sector in the Government of Zimbabwe commented on the issue at hand.

"Corruption, Grant Corruption. This is where he lost credibility for himself. He mentioned a bigger figure than the real amount and resources lost. The figure was

much ever than anywhere. Where has it happened that a country loses US\$15 billion. Yes, Grant Corruption has been there in the country thus why some Government officials disappeared, ran away.

"There has been much unaccounted for Grant Corruption in the Police. This made grow the kind of petty corruption in the police targeting commuter bus drivers. This was really massive and scandalous.

"Mugabe had created for himself and the family a Mugabe Kingdom taking the idea from King Mswati whom he once had friendship with. That kind of idea made him stay longer than ever in power. He was supposed to resign early before danger. His end is horror. Thus tragedy indeed.

Mixed feelings centralise on Mugabe as a true villain through the way he administered everything. One mistake he has received equal critic tongue lies on favouritism on the side of his relatives. He had come up with an Oligarchy, where he had family members to sustain consolidated support and security on his side.

A British based political

Analyst Stephen Chan quoted by media with a comment described Mugabe as a Leader who created enmity in the World. Chan sees Mugabe as among Dictators not Pan-Africanists.

"He had divided the whole World. If he had continued if younger than the age he died, he would have done worse to the World. He failed his people. Many things went astray, lost direction economy and the downfall of every sector."

"He created for himself the worst legacy than any other Leader. In-fact this was motivated by political avarice and unnecessary greedy. Africa must learn from what was made as mistakes by such leadership. If done like that then all can be alright. If he had put it straight, he would have taken it the Nelson Mandela, Kwame Khurumah way, Munjoma, accepting defeat like Kenneth Kaunda".

Mugabe's Personality and the Greatest Mistake He Made..

Themba Mliswa goes down memory lane in pursuit of what Mugabe did good, better, best, bad, worse and worst.

"He did good, better, best of all to show he was



A number of African leaders paid their respects to Mugabe.

pan-Africanist. He worked to liberate others together with others who were more committed than him, the likes of Josiah Tongogara, Leopold Takawira, Jason Ziyapapa Moyo, Joshua Nkomo, Hebert Chitepo and a few not mentioned.

"He did better with decolonising the mind by highlighting the brightness of Education. The best he did was to take land to the people but to an extent of certainty, he brought the worst harm to his people. He empowered those who had no skills, resources, finance, inputs, irrigation mechanisation and various implements. They have failed to develop.

"He was not accountable to

those who surrounded him. He was not strict nor was he tracking on errors done, mistakes made by his wife, friends and relatives."

"The bad of assassination policy was to stay in power. He side-lined and screened his enemies by eliminating them through death signature. His worst is dictatorship and totalitarian rule. The worst of all brought him down. He brought his wife close to political power and leadership. This was the worst of all", says of Mugabe, Themba Mliswa.

Views
-Pan-Africanism is long live. It needs a new framework for future new Pan-Africanism. It must be

a course/ subject in schools, colleges and Universities for those in the future..

-Orientation of young people then Integration into systems of Pan-African values and development..

-Besides AU Day, Pan-African Day must stand alone to show solidarity of Africa and Afro-Americans and others round the World..

-History of Pan-Africanists must be documented to live for ever put in libraries, museums and schools.

-Pan-African organisations funded to educate communities, forums on the subject and trainings.



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Rwanda eyes African market after inaugurating first smartphones plant on the continent

By Maniraguha Ferdinand

Monday, the 7th of October, Rwanda wrote history as first African country to inaugurate a plant that manufactures smartphones.

The plant is situated in heart of Kigali, in special economic zone, the area that is reserved for industries.

Mara Phones, a subsidiary company of the Mara Group owned by businessman Ashish Thakkar has started to produce two kinds of smartphones including Mara Z and Mara X.

President Paul Kagame inaugurating this plant, lauded this achievement and he believes it is going to increase number of Rwandans who use smartphones.

