



## AFRICA & COVID-19

### Dr Ameenah Gurib-Fakim On Reforms and Way Forward



Dr Adesina Leads AFDB To Stem The Bleeding



Furor Over Chinese Stigmatization of Africans



Benin: Down But Not Out For Komi Koutché



Namibia: Emma Theofilus Becomes Africa's Youngest Minister

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# A Time For Africans To Take Leadership

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Like other parts of the world, the coronavirus-COVID-19 is taking a drastic toll on Africa. While infected and casualty numbers may still be low compared to other parts of the world, the reality is that Africa will be hit pretty hard. From our porous health care systems, to the fragile nature of our economies, misplaced priorities of leaders, perpetual political tensions and more, COVID-19 has the potential to mar Africa. On the flipside, the pandemic equally represents a great opportunity for Africa to rethink its priorities and embark on reforms that could put the continent on a firm path towards the greatness that matches its potential.

If African leaders had learned anything from the Ebola crisis, the current healthcare infrastructure in many countries of the continent would definitely be better than what it is today. Measures like closing borders, social distancing, closing schools, quarantining patients and more are mightily helpful in mitigating the rapid spread of the virus, but what about the existing health care infrastructure? Health is wealth goes a popular saying, but curiously health has never been a topnotch priority of African governments for some reason. From the quality of hospitals to the poor working conditions of health care professionals, the health sector in most African countries South of the Sahara has been the poster child of wanton abandon and misplaced priorities.

Known to rush to Europe and other parts of the world at the slightest sign of even common ailments, African leaders have stayed put in the continent since their favorite destinations became hard hit by the pandemic. In Cameroon, we are told that the deafening silence of President Biya is because he is hunkered somewhere to stay away from infection, we now know President Museveni in Uganda is still capable of doing the kind of pushups that will make Bobbi Wine and his team rethink age as a factor in the



Ajong Mbapndah L, Managing Editor

next Presidential race in Uganda. We now know in addition to been a super talented footballer in his younger years, and a successful career so far in politics, President George Weah of Liberia is also a great singer, using music as an instrument in the fight against COVID-19.

At no time in recent memory have we seen African leaders communicating so much with their people. From press releases, to interactions with people on social media, regularly addresses and more, from Buhari, to Ali Bongo, Maada Bio, Cyril Ramaphosa, Uhuru Kenyatta, Akuffo Addo and others have all stepped up their game in proffering solutions to mitigate the ravages of the Pandemic. From borders been closed, to mandatory testing for those came to most of these countries at a certain period, quarantining people with symptoms, and more, African leaders have done their bit but is this enough and is it the best?

In addition to the poor healthcare infrastructure that was mentioned earlier, the economic hardship on everyday Africans is going to be enormous if nothing is done. How do people feed themselves and their

families? How do electricity, water rents and other related bills get paid?

As the continent grapples with the pandemic with a strong focus on how to survive the moment, lessons must be drawn on the way forward. One of the major ones should be the reminder that everyone is a leader. Rather than cry over what we do not have, every African must in his or her own little way follow safety guidelines as best as they can. When we are told to stay away from mass gatherings, that should be respected, when we are advised to keep social distancing, we should do that, when we are urged to respect basic measures like hand washing, we should do that and encourage others to do same.

Another lesson that must sink deep is that Africa must learn to believe in and depend on itself. What some of our leaders who frequently flock to foreign lands for treatment forget is that some of the leading hospitals in the world are staffed by Africans. Indeed, the African genius is found everywhere, from Doctors, to nurse, to researchers, engineers and more. Indeed, there is a staggering number of medical and other related development professionals spread

across the developed world. If nothing is done to improve the conditions of the hard-working medics in Africa, the odds are that many will continue to move to other parts of the world where their services are better remunerated, and they are treated with more respect.

In the absence of adequate medical facilities, many resorted to selling the merits of natural medicine. While it has been hard to see the scientific proof, the merits of garlic, ginger, lemon, lime and so on have been abundantly circulated in informal channels. Could the pandemic also be a wake up call for Africa to take a second ad stronger look at natural or tradi-medicine? Could researchers and scientists do more findings so we get more certainty on the efficacy of some of these combinations? There should be no shame in valorizing traditional medicine, it is popular in China, and many other countries and it is more affordable as well.

When two French Doctors recently suggested that vaccines should be tested in the continent, push back from Africans was strong from people of all works of life. Should the same energy be deployed in all matters affecting the continent, things will definitely change in Africa. The same fury should be directed at leaders who rig elections to eternalize themselves in power, it should be the anger and popular scorn that should be directed at leaders who loot the public treasury with reckless abandon, it should be the same outright condemnation of leaders take delight in violating even the most basic of human rights for their people.

Fighting the pandemic and making sure Africa does not only survive but comes out with the resolve to write a new chapter in its history is a task that should redefine leadership. All Africans have to be leaders, the agenda has to be dictated by them and not from people who often times have doubtful legitimacies. Politics should no longer be the shortcut to wealth and affluence, but rather



about service. The wealth of African countries should not go in funding the whims and caprices of unscrupulous politicians but how emphasis on science , on research , on crucial infrastructure, on building roads that those in power will feel comfortable driving on, in building hospitals that they will feel comfortable seeking treatment in and not rush abroad to seek treatment at frightening cost for common colds?

Last year, we saw a number

of political actors from Africa embarrassed with mass protests and running battles with their compatriots in Europe, this year it is the coronavirus that has soured prospects of frequent costly trips by African leaders. A new dawn may well be on the way for the continent.

In a sign that things are increasingly changing for the continent, the global response to the pandemic is led by the Ethiopian born Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus who heads the World

Health Organization. Instead of just relying on handouts from the rest of the world, there are Africans willing to contribute in funding a response to the pandemic. Led by Akinwumi Adesina, the African Development Bank is coming up with solid support to help African countries cushion the effects. Again, the collective leadership should also include holding those in power accountable on how every dime is spent, making sure the money is used on priority

projects.

This issue of the magazine dwells not just on the pandemic but on how Africa could come out strong in interviews with former Mauritius President Dr Ameenah Fakim, the leadership of the African Development Bank , the response of the energy sector and more. Happy reading!!

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# Time For Africa To Look Inward For Solutions-Former Mauritius President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim

By Ajong Mbapndah L

As Africa grapples with adequate measures to cushion the ravages of COVID-19, Dr Ammenah Gurib-Fakim says it is time for the continent to take ownership and leadership in solving its own problems.

Speaking in a skype interview from Port Louis, the Biodiversity Scientist who served as the first Woman and 6th President of Mauritius, says it is time that Africa digs deep in its pockets, bring out all the philanthropists, business community, governments, and all the full resources available to power the continent forward.

"Africa has resources, and should be able to change the narrative, work with the international community but more importantly should start investing in ourselves. Up until we start doing this, we will always be in the narrative of waiting for other people to come and help us," says Dr Ameenah Fakim as she urges the continent to invest in institutions, and training human capital.

Addressing concerns about testing vaccines in Africa, Dr Ameenah Gurib Fakim says using Africans as guinea pigs should be out of the question.

"Whenever a trial is done on the continent it must be done in the right way, with the consent of the person, we do not talk about 'guinea pigs' but volunteers, so the person who is participating in the clinical trial must have given his/her consent," she said.

**PAV: Madam President Good afternoon, and thanks for accepting to grant this interview.**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: Good afternoon and you are welcome.