According to Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Agency (RURA), by September 2019, phones penetration rate among Rwandans was at 77 % while internet penetration rate stood at 51 % as of June 2019.

"The percentage is still really low of Rwandans who are already using smartphones, but we want to enable many more who would like to, and this is why dealing with cost and quality is very important" Kagame said

The cost of first phones produces by Mara Phones ranges between one hundred dollar and two hundred dollar.

Kagame promised that government is dealing with Mara Phones to see how price can be reduced and be paid in instalments.

"The introduction of Mara Phones will put smartphone ownership within reach of



Kagame holding a smartphone produced by Mara Phones.

more Rwandans. The product is backed by a warranty and the price can be paid in instalments over two years. They have tried to make it as simple and possible for Rwandans as they could."

However, Mara doesn't eye Rwanda as its big market though geopolitics may have played a big role setting up such plant in Rwanda.

It seems to be hard for a country of 12 million people whose GDP per capita stands at 740 to buy abundantly a smartphone of two hundred dollar.

However Rwanda has other qualities that may have contributed to convincing Ashish Thakkar to set up his plant in Rwanda.

Firstly, Rwanda sits right in the heart of Africa, it is one of major members of East African Community, it has a

big voice in the block.

Unlike other great lakes countries, Rwanda's economy has been growing over the decade. It is one of the safest countries to do business easily according to World Bank's Doing Business Report.

Besides, Kagame is seen as a champion of The African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement which covers more than 1.2 billion people with a combined Gross Domestic Product of more

than USD 3.4 trillion.

Though Rwanda championed such agreement, it has limited products and services to compete on the market. Bringing Mara Phones on board will bring it in the race, since all smartphones that are used in Africa are imported and Rwanda wants to position itself as regional hub in ICT.

The other reasons, Rwanda seems to be stable in terms of security and politics unlike

other regional countries where reign uncertainties.

Inside the country, not many impacts are expected because the announced prices for first smartphone produced by Mara are seen in general population as high.

Nsabimana Straton, a Kigali resident who spoke to Pan African Visions said prices are still high.

"It's a good achievement but prices are still high, they should have thought on those whose middle income." He said

Ashish Thakkar of Mara Group also revealed that he targets African market more than Rwandan.

"This is the first plant that produces smartphones on the continent, It has never been done before. This is the time for Africa to make a difference in producing high quality products not only for Africans but also beyond" he said while he introduced a plant in Kigali.

Mara phones announced that it have already started to attract regional markets like Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Angola.

Mara smartphones uses Android system powered by Google.

Mara plant in Rwanda employs more than two hundred young Rwandans, with few foreign experts.

The plant has capacity of producing about 1 000 smartphones a day, and building that plant has cost more than 50 000 000 USD.



A man holding a smartphone manufactured by Mara Phones.

Kenya: How Eliud Kipchoge climbed the ladder

By Samuel Ouma |@journalist_27

Eliud Kipchoge has proven that no human being is limited. It is right for him to be referred as the greatest athlete in history given his prodigious achievements in the world of athletics in the last seventeen years. His performance has not gone unnoticed; the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) has nominated him for the 2019 Male Athlete Awards slated for next month in Monaco, France.

He will battle it out with Donovan Brazier, 800m world record holder (USA), Christian Coleman, 100m and 4x100m title holder (USA), Joshua Cheptegei-world cross country, 10,000m and Diamond League 500m title holder (Uganda) and his fellow countryman Timothy Cheruiyot who won world 1500m and Diamond League 1500m titles. Others are Steven Gardiner-world 400m winner (BAH), Sam Kendricks-world pole vault title holder, Noah Lyles who won world 200m and 4x100m titles both from USA, Daniel Stahl-the world discuss winner (SWE), Christian Tylor- world triple jump title holder (USA) and Karsten Warholm-winner of the world 400m hurdles.

Kipchoge is a Kenyan long-distance runner who hails from Nandi, Kenya's Rift Valley, born in 1984. He recently entered into the Guinness World Record after he became the first man on earth to run a marathon under 2 hours. On October 12, 2019, he left the entire



President Uhuru Kenyatta awards Eliud Kipchoge with the Order of the Golden Heart during the Mashujaa Day celebrations.

world tongue wagging when he completed the special in Vienna, Austria in the world record of 1 hour, 59 minutes and 40 seconds dubbed INEOS 1:59 Challenge.

His career is traced back to his childhood days, failure to get breakthrough in marathon during his school days did not damp his spirit, and he remained optimistic and engaged in thorough training to nurture his talent including running two miles to school on a daily basis. At the age of 16 (in 2001), two years after he completed his secondary education he met his trainer Patrick Kipsang, former Kenyan International Athlete. The ex-Olympic medalist in the steeplechase made him believe that he is a winner and it did not take long before he took part in international competitions.

The son of a single mother kicked off his career in track where he majored in 5000m before switching to marathon. He won at the Kenyan trials for the 2002 IAAF World Cross Country Championships junior race. Kipchoge was part of the team that represented Kenya in the Dublin event where he finished fifth.

His hard work started bearing fruit during 2003 Bislet Games where he set a world junior record of 12:52:61 in the 5000m race, a record which stood for 9 years only to be broken by an Ethiopian Hagos Gebrhiwet. In the same year at the World Championship, he bagged a gold medal beating future record holders Kenenisa Bekele and Hicham El Guerrouji. The following year he suffered a shock defeat at

the 2004 Athens Olympic behind the duo.

He further showed his commitment to become a great athlete at the 2006 World Championships in Moscow by winning bronze medal in the 3000m indoor activity and silver in the 5000m final at the 2007 World Championship at Osaka.

The father of three bagged silver medal in the 5000m event at the 2008 Beijing Olympic with a time of 13:02:80 before shifting to road running in 2012. During his half marathon debut in the Lille Half Marathon he was recognized as the second fastest Half Marathon debut despite finishing in the third place. He recorded 59:25, five seconds behind a record set by his compatriot Moses Mosop in Milan in 2010.

In April 2013 he transited to long distance running and won Hamburg Marathon in his debut in a course record time followed by successive triumphs at the Chicago Marathon in 2014, 2016, 2017 and 2018. He has also reigned at the London Marathon four times; his first victory in the lucrative competition came in 2015, then 2016, 2018 and 2019.

On September 2018, he set a new record of 2 hours, 1 minute and 39 minutes at the Berlin Marathon breaking the previous record held by his fellow national Dennis Kimeto. The world record holder has won 12 out of 13 marathons he has participated in since he switched on to road running.



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Samuel Eto'o: African Legend Retires from Football

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

Ask anybody and Eto'o will be put in the top three of the greatest African football players of all times, and in the top 100 best players of all times. He is a multiple award winner in three of the top five divisions of European Football — Spain, Italy, and England.

Samuel Eto'o, 38, a four-time African Player of the Year (2003, 2004, 2005, and 2010) has retired from International football declaring "I need a rest" "The end, towards a new challenge. Thank you all, big love, adrenaline. "In a few months you'll see me doing something new," he added while saying "I need a rest. I've been running for 19-years."

Eto'o played for teams such as FC Barcelona, Real Madrid, RCD Mallorca, Espanyol, England's Chelsea, Everton and Italy's Inter Milan. He equally played for Antalyaspor and Konyaspor in Turkey from 2015 to 2018 and Qatar Sports Club in Qatar before calling time on

his illustrious career.

Shortly after announcing his retirement, congratulatory messages came flooding in from former teammates, opponents. Former FC Barcelona teammate and present captain of the Blaugrana Lionel Messi joked on Instagram, "Have you decided to stop, Samu? I thought you would reach 40 at least... All the luck in the world in what you want to do from now on, genius."