**PAV: Let us start with the situation in your home country. How is Mauritius fairing with regards to the coronavirus pandemic?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: We have been in lockdown for the past two weeks, and as of today we are counting over



*Dr Ameenah Gurib was the first female President of Mauritius. Photo credit Forbes Africa.*

two hundred and fifty (250) infected cases and seven (7) deaths.

**PAV: There are concerns about the capabilities of healthcare infrastructures across Africa to handle the pandemic, how equipped, and prepared are health facilities in Mauritius?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: In Mauritius ever since we got independence, we have systematically invested in the health sector; the health service is free in Mauritius. We have also invested in the past fifty-plus years on social security nets. This has been one of the pillars in Mauritius, and right now I am very pleased that our founding fathers of this country had this vision to set up a social security net especially the wealth gap.

We are going to be stretched a bit. We keep getting a lot of infections, and what we are encouraging people to do is to stay home so that the pressure does not build on the health services in this country. Having said this, I am concerned about what is going to happen in the African continent because unfortunately, the

infrastructure is going to be pushed a great deal but more importantly, if we look at the advice of the WHO they are talking about social distancing, washing hands properly, and in many places, unfortunately, these are still luxuries.

Many people are leaving in cramped conditions in one room, social distancing is out of the question, access to water is an issue, social security net in many of the fragile states is out of the question, and even food is an issue. We talk about people staying home, those operating in the informal sector they are going to be challenged because if they do not work, they do not eat. So unfortunately, in many of these places, the concerns are there that the COVID may not get them, but hunger will.

**PAV: Let us talk a little more about the pandemic, what should Africa brace itself for, just how bad could this be and what impact do you see socially, politically and economically for the continent?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: The interesting thing about what is happening in Europe, and what we are observing in many parts of West Africa is that it has not hit so badly so far. I am not going to be controversial here, but could this be because Africa has been hit by so many of these pandemics they have developed somehow a little bit of resistance but already we are seeing that South Africa has enacted all the measures of social distancing, and all that so they are taking it very seriously. Whether we get the true picture of what is going on in Africa depends on the capacity to test. Now, do they have the means to do all the testing? That is the issue.

We are just praying that the right measures will be taken on board in the African countries so that more importantly people stay away from those who are infected, and those who are infected have their tests, and have the appropriate care that they need.

In terms of political impact, one thing we have to address is what the COVID has done which has revealed the state of our institutions in the continent. When we talk about the

state of our institutions, first is the healthcare system which we find will not be able to cope that much. The second issue which I have always been talking about is the exodus of our competence from the continent, and right now we need all the capacity we can have to be able to handle this and you know the ratio of Doctors to population is very weak on the continent. So, I fear that we may not have the appropriate human capacity to be able to tackle this pandemic. In terms of the pressure politically, time will tell but I think many governments will be under a lot of pressure to be able to address this crisis which the health sector is facing.

**PAV: Leaders like Mohamadou Issoufou of Niger say the world needs to consider a Marshal Plan for Africa to help cushion the impact of the pandemic, is this something that you subscribe to?**

Ameenah Fakim: I have signed a letter which we sent to the G20 in terms of the measures. We have a plea that people come together, governments come together, institutions come together to capitalise the institutions to help provide the social security net, provide medication all these. These are all our wishes that we will like to put to governments, and institutions. When we talk about the Marshal plan that was of course in 1948, it was done for a particular purpose, for reconstruction immediately after World War II. Right now we are talking about a global pandemic and this calls for countries to come together.

The scenario now is not the same as it was then. My narrative all the time has been African countries have got fifty plus years of post-independence history. It is time that we look at the continent, start digging in our pockets, bringing all the philanthropists, business communities, government because Africa is a very rich continent.

Africa has resources and should be able to change the narratives, work



*Africa must start invest in itself and do more in building its institutions says Dr Ameenah Fakim.*

with the international community but more importantly should start investing in ourselves. Up until we start doing this, we will always be in the narrative of waiting for other people to come and help us. The international community has been going a great job of helping us. Beyond the solidarity, we need to start looking at ourselves and I mean this very seriously beyond the health crisis, we have a young population and we need to start investing in them.

We need to start investing in our institutions, training our human capital is our responsibility, keeping the population is our responsibility, so let us all come together to use our resources for the betterment of our institutions, and, of course, our human capital.

**PAV: The African Development Bank is setting aside big sums to help African countries fight the pandemic. Considering the poor track records of managing resources across the African continent, is there a**

**message you have for African leaders on how to manage these resources?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: If you look at a country like Rwanda, Paul Kagame after the genocide turned things around. This country does not have many resources, but I think it is leadership. We need to start looking at our leadership as I said invest in our institutions because this is something that will go beyond the lifetime of the leader. We need to start building our institutions, and it comes with investment, with investment in human capital, and in our people and institutions. We need to start building, it should have started yesterday, as we are here with COVID-19, we can start immediately after the pandemic is over but go and invest in our institutions.

Next thing I will also like to point out is that Africa has just signed up to the Continental Free Trade Agreement, there is nothing to prevent West or East Africa trading together, bringing the necessary goods and services and encouraging

the movement of people so that we can promote brain circulation so that we can promote human capital, trade, goods and services across the continent. So, this is something we need to start looking at very seriously.

**PAV: There has been a lot of controversy in recent times about the vaccine and testing that are needed in Africa coming from two French doctors who said Africa should be the centre for some of these testing. Being a scientist and a former leader, do you think Africans should be concerned about participating in trial runs for any potential vaccines?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: Clinical trial is an inevitable step in drug development and vaccine development. Now, do we need to incorporate Africans in clinical trials? Yes, we need to incorporate Africans. We need to do it in the right way, the same way we do it in the United States, Europe, Asia, and other areas. We need more Africans in these clinical trials. The reason why we need more Africans in these clinical trials is that genetics matter. Whenever a drug is developed in the North it is tested with Caucasians, in Asians, unfortunately, we do not see many Africans being part of the clinical trial panel. Genetics matter because whatever dosage is being developed for a Caucasians or Asian person may not be the right dosage.

Whenever a trial is done on the continent it must be done in the right way, with the consent of the person, we do not talk about "guinea pigs" but volunteers, so the person who is participating in the clinical trial must have given his/her consent. Coming back to the issue on whether we should use Africans as "guinea pigs", certainly not. Everything must be done appropriately but we need more Africans in these clinical trials so that the dosage and the drug whenever we are prescribing to African genotype it makes a big difference to his or her



health.

**PAV: Let us talk about leadership from former Presidents like you, former Prime Ministers, across the continent, what role do you think they can play in addressing such a pandemic and generally trying to make sure that Africa stays on the right path to progress?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: I think past leaders have the responsibility of mentoring and this is what I have given myself the task of mentoring girls in science because of my background. We need to educate our girls and to bring them there we need to be a role model for the girl who is growing up in a village in Africa to know that it is possible to reach a certain position through hard work. In the current pandemic, we have the responsibility of advocating, speaking to governments, addressing, and seeing how we can provide best practices. I feel that at this moment in time, we need to be able to know what are the best practices and how do we also speak to the people so that they can adopt best practices so that we can get this pandemic behind us.

Having said this, getting the pandemic behind us is short term,



**Dr Ameenah Gurib believes that any clinical trials for vaccines in Africa must follow standard protocols.**

what we have to ensure is that the conversation and the communication still go on because a second or third wave is not impossible as it is already happening in some countries as we have seen in China, Singapore. We have to make sure that when we address this issue on the continent, the conversation remains alive so that we do not get this issue again and again, and I can assure you that we have not seen the last of the COVID.

We have not seen the last of any pandemic because climate change will be the next pandemic we have to settle.

**PAV: Let us end this interview with an opportunity again for you to make a direct statement to everyday hardworking Africans on safety and survival measures. How can they walk their way around this**

**troubling time and with all the wave of panic across the continent can you also give a positive message on the way forward?**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: I think what we have to do in this incident is to communicate, communicate to the people, encourage governments to do tests, tests and more tests. Hopefully, with the necessary financial measures that are been put in place, we will be able to provide the safety nets for those who are desperately in need for it. It also calls for a time of solidarity and I know that at the level of the African Union, there is an effort to get people to contribute to a fund so that they can then use that to help those people who are in desperate need. Here I have a special thought to those children because I am also working with Save the Children in Africa and I know that they have huge needs as well.

**PAV: Madam President thank you so much for talking to Pan African Visions**

Dr Ameenah Fakim: Thank you for having me. It has been a pleasure and as I said let us work towards getting rid of this COVID virus fast so we can start building ourselves again.

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## Product Sheet

# *Champagne De Watère: Cuvée Premier Cru Brut Rosé de Saignée*



<b>Origin:</b>	Vallée de la Marne, Champagne, France
<b>Composition:</b>	100% Pinot Noir, Méthode Saignée
<b>Tasting Notes:</b>	<p>Deep, bright orangy-pink with faint copper, reflection of a rose. Abundant, light foaming in serving. Very vivid, followed by very fine and sustained ropes of pearls.</p> <p>The nose is complex and energetic, opens up to red fruit in syrup notes, then delivers vegetal undertones. Aromas of red fruit, specially blackberries and raspberries are very expressive.</p> <p>Rich, fruit-forward palate with a lush attack that contrasts with a firmer finish. Upright and vivid, while tactful and fruity. Light dosage allows the wine to unfold its complex aromas. A great length in the mouth.</p> <p>Excellent Rosé for an aperitif and throughout a meal. Try with beef fillet.</p>
<b>Awards:</b>	<p>International Wine Guide Awards (2016) – Great Gold</p> <p>Gilbert &amp; Gaillard (2016) - Silver</p> <p>Catavinum World Wine &amp; Spirits Competition (2020) - Great Gold</p> <p>Gilbert &amp; Gaillard (2020) - Silver</p> <p>Berlin Wine Trophy (2020) - Gold</p>
<b>RRP (Europe):</b>	from 145,00 EUR (75cl), from 23 EUR (20cl)
<b>Distribution:</b>	Ex-Cellar Munich, Germany

# Time to Stop the Bleeding is now: President Adesina says AFDB Ready to Help Africa Fight COVID-19

By Ajong Mbandah L & Prince Kurupati

The novel corona virus is causing havoc all over the world with over a million people infected and thousands of others having succumbed to COVID-19, the disease caused by corona virus. The corona virus is so devastating as its presence is being felt in all continents and countries in the world Africa included.

The increase of COVID-19 positive cases in Africa has prompted several institutions to put to hold their daily routine and seek strategies to help the continent fight the corona virus with the intention to contain it whilst saving as many lives as possible. One such institution that's leading at the forefront in the fight against COVID-19 is the African Development Bank (AFDB).

In a virtual press conference, an apt demonstration of how the corona virus has changed all facets of our daily lives forcing people to interact virtually, the President of AFDB Akinwumi Adesina said that his institution is putting all decks on the board in an effort to ensure that Africa contains the corona virus. On this front, President Adesina said that the main focus at the moment is to stop the bleeding and save lives; on that note, AFDB has implemented a raft of strategies that are going to help the continent overcome COVID-19.

## On financial support

As a financial institution, President Adesina said that the main support that his institution is going to offer at this unprecedented time is financial support. Already, AFDB has rolled out a \$10 billion corona virus response facility to cover the whole of Africa.

"Africa is facing enormous fiscal challenges to respond to the corona virus pandemic effectively. The African Development Bank Group is deploying its full weight of emergency response support to assist Africa at this critical time. We must protect lives. This facility will help African countries to fast track their



*Dr Akinwumi Adesina has led the AFDB in providing a robust response to COVID 19 in Africa.*

efforts to contain the rapid spread of COVID-19," President Adesina.

To ensure that the response facility achieve its intended purposes, President Adesina said that the facility will be structured into three parts, each part being dedicated to a specific sector. \$5.5 billion goes towards sovereign operations that is, countries that are in the AFDB group.

\$3.1 billion is channeled towards sovereign and regional operations for countries under the African Development Fund. AFDB classifies countries in the African Development Fund as low income countries and/or fragile nations. These countries by nature of their profiling are the least able to deal with a devastating pandemic such as the corona virus hence massive support should be aimed at these countries.

Of the \$10 billion corona virus response facility, \$1.35 billion is devoted to non-sovereign operations that is, private sector operations. President Adesina said that the private and informal sector in Africa account for over 75% of business operations in Africa hence there is a need to cushion this sector from

the devastating effects of the corona virus.

In protecting the private sector, President Adesina said that parts of the funds will be aimed at protecting existing portfolios so that they remain in operation during and post COVID-19. Another portion of the funds will be directed towards the SME sector which employs millions of Africans. Another portion of the funds will go towards deferring debt payment for private sector operations while another will go towards trade finance guarantees.

President Adesina said that the \$10 billion corona virus response facility is an addition to the record-breaking \$3 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond, which AFDB launched a couple of weeks back. The \$10 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond is the world's largest US dollar-denominated social bond ever on the international capital market. The \$3 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond is available through the London Stock Exchange's Sustainable Bond Market bourse.

Soon after its entry on the London Stock Exchange, the \$3 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond quickly

attracted interest from central banks, bank treasuries, and asset managers. Several other high-quality Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) investors also showed massive interest including Affirmative Investment Management from the UK, Columbia Threadneedle from the US, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Several pension boards such as those of the United Church of Christ, PineBridge Investments, Praxis Impact Bond Fund and the United Nations Development Programme showed massive interest.

After the launch of the \$3 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond, the International Development Secretary Ms Anne-Marie Trevelyan said, "The International community must work together to successfully tackle the corona virus pandemic. The UK, along with partners like the African Development Bank and London Stock Exchange Group, is supporting the most vulnerable countries to invest in their own health systems and avoid economic hardship."

In playing its part, the London Stock Exchange chief executive officer Mr. Nikhil Rathi said that the bourse will admit on the exchange and waive admission fees for an initial period of three-months all eligible social or sustainability bonds with use of proceeds aligned to mitigating the impact of COVID-19. Mr. Rathi said the bourse is looking to admit and waive fees for social and sustainability bonds dealing in essential services such as healthcare, water and sanitation, supporting employment, or those with a link to the relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition to the \$10 billion corona virus response facility and the \$3 billion Fight COVID-19 Social Bond, AFDB also donated \$2 million emergency assistance to the World Health Organization (WHO) to help African countries contain COVID-19. The donation contributes towards a \$50 million WHO Preparedness and



Response Plan, which other partners including the United Nations system are also supporting. The funding is set to boost surveillance systems, procure and distribute laboratory test kits and reagents, and support coordination mechanisms at national and regional levels. 41 African countries have been selected to be recipients of the WHO Preparedness and Response Plan funding.

#### On global recession

During the press conference, President Adesina took time to respond to questions and one of the questions directed to him was in relation to the impending global recession. President Adesina said that it was almost a guarantee that the world is moving into a global recession owing to the economic impacts of COVID-19. Many workers around the globe are staying at home while companies and industries are operating well below their capacity. This in turn translates to low demand.