Another famous African footballer and African Legend Didier Drogba equally posted congratulatory messages on Instagram. He said, "Congratulations for this great career Samuel Eto'o and very good continuation for the new challenges that await you... Africa is very proud of one of its greatest ambassadors."

Carlos Puyol wrote, "Thank you for all, brother. It has been a pleasure to share a team with you. Good luck in this new stage."

The most successful period



Samuel Eto'o ended his football career in Qatar SC in Qatar.



Coaches like Jose Mourinho believe that Samuel Eto'o deserved the prestigious Ballon D'Or.

of his club career includes five huge successful seasons with Barcelona from 2004 to 2009. During that period, he scored 108 league goals in 145 matches winning three La Liga and two UEFA Champions League before departing to Inter Milan of Jose Mourinho. In his first season with the team Eto'o won the treble — Serie

A, Coppa Italia and the Champions League.

For his country Cameroon, Eto'o participated in four, world cups in 1998, 2002, 2010 and 2014. He however enjoyed success in the Africa continent winning the AFCON in 2000 and 2002. He made 118 appearances for Cameroon scoring 56 goals. Throughout his career, Eto'o scored 359 goals and made 116 assists in 718 games.

Will Samuel Eto'o to go into coaching?

Following his retirement, Jose Mourinho recently backed the former Cameroonian international's potential to become a successful coach. At the Aspire Academy Global Summit on Football Performance, and Science in Doha, the 38-year-old who is an Ambassador for the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup pondered on a move into management.

"To be a coach I have to study. My luck is that as a player I met a wise man who now rest in peace: Luis Aragonés," said Eto'o of his

former Mallorca coach. "He told me to please listen to the people I knew. It is obviously that the idea of being a coach is in my head. At the moment I am in a period of reflection."

Samuel Eto'o has had a stint at the dugout after he became the player-manager of Turkish side Antalyaspor. Eto'o who joined the club on a three-year contract took over from Yusuf Simsek when his contract was terminated by mutual consent on Seven December. During his time there he won his first two games before suffering two losses, and a draw. He was replaced by Jose Morais.

Fight against racism

Samuel Eto'o like most African players has come under racial abuse from away supporters in some away matches. He is one of several high-profile players to have reacted to the abuse by threatening to leave the pitch and being outspoken in critic of their experiences.

In February 2005, during an away match with Real Zaragoza, Eto'o was the

subject of a racial chant by Zaragoza supporters, who began making monkey-like chants onto the pitch whenever he had the ball. He was equally racially abused on 17 October 2010 in a Serie A game against Cagliari.

Interesting fact about Eto'o
Samuel Eto'o Fils is a native of Nkon, a suburb of Yaounde. He began his professional football in Cameroon with Kadji Football club before moving to Real Madrid in Spain. Eto'o, an Olympic Gold Medalist in 2000 was crowned paramount chief in Kaffu Ballom, chiefdom in Sierra Leone in November 2015. He was visiting Sierra Leone as a part of the "FIFA 11 for Health and 11 against Ebola" program in the



Samuel Eto'o is an Ambassador for the Qatar FIFA World Cup 2022.

country.

With a glittering 22-year career that has come to an end, it is left to see whether Eto'o will go into coaching, or take another road in his career. He has however closed the road on a political career like one of, if not the greatest African Football

player and the only African to win the Ballon d'or at the moment George Weah — who went into politics and is the current President of Liberia. Many had even joked on social media that Samuel Eto'o would replace long serving President Paul Biya.



Samuel Eto'o, former Cameroon player during the Final of 2019 African Cup of Nations match between Algeria and Senegal at the Cairo International Stadium in Cairo, Egypt on.

Eto'o go, Eto'o Came: Etienne Eto'o, son of legendary football striker, Samuel Eto'o set to further father's legacy

By Amos Fofung

A new dogma on the lips of sports pundit in Africa now is; "Eto'o go, Eto'o Came" as Etienne Eto'o Pineda, son of Cameroon's legendary international striker, Samuel Eto'o Fils is anticipated to commence on his international debut anytime soon for team Cameroon.