President Adesina said that due to low demand which has up to now necessitated economic losses of up to 88 billion, it's almost certain that a global recession is upon us. Unfortunately for Africa, the global recession is going to affect everyone including African countries. Compounding matters for Africa is extremely low demand for Africa's major forex earners that is, minerals, metals, agricultural produce and tourism. In light of this, President Adesina said there is need for AFDB to help the continent and one of the methods that it is going to employ on this front is to ask for debt repayment restructuring on behalf of Africa to financial lenders and institutions. This will be done to allow nations to have some fiscal space to operate in during the impending hard economic times. AFDB itself is going to reprofile and restructure debts both in principle and interest but only for the non-sovereign sector.

#### On improving healthcare facilities

President Adesina said that it's no secret that Africa lags behind when it comes to world class healthcare



*President Adesina says there is need for AFDB to help the continent by asking for debt repayment restructuring on behalf of Africa to financial lenders and institutions.*

facilities. However, even at this difficult time, the "eye that cries must see at the same time," even in the midst of this difficult time, President Adesina called on Africa to find opportunities in the crisis. The corona virus pandemic has demonstrated to all of Africa that something needs to be done in relation to improving healthcare facilities and AFDB in its own right is going to employ strategies to change this.

After the corona virus pandemic is contained, President Adesina said, "Never again shall we have Africa exposed without quality healthcare infrastructure." To ensure that this comes to life, AFDB will focus on constructing diagnostic centers, primary, secondary, and tertiary infrastructure. AFDB President went on to say that it is quite disappointing to see Africa a continent of 1.3 billion people having just 375 pharmaceutical companies while China with a population of 1.4 billion has close to 7000 pharmaceutical companies and India with a population of 1.4 billion has over 10 500 pharmaceutical companies. He said AFDB seeks to correct this by encouraging and funding more pharmaceutical companies to open shop on the continent. In addition, President Adesina said AFDB will seek to support healthcare insurance for all in Africa.

#### On guarding against misappropriation and mismanagement of funds

Reports of funds misappropriation and mismanagement are not new to Africa. As such, President Adesina was asked about the measures that AFDB will employ to ensure that the funds are used to their intended purposes after being disbursed to various countries. In his response, he said that AFDB already has existing monitoring systems in place and it is going to use these to ensure funds are used for their intended purposes.

However, seeing that the corona virus pandemic is proportionally affecting everyone, President Adesina said that those tasked with administering the funds have shown a willingness and determination to ensure that this pandemic is contained in the shortest period of time hence individual, institution or organization can jeopardize that fight by misappropriating the funds.

#### On social distancing

President Adesina said that he welcomes the concept of social distancing as it has proven to be effective even when it was used back then during the Influenza pandemic of 1918. He said that he even advised all AFDB staff to work from home as a form of social distancing four weeks ago when it was apparent that the pandemic was soon to ravage the

African continent.

In as much as he commended social distancing, he called on Africa to come up with more context specific measures that will help in the fight against COVID-19. President Adesina said that 55% of African urbanites live in slums sometimes with over 10 people living in one house. This makes it possible for social distancing to have any effect if the pandemic finds its way to these settlements. As such, to prevent a 'silent genocide' in urban areas, Africa must come up with context specific measures which work for Africa.

President Adesina's sentiments are very true as practicing social distancing when living in Africa's high density suburbs is virtually impossible thereby making such areas high risk areas when it comes to transmission. Without context specific measures in place, the future is certainly scary if the corona virus continues spreading.

The sentiments expressed by President Adesina are in line with those expressed by the interim leader of the main opposition party in South Africa John Steenhuisen who said the measures to combat corona virus being implemented by Africa are a carbon copy of those being implemented in the East and West but without factoring in the African context. Steenhuisen was speaking in relation to lockdown extension implemented in South Africa which according to him will create an "economic disaster" in the near future.

Steenhuisen said lockdown extension was implemented "as if we face a binary choice between health concerns and economic concerns...it is a great mistake to think in terms of lives versus livelihoods. This is a false dilemma. Rather, the difficult trade-offs to be made are between lives lost or damaged by the drastic measures to contain its spread...the resulting economic fallout now means that it is not only lives which are threatened by the virus, but livelihoods by our economic and financial collapse as a result of further lockdown restrictions."



## Energy & Natural Resource Security, Inc.

From the Desk of Keith T. Paige,  
Chief Technology Officer  
Energy & Natural Resource Security, Inc.  
13 April 2020 @ 0830 U.S. Eastern Time

*To the Owners, Operators, Investors, and Insurers of Critical Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resource Assets:*

### **STAY VIGILANT re: CYBERSECURITY REQUIREMENTS**

As Energy and Natural Resource asset stakeholders are entering into a critical period in reviewing the cybersecurity posture of their facilities, ENRS recommends immediate attention to assessing security for Industrial Control Systems (ICS). Traditionally, ICS were isolated systems to control and manage industrial assets, machinery and systems. However, that is changing as we enter the age of Fourth Industrial Revolution or the Industry 4.0 era. The convergence of Operational Technology (OT) and Information Technology (IT) impacts the security of ICS and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems. As the air gap is removed, these systems are exposed to an expanding threat landscape and are targets for hackers involved in terrorism, cyber warfare, and espionage. Vulnerabilities that come embedded into the ICS components have much more exposure to known and unknown cyber threats.

As detailed in Kaspersky's "Threat landscape of industrial automation systems H2 2018", **20% of vulnerable ICS devices are being impacted by critical security issues. Over half of the 415 vulnerabilities found in industrial control systems (ICS) were assigned CVSS v.3.0 base scores over 7, which are designated to security issues that are considered high or critical risk levels.** This fact demands that Energy and Natural Resource asset stakeholders remain keenly vigilant of their IT/OP environments.

The **ENRS** team is standing by to support your cybersecurity needs during this time of unprecedented uncertainty. Our mission is to ensure Energy and Natural Resource asset owners, operators, investors, and insurers achieve Resiliency and maintain Continuity of Ops by mitigating Risk throughout their asset's operational life cycle via the implementation of "best-in-class" physical, cyber, and technical security solutions. **ENRS** will assure the safety and security of your *Critical Energy Infrastructure and Natural Resource Assets*, giving you the decision-space required to plan and execute your plan for financial recovery during this time of extreme duress.

Ever Vigilant,

*Keith T. Paige*

Keith T. Paige



# A Crippling Toll On East African Economies From Covid-19.

**The Economy of the East African Community (EAC) countries is suffering a heavy blow due to the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) especially the lockdown imposed by governments, analysts predict.**

By MOHAMMED M.MUPENDA

According to Mr. Teddy Kaberuka, Economic Analyst and Researcher, the effects of COVID-19 and associated measures will negatively affect the EAC economy at different levels.

Most EAC countries have imposed a total lockdown and there are no movements of people from one country to another. Regional and international flights have been halted and road transport temporarily banned except those ferrying essential goods.

"The negative effects are multiple and at different levels. Some effects are short term others may be of long term," Mr. Kaberuka Told Pan African Visions in a phone interview.

He said that in EAC, exporters are losing revenues from horticultural products mainly flowers due to the closure for transporting non-essential items.

He said, for instance, the closure of borders would affect tourism and hospitality that are considered to be big earners of revenues for regional countries, citing an example of Rwanda.

Travel outside the country and between provinces of Rwanda has been restricted and as a result incomes have been reduced to substantial number of people and companies, he said.

He added that trade has been interrupted and expects figures that will point to a lower rate of growth.