The 17-year-old who is already following in Samuel Eto'o's footsteps by captaining the youth squad of one of his father's former clubs, Mallorca, is showing relative affection and excitement to play for team Cameroon.

He was recently called to camp and he even played three matches with a goal credits to him name as Cameroon prepares for the forthcoming FIFA Under-17 World Cup in Brazil. But to the dismay of

many, his name, alongside that of other international Under-17 Cameroonians that were called to camp ahead of the torney, was left out of the list of selected players to represent the county.

Sports pundit attribute the decision of Cameroon's Football Federation, FECAFOOT to the fact that he as well as his peers that were not included in the final list, hold dual nationality. This has not however blown his chances of playing for team Cameroon.

The Son of Cameroon's all-time top scorer, Samuel Eto'o Fils rated among the top 3 legendary African players who left his mark the word over from REAL MADRID, Barcelona, Chelsea to Inter Milan, Etienne Eto'o said he is determined to prove his worth when he got called

to camp with the national selection barely days after his dad announced he was retiring from football.

Etienne Eto'o is eligible to represent Spain, the country he was born in when his dad was playing in La Liga, however, the youngster has chosen to follow in his Father's footsteps by embracing the green-red-yellow jersey of Cameroon.

With a proud stature, an impressive touch of ball and a sense of finishing, Etienne Eto'o, augurs hope for Cameroonian football as sports lovers in the country anxiously anticipate he will one day, most definitely play for the Indomitable Lions, be it at the junior level or main team.

Samuel Eto'o the underrated legend Bobby McMahon of Forbes



Like father like son Etienne Etoo Pineda is following the foot steps of his father.

points that; after over twenty years as a player, Samuel Eto'o has announced his retirement. Eto'o played for 11 teams and won 18 club and national team trophies and numerous individual awards. He scored 426 goals in 877 matches and retires holding the record for the most goals in the African Cup of Nations and is Cameroon's all-time leading scorer.

He is one of the best players that Africa has ever produced and one of the truly great strikers of the 21st century. He had pace and strength, he was a tremendous finisher from short-range and from distance, and he was just as likely to create a chance as he was to score a goal.

The career of Eto'o started with a bang. His debut for Cameroon came the day before he turned 16 and he was only 17 when he played in the 1998 World Cup in France. In 1997, he signed for Real Madrid but was loaned out three times before he was sold to Real Mallorca for £4.4m (\$5.3m) in 2000. Eto'o only made 7 appearances for Real Madrid and in many interviews down the years the striker expressed bitterness at not have being given a fair chance at Madrid.

Eto'o would score 70 goals in 165 appearances for Real Mallorca and he helped the team to their only Copa del Rey in 2003. Barcelona came calling in 2004 and Real Madrid, realizing the error they had made years before, were interested in reacquiring Eto'o.

Barcelona paid Real Mallorca €24m (\$26.4m) to sign Eto'o and by the end of the season he had repaid a hefty chunk of the transfer fee with 25 goals in 37 La Liga appearances as Barcelona rolled to the title.

The next season brought more success as Barcelona won La Liga once again and added the UEFA Champions League as well. It was only the second time Barcelona had won the European Cup. Eto'o also finished as the top scorer in La Liga with 26 and he played a pivotal role in the Champions League Final against Arsenal. He was fouled by Jens Lehmann early in the game and the Arsenal goalkeeper was sent off and in the second half he scored Barcelona's equalizer on the way to a 2-1 win.