He referred to the recent revision of Rwanda's economy growth at 5 per cent against 8 per cent that was predicted earlier by the Central Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Loss of jobs is also likely and some workers in hotels, restaurants and other SMEs have been suspended



*COVID 19 has taken a toll on economic projections of many East African countries.*

while schools are also off and some of such jobs may not be recovered even after the pandemic is contained, he predicted.

The East Africa business Council (EABC) has said in its report early this week that the coronavirus outbreak would affect the tourism industry which contributed an average of 18.8% to EAC total exports in 2017.

The report says that the EAC Trade and Investment Report of 2018 indicates that Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) into East Africa decreased by 15.9 percent to USD 5.7 billion in 2018 from US\$ 6.8 billion in 2017. Overall, FDI inflows to the EAC were concentrated in the manufacturing, construction, and services sectors.

FDI into manufacturing and construction amounted to US\$ 2.1 billion and US\$ 1.0 billion in 2018 respectively. China and India

continued to be the major sources of FDI into the EAC with inflows amounting to US\$ 1.1 billion and US\$ 281.02 million, respectively.

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to impact the EAC construction and infrastructure projects given their connection to China in terms of either investment or contractors.

With the disruption of imports following the outbreak of COVID-19, EAC also stands to be affected by shortages of raw materials, capital goods and consumer goods which were originally imported from China.

EAC Trade and Investment Report 2018, indicates that total EAC imports grew by 19.2 percent to USD 38.3 billion in 2018 from US\$ 32.2 billion in 2017, according to EABC.

"Even before the lockdown in different countries, the EAC economy was affected by the COVID-19 right at the beginning, remember so many

aviation companies have closed their businesses like Rwandair, Kenya Airways there is no more commercial flight and there was a total loss,"

He added that tourism would also be the most hit sector as EAC countries expected many tourists as well as meetings and conferences including international ones.

"All the East African Countries have lost those opportunities to get money in their economy," he stressed.

He revealed that the region was experiencing a humanitarian crisis which starts from health to economy as millions of people are locked up in their homes without getting out to engage in different economic activities.

The East African economy was growing at 4.8percent annually but is predicted to go down.

He observed that the fact that governments opted for budget

deviation that would be used to implement their respective developmental projects and is being used in handling the crisis.

"Governments are spending a lot to control the disease while the private sector is not performing well and as a result, governments will have shortage of cash and internal revenues," noted the analyst.

### Governments priority

He said that the government should focus on controlling the spread of the pandemic by spending all they can afford to control the pandemic.

"If it continues spreading it will be humanitarian and a disaster. So, controlling it means investing a lot in testing, in health services," he noted.

Once the pandemic is eliminated, he said strategic measures should be put in place to support private sector to recover their full potential.

"People should think how to get recovery funds, or emergency funds for Covid-19, that fund will help Government to subsidize enterprises to help them not close their jobs, pay their employees, to recover from financial loss occurred during the



Hotels in Rwanda are the most affected among tourism industry.

lockdown," he said noting that one of mechanisms would be issuing bonds by member countries.

"The other strategy is for a country to take their reserves and finance that recovery process," he added, also raising the worries of corruption as perceived in the EAC countries.

He said that there are corruption cases in normal circumstances found

in projects implementation and people wonder if such misconduct will not be seen in resurrecting post COVID-19 economy.

"That is a threat but in general the idea is to have an emergency fund to finance private sector, social activities that the economy can recover slowly," he said.

"We are facing a health crisis

and it would be imperative actually for the EAC countries to invest in health sectors, in health facilities, in hospitals, and in training health practitioners and researchers to be ready to confront any pandemic that can come in the future," he urged also noting that Africa should not always wait for support from overseas.

## Kagame calms citizens as Rwanda fights to contain Covid-19

By Maniraguha Ferdinand

On 21st March 2020 when Rwanda started total lockdown to contain coronavirus, Murorunkwere Zabibu, a mother of two thought that her family's life was going to be a misery.

As resident of Ngoma district, Eastern Rwanda, Murorunkwere daily lives depended on helping local builders, and she would use the money she was paid to buy food for her family.

She is one of early beneficiaries of country's social protective plan, of distributing food to needy families during lockdown.

Food distribution program was launched in Kigali two days after implementing lockdown, and government counts at least 20 000 households to be catered for in the capital.



President Kagame says his government will do everything to provide needed help to Rwandans in the COVID 19 fight.

Murorunkwere told Pan African Visions that her family's lives were in danger, should government have not intervened.

"I didn't know what I was going to do after being confined at home. I

wondered what to feed my children and I could not find solution. I am glad that they have given me food", she said.

Rwanda registered its first coronavirus case on 14 March 2020.

As of 14th April, there were 127 confirmed cases, 42 of them recovered.

Government officials in Rwanda have agreed to donate their April salaries to be used in ongoing social protection initiatives. Ministry of Finance revealed, such initiative will yield 2.5 billion Rwandan Francs (about USD 2.6 million).

### Serving other countries in testing Covid-19

Apart from lockdown , Rwandans were urged to follow medical advices including social distancing, hygiene among others.

However, Rwanda also turned towards donors to get enough fund to invest heavily in its health system, to



make sure it will fight Covid-19.

Early April, International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved \$109.4 million to be drawn under the Rapid Credit Facility (RCF). During the same week, World Bank approved \$14.25 million in immediate funding to support Rwanda's response to the global coronavirus pandemic. According to Ministry of finance, that money will be directed to Rwanda COVID-19 Emergency Response project.

Dr Nsanzimana Sabin, director general of Rwanda Biomedical Center recently told national television that they are making a lot of efforts to build good facilities that will be effective in combatting Covid-19.

Rwanda's laboratory that tests Covid-19, has capacity of processing above 800 cases a day.

Nsanzimana promised that new equipment are being added to expand their lab, so that Rwanda's laboratory be among the best in Africa.

Recently, Central African Republic thanked Rwanda for helping in testing some of their coronavirus cases. Dr Nsanzimana revealed that they are other regional countries which they

are helping, though he didn't mention them.

On 12th April, President Paul Kagame visited COVID19 Command Post located in Kigali, to motivate over 400 professionals who coordinate activities aimed at ending the spread of COVID19.

Kagame admitted the problems his country is facing due to the lockdown, however promised things will come to normal.

"For now, the life of the country has to be on hold but there is hope that things will return to normal. And that hope coming true is founded on you and how you do your work", Kagame said.

"As government, we will keep doing everything we can to support you, so Rwandans can return to their normal lives", he ensured.

To further raise awareness about Covid-19, Rwanda police introduced drones that hover over neighborhoods in Kigali, with loudspeakers disseminating information about Covid-19.

Though government is praised for fighting Covid-19, business people



decry loss as some services were put on hold.

Among affected business, hospitality sector comes at the front. Innocent Tuyishime, sales and marketing manager at Hilltop Hotel in Kigali told PAV that they are in a big loss after government postpones some international meeting that were to happen in March and April.

He foresees the loss of long term for hotels, because even after Covid-19 is contained, their activities will wait for long as they depend on international visitors.

"We are counting a long term loss.

There are some clients who had booked for September's meetings but they have notified us that things may change", Tuyishime said.

East African Community Secretariat has urged its Partner States to immediately commence developing National Economic Recovery Plans to prevent other catastrophe after Covid-19.

Rwanda is in a lockdown that is set to end by 19th April 2020, however that period could be extended looking on number of cases of Covid-19.

## Furor Over Chinese Discrimination and Stigmatization of Africa

There is a possible backlash in our home countries African Ambassadors warn

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The Group of African Ambassadors in Beijing has demanded the immediate cessation of forceful testing, quarantine, and other human rights treatment meted out to Africans in Guangdong province, China. The incidents, documented in videos, and eyewitness accounts that circulated widely, have been condemned by some African diplomats as evidence of "racial discrimination" and "unfair" treatment.

"... African Group of Ambassadors observes with consternation the discrimination and stigmatization of Africans

whereby they are made to forcefully, and in a very crude manner to undergo epidemic investigation and Nucleic Acid Test, fourteen (14)

days quarantine even if they had not travelled outside their jurisdictions, not come into contact with infected persons, not had close contact or



Chinese Leader Xi Jinping with African leaders, the stigmatization of Africans has received global condemnation.

showing any symptoms of the COVID-19," the letter read in part.

The video clips showed a number of evicted Africans sleeping under a bridge in the Chinese city, of Guangzhou, an African shoved against a wall by a policeman, another African locked into his home and told to call the government if he wants water, and a fast-food restaurant with a laminated notice reading: "Black people are not allowed to enter."

"Kenyans in China: Rescue Us from Hell," said a huge front-page headline in The Nation, one of Kenya's biggest daily newspapers, looking at the plight of Africans leaving in China.

Several Africans countries including South Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana has called on the authorities in China to address the issue of Africans in the southern city of Guangzhou being harassed and mistreated.

The Group in a letter dated April 9, 2020, said there is a possible backlash in their home countries of this obvious human rights violation, while demanding that Africans are treated the same as Chinese and other nationals in the fight against COVID-19.

In recent days Africans in Guangzhou has reported been ejected from their apartment by their landlords, being tested for coronavirus several times without being given results and being shunned and discriminated against in public. Such complaints have been made on local and social media, France24 reported.

Amongst the cases highlighted by the Group of African Ambassadors was the eviction of amongst others, Togolese, Nigerians, and Beninois from their hotels in the middle of the night only because they were Africans.

A group of African students studying in Sun-Yat Sen University in Guangzhou were made to undergo the Nucleic Acid Test, in spite of the fact that they had no travel history within the stated period.

The ambassadors also disproved the selective testing of African students while their non-African colleagues are left out. Some African men married to Chinese ladies were demanded to take the COVID-19 test and their Chinese families left out. In some cases the men were pulled

out of their families and quarantined in hotels alone.

“From the foregoing, the impression is being created as though the spread of the virus is caused by Africans contrary to the fact that, in China and indeed globally,” the Ambassadors noted. “Africans are the least exposed to COVID-19 or is there any other reason for which Africans are being targeted other than

COVID- 19 that we are unaware of? The Ambassadors questioned.

Chinese authorities, after quelling the original COVID-19 outbreak in the city of Wuhan, have been focusing on cases suspected of being imported by travelers from abroad. In the city of Guangzhou, a major trading hub with a large African community, Chinese media said five Nigerians broke a mandatory quarantine and visited restaurants and other public places, forcing nearly 2,000 people to be tested for the virus or placed under quarantine. The reports led to widespread public anger and a perception that African migrants were a threat.

China has reported 983 imported cases of the virus so far, but it has acknowledged that about 90 percent of the cases are Chinese citizens returning from abroad.

The letter was sent to State Council Wang Yi, the Chinese government’s top diplomat, copying the chair of the African Union, and all African foreign Ministers.

Disappointments all round



Africans were victims of harassment in China.

The Ambassadors’ note highlighted a number of reported incidents, including that Africans were being ejected from hotels in the middle of the night, the seizure of passports, and threats of visa revocation, arrest or deportation.

Ghana’s foreign Minister of Affairs Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey said she had summoned the Chinese Ambassador to express her disappointment and demand action.

The foreign Minister of Kenya has also “officially expressed concern,” adding that the government is working with Chinese authorities to address the matter.

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco) has lambasted the allegations of discrimination, stigmatization, and other inhumane treatments against Africans in China.

“Reports of these alleged actions are inconsistent with the excellent relations that exist between China and Africa, dating back to China’s support during the decolonization struggle in Africa, and now manifesting in an extensive Africa-China partnership. This collaborative, mutual relationship also finds concrete expression in the support that China is providing to Africa in the ongoing fight against the Covid-19 pandemic,” said Dirco in a statement.

FF national spokesperson Delisile Ngwenya described the action as “inhumane.” “The racist motivated evictions of African nationals in China have forced many to live under bridges, shops, and restaurants; owners turn Africans away from buying food from them. We condemn

in the strongest possible terms the abuse and mistreatment of Africans living and working in China...” Ngwenya said.

Chinese authorities respond

The Guangdong authorities attach great importance to some African countries’ concerns and are working promptly to improve their working method,” Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said in a statement, refuting to the province in which Guangzhou is located.

“African friends can count on getting fair, just, cordial, and friendly reception in China,” adding that the foreign ministry will stay in close communication with Guangdong authorities to address the “African side’s reasonable and legitimate appeals.”

The Chinese Embassy in Zimbabwe has dismissed the accusation that Africans were being deliberately targeted. “It is harmful to sensationalize isolated incidents,” it said in a tweeted statement. “China treats all individuals in the country, Chinese, and foreign alike, as equals.”

The coronavirus was first discovered in the Chinese city, of Wuhan in late December 2019. The virus has since spread to over 180 countries globally. More than 14,497 confirmed cases have been recorded in Africa, with more than 788 persons who have died due to the virus. Across the world, more than 1,872,549 persons have contracted the virus with 116,030 having died from it. More than 434,778 persons have equally recovered having contracted the coronavirus.



Chinese nationals Yu Ling, Deng Hailan, Ou Qiang, and Chang Yueping, were recently deported from Kenya for assaulting a Kenyan employee at a Restaurant in Nairobi.



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# Coronavirus: Debunking the myths, Fake News on COVID-19

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The world is in the grip of a global pandemic. It is a scary time for everyone but one thing that certainly will not help governments fight COVID-19 is panic caused by fake news and misinformation. It is natural to want to stay up-to-date and do the best you can to protect your health and that of your loved ones but remember, social media is not a news site and you cannot believe everything you read on a Twitter thread. From the usefulness of face masks to the longevity of the disease, read on for the truth behind some of the most prominent coronavirus myths.

There are now over 21,105 confirmed cases of the coronavirus across the continent as a host of African countries have taken drastic measures to limit or stop the spread of the virus.

## Cure for the coronavirus

At the moment there is no cure for the coronavirus. However, tests are ongoing in many countries to come out with a vaccine. According to the World Health Organization, there is no cure for coronavirus at the moment, sadly.

This has not stopped many to say they have a cure for the coronavirus. Fenel tea, pepe soup and the tropical plant known as "Congo bololo" have all been named as natural remedies for the coronavirus, according to BBC News Africa. No evidence has been put forward on whether they work.

False. There have many posts from high profile individuals on social media stating that they are taking measures such as gargling bleach and saltwater, taking steroids and using essential oils to protect them from the virus. Writing on hopkinsmedicine.org, Lisa Maragakis, senior director of infection prevention at Johns Hopkins University, states that not only do none of these methods work, in some cases, but they are also actively dangerous. The only way to prevent the spread of infection is



*I conic Actor Idriss Elba tested positive and sent out a public message to raise awareness.*

to wash your hands frequently and thoroughly, avoid touching your face and to avoid coming into contact with people who are sneezing and coughing. Use the bleach to clean your bathroom instead.