The next two seasons were disappointing with no trophies, just a lot of close things. However, Eto'o's goal

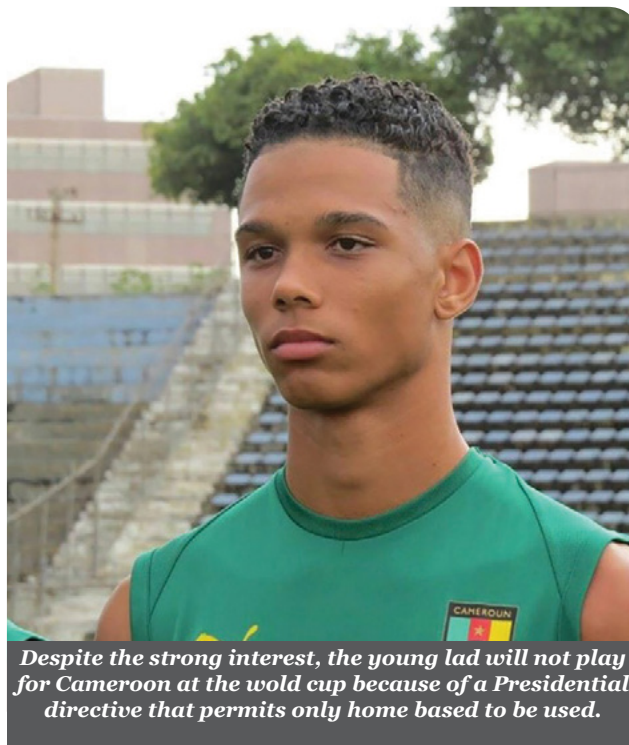
scoring dropped off with "just" 31 goals over the two seasons.

But things were about to change. The 2008/09 season was the first with Pep Guardiola in charge and Barcelona completed the treble of domestic league and cup, and the UEFA Champions League. Eto'o came roaring back and one of his 36 goals was the opening goal in the Champions League Final against Manchester United on the way to a 2-0 win.

Barcelona's front three of Lionel Messi (38 goals), Eto'o (36 goals) and Thierry Henry (26 goals) combined for a century of goals.

Eto'o and €46m (\$50m) headed off to Inter Milan in exchange for Zlatan Ibrahimovic. Ten years ago Ibrahimovic had only once scored more than 22 goals in a season (2009 - 29 goals) and it was only with Milan in 2012 that Zlatan became a goal scoring machine.

The conventional wisdom was that Guardiola wanted an option B and he felt that the physical more imposing Ibrahimovic was a better bet



Despite the strong interest, the young lad will not play for Cameroon at the world cup because of a Presidential directive that permits only home based to be used.

than the battle-tested and proven qualities of Eto'o. The Ibrahimovic experiment failed at Barcelona and after one season Zlatan was loaned and then sold to AC Milan at a markdown price.

For Eto'o, 2009/10 brought another treble as he demonstrated other qualities that had lay hidden and unappreciated. Eto'o's finest moment was perhaps his display against Barcelona in the Champions League semi-final second-leg at the Camp Nou.

With Thiago Motta sent off after 30 minutes Eto'o responded with an incredible display of selfless play, tactical awareness and defensive discipline. Inter won on aggregate and moved on to beat Bayern Munich in the final at the Santiago Bernabéu, yes, the home of Real Madrid. Eto'o assisted on the opening goal.

Highest paid player in the world

Although Eto'o scored 37 goals in 53 appearances the following season it was his last at Inter. Now 30, Eto'o

was sold to Russian club Anzhi Makhachkala for €28 million and he signed a three-year deal, with a salary of €20 million (after taxes) per season, making him, at the time, the best paid player in the world.

Eto'o headed to the Premier League for a season at Chelsea and then to Everton and although he was past his best he still contributed a few highlight reel goals with a hat trick against Manchester United the most memorable.

The next five seasons brought stops in Italy, Turkey and finally in Qatar. Eto'o's best spell was three seasons with Antalyaspor where he scored 44 goals in 77 games.

In retrospect, the move to Anzhi Makhachkala padded Eto'o's bank account but it killed his playing career at the elite level. He could have easily have had another three seasons at the very top.

In 2013, Forbes listed Eto'o in the top 100 highest-paid athletes in the world and a year later his net wealth was estimated at \$64m.



A trophy laden career for Samuel Eto'o.



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