## Young people aren't at risk and don't need to self-isolate

It's easy to see where the confusion has come here as the semantics around the disease haven't always been easy to follow. It is estimated that the fatality rate of COVID-19 is around 1%, with most of those dying from the disease is over 70 or with pre-existing respiratory conditions. However, the virus has killed people as young as 30 and, while most young people only suffer

mild symptoms, the classification system used to categories the severity of a coronavirus case means mild symptoms can include anything up to pneumonia.

This said it is also possible that a fit or young person may catch the disease and feel only as if they have a slight cold – but you are still highly infectious regardless of how much you suffer. If you ignore the advice given by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and government – self-isolate for 14 days if you show even the smallest COVID-19 symptom – you risk passing the disease on to people far more vulnerable to the tragic effects of the virus.

Warm weather will kill coronavirus  
We have our friend from across the

pond, President Trump, to thank for this particular rumour. At two rallies this month he stated that "the heat generally speaking kills this kind of virus" and promised that it would be gone by April when the weather warms up. This notion is based on the belief that, due to its flu-like symptoms, COVID-19 will behave in the same way as the seasonal flu we're used to. However, according to the WHO, we simply do not know enough to assume this, while cases of the disease spreading in hot countries suggest it may be harder than many hope, the gentleman Journal reported.

## Coronavirus is man-made

As the coronavirus outbreak turned into a full-fledged public health crisis, a fringe theory about the virus' origins started to take hold on the internet: that the virus did not come from nature, but had instead been created in a lab. The rumours, which originated from unverified social media accounts and were not supported by any credible evidence, got more elaborate as time went on.

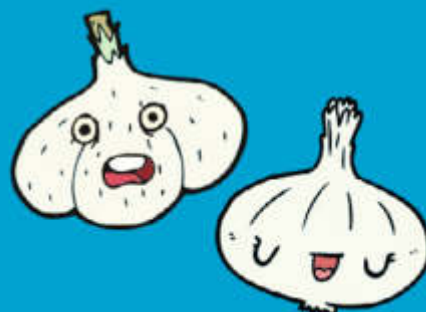
One version popularized outside China suggested that a Chinese lab had been secretly working on a bioweapon that got leaked. Another that gained traction among nationalistic parts

Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new coronavirus (2019-nCoV)



#2019nCoV

Can eating garlic help prevent infection with the new coronavirus?



Message from WHO cautioning people on the eating of garlic as cure to coronavirus.

of the Chinese social media sphere suggested that the virus originated in the US - and that many Americans thought to have died of the flu this season were killed by COVID-19.

Scientists in both China and the West have widely dismissed these theories, though that has not stopped them from spreading. Experts are still trying to figure out the exact source of the virus, but research indicates that it likely originated in bats and was transmitted to an intermediate host before jumping to people - just like its cousin that caused the 2003 SARS epidemic.

#### People who get the coronavirus will die

Officials estimate the death rate for the virus to be around 3% to 4%



World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus gestures during a press briefing on evolution of new coronavirus epidemic on January 29, 2020 in Geneva. Photo AFP.

globally, based on the information they have, though they expect that number to fall. People who get coronavirus will typically get sick with a mild to moderate upper respiratory

tract illness, similar to a common cold. Symptoms include a runny nose, cough, sore throat, headache and a fever that can last for a couple of days. Most of the time, symptoms will go

away on their own.

The disease can be fatal but those cases are rarer. For those with a weakened immune system, the elderly and the very young, there's a chance the virus could cause a lower, and much more serious, respiratory tracts illness like pneumonia or bronchitis.

Given that thousands of people have been infected and authorities are still struggling to contain the virus, though, even a 3% to 4% mortality rate is worrisome.

To get apt information on the coronavirus, it is recommended that the population should always consult the World Health Organization's website and some trusted news sources so they do not believe information which is not accurate.

## Will Mozambicans LNG projects survive between Covid-19 and extremist attacks? The regulator answers

By Jorge dos Santos\*

Mozambique has one of the largest gas reserves in Africa, with a total of 170 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas of natural gas reserves in situ. Although it was only discovered in 2010, major projects are already underway and production and export should start in 2022. Most of the gas will be exported, mainly to Asia, in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The production, processing and export of the gas will be done by major international corporations such as Total, ExxonMobil, ENI, Rosneft and others with sufficient technical and financial capacity. Billions of dollars are already being invested in wells, pipelines and processing and transportation facilities. This is an investment on an unprecedented scale in Mozambique in which the country expects to raise about \$90bn in taxes and profits, transforming the state budget. Whatever, these projects may be constrained by the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing extremist armed attacks in the gas project region. Read here the interview with the President of the Oil and Gas regulator in Mozambique, Carlos Zacarias, about the challenges



President of the Oil and Gas regulator in Mozambique, Carlos Zacarias.

and prospects for the country.

#### What is the current situation of the country in terms of reserves?

In February we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the announcement of the discovery of natural gas that changed Mozambique. In fact, the systematic research of hydrocarbons

in the national territory began in the middle of the 50's of the last century, with satisfactory results that led to the discovery of the Pande, Temane and Búzi fields in the Mozambique Basin. After intense and thorough research work, seismic data surveys and numerous drillings of research wells, marked by advances and setbacks, in a long and epic journey,

the Rovuma Basin proved to have a very high potential for hydrocarbons. Meanwhile, it was on February 18, 2010, as a result of the first of several scheduled boreholes, within the scope of the second Public Tender for the Concession of Areas for hydrocarbon exploration and production, that Anadarko Mozambique Area 1 (then operator of Area 1 offshore





*Mozambique is positioning itself as a major player in the African energy sector.*

the Rovuma Basin) announced the discovery of natural gas from the Windjammer field. This discovery (through the Windjammer 2 borehole) was the first of many to be made in Areas 1 and 4 of the Rovuma Basin and later considered to be the largest natural gas discovery in the last 20 years, which made it possible to prove a total of 170 TCF's of natural gas reserves in situ in the areas in question. The scientific, economic and historical dimension of this event put Mozambique on the route of opportunities and development of an oil industry for the benefit of society.

### **What are the ongoing projects and how important are they to the country?**

To monetize the large gas reserves, the Government approved the implementation of three large LNG production projects, namely South Coral FLNG, Dolphin/Atum and Rovuma LNG, with investments in the order of US \$50BN and revenues for the Mozambican State above US \$90bn. These investments will enable the creation of more than 10,000 jobs and numerous opportunities for small and medium enterprises in the supply of goods and services

throughout the value chain (power generation, fertilizer production, methanol, liquid fuels), which will contribute to transform the country, placing Mozambique as one of the world's major producers of natural gas and one of the largest suppliers of LNG. The Rovuma basin natural gas project places Mozambique in the position of being the largest producer and exporter of natural gas in Africa.

### **The gas was supposed to be already being exploited in Mozambique, but not so far.**

### **What concrete steps are being taken to achieve this goal in the coming years?**

ENI and Area 4 partners have already announced the launch of the hull of the floating liquefied natural gas (FLNG) treatment and liquefaction plant in Geoje, South Korea. The platform is part of the Coral Sul project in the Rovuma basin that will produce 450 billion cubic meters of gas from the Coral reservoir on the coast of Mozambique. The launch marks the project's progress, which is over 60% in execution, within the timeframe set for the start of production. With a gas liquefaction capacity of 3.4 million tons per year,

Coral Sul FLNG will be the first floating liquefied natural gas plant to be installed in deep water, at a depth of approximately 2,000 meters, and the first FLNG developed from scratch to operate on the African continent. We believe that at this rate we will actually have, by 2022, the production, liquefaction and export of the first shipment of LNG from Coral FLNG Project and Mozambique and, as a consequence, the expected transformations in job creation, local business development.

The example now given is of a platform being set up outside Mozambique, which shows that, in principle, Mozambican companies are not benefiting from the projects at this phase. What is happening in relation to national companies?

The multinationals that are implementing the LNG project in Area 1 of the Rovuma basin have already spent about US \$500m on expenses related to the provision of services and the purchase of goods from Mozambican companies. This amount is part of the US \$2.5bn agreed between the Government and the concessionaires led by the French oil company Total, as a reserve for expenses with national companies that provide services or trade goods for the Area 1 project. I can guarantee that there is an increasing number of Mozambican companies interested in participating in hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation projects in the country. We have a database created, where 1400 companies have already been registered, of which 427 are registered in Mozambique and 307 are owned by Mozambicans, which is encouraging in this effort to boost the national economy. The Mozambique

LNG project, led by Total, currently employs around 7,000 Mozambicans, 50% of whom are residents of the areas adjacent to the site where the project is being carried out and the remainder from other regions of Cabo Delgado province. We believe that the development of policies and regulations for local content will have a considerable impact on national enterprises. Legislation already exists to regulate and define procedures for the provision of goods and services to multinational companies. As I said we are also implementing a mandatory registration and reporting system for local content implementation that brings more assertive and improved data regarding the registration of companies in the country. In the system, there is discrimination between companies, those based in Cabo Delgado to allow also their development; companies registered in Mozambique, which is different from Mozambican companies; and Mozambican owned companies that in the jargon of the sector are called «indigenous», i.e. 100% Mozambican owned. We believe in the measure as an indicator that will allow us to monitor and bring some more assertive interventions to improve what is the number of companies that may be not only registered, but also qualified and already provide and respect the requirements demanded by the industry.

### **What about the other projects? Also what has been the employment situation of the Mozambican labour force?**

As for the Coral Sul Project 430 workers are now employed and for the Rovuma LNG Project, whose implementation has not yet really started, there are nevertheless activities on the ground. There was also an initial investment decision to allow some activities to be implemented. The Rovuma LNG Project, led by MRV, a consortium formed by Exxonmobil and ENI, has around 170 workers, but in the



construction phase it will have more or less the same universe as the Tuna Dolphin, Mozambique LNG project, which is around five thousand and its combination can generate 10,000 jobs.

**And how will Mozambicans, in addition to taxes and profits to be taxed, will benefit from Gas?**

Mozambique will, in the next three years, implement the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) project, commonly known as cooking gas, with an estimated annual volume of 20 thousand tons, equivalent to around 70 per cent of the domestic market needs. Projects are also being implemented to evaluate possible oil resources which, still in the current year, will probably lead to the opening of production holes and possibly the discovery of more resources. At the moment, we are drilling in the Búzi Basin, Sofala province, which started this week, and we expect that within 45 days it will be finished and we will see if the results are satisfactory in terms of confirmation of what the existing reserves are. Others projects include the selection of Yara to develop fertilizers and 30-50 megawatts (MW) of power while Shell Mozambique will produce diesel and 50-80 MW of power. GL Energy

Africa will produce 250 MW from gas resources. All these projects in basin of domestic gas.

The data are encouraging, but the world is facing the Covid-19 pandemic which is even lowering the price of oil on the international market. How to survive that? ExxonMobil, for example, has postponed the FID of its US \$30bn budgeted project due to the negative impact of the new coronavirus that is damaging the preparations, coupled with the depression of the natural gas market that makes investors apprehensive.

The drop in prices and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic puts companies in the energy sector on alert, because these are sensitive situations. As a regulator, I hope that this drop in oil prices will not be for long and will not have a negative impact on investment. There are commitments made by investors, but there are also developments that are beyond the control of market players.

**What about the armed attacks by Cabo Delgado?**

We are the regulator of a country where there is a government and a people. Of course, this is a matter of concern to everyone, but I wouldn't



*The drop in prices and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic puts companies in the energy sector on alert says Carlos Zacarias.*

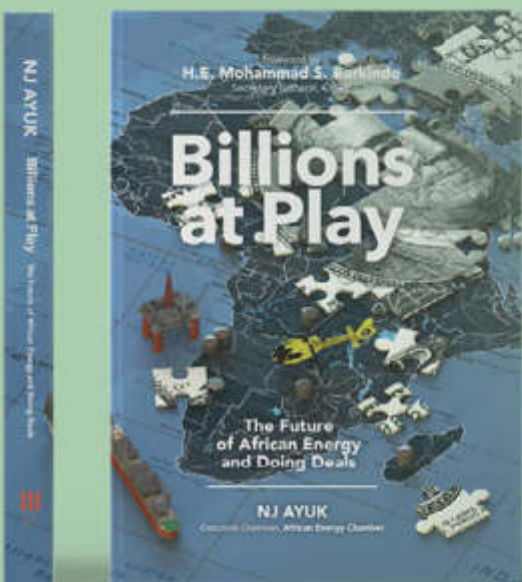
dwel on it because it is a defence matter. In any case, the Government and competent authorities are making efforts to resolve the problem as quickly as possible. It is the wish of all of us that this situation should be brought under control as soon as possible.

**And what are the other challenges for the regulator?**

We have several challenges, from technical to human. But the main challenge is to ensure the implementation of projects according to schedule and budget. We don't want to go through a situation where a certain project foresees a total budget of US \$5M, for example, but

due to several factors it increases to US \$20M. Therefore, at the end of the day, we all end up losing out. We also have the challenge of empowering the human resources assigned to the institution. With about 80 employees, mostly young, it is necessary to train people, framing them properly, enabling the institution to be a regulator with the necessary competence. We also have the great challenge of making these projects bring an added value to the country, in terms of training, employment, involvement of national companies in the supply of services and goods.

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# African Development Bank Group (AfDB): Why Adesina Deserves a Second Term

*During his tenure, the bank has seen its fortunes rise on several fronts, including the largest general capital increase in its history with a capital base of \$208 billion dollars*

By Lewis Chukwuma\*



issued after the meeting.

The ECOWAS summit included a progress report on the region's economic performance. It noted the role of the African Development Bank in the continent's transformation and called for greater cooperation in order to fund projects in West Africa.

"The Authority takes note of the region's improved economic performance, with ECOWAS real GDP growing by 3.3% in 2019 against 3.0% in 2018, in a context characterised by a decline in inflationary pressures and sound public finances," the regional body further said in a statement.

More, the Authority commended efforts made on currency and monetary policy convergence in ECOWAS and laid out plans to advance the movement. These efforts are a key part of the regional integration agenda championed by the African Development Bank, as exemplified by the African Continental Free Trade Area, which aims to become the world's largest free trade zone.

Meanwhile, as COVID-19, the viral global pandemic sweeps the globe, Sub-Saharan Africa region is no exemption to the economic shock. It's worth noting that in its analysis, Renaissance Capital revised down the growth forecast for Sub-Saharan Africa from 3.5 percent to 1.3percent.

A proactive AfDB Group, under Adesina's adroit leadership has also risen to the challenge and has announced a \$10 billion facility support for African countries. In no small way, this has helped scale up a \$3 billion COVID-19 social bond on the London Stock Exchange to help Africa deal with the economic and financial fallouts of the pandemic. Industry observers have commended AfDB president, Adesina, who under his leadership has made this support

*The AfDB has seen its fortunes rise on several fronts, including the largest general capital increase in its history under Adesina.*

The African Development Bank Group (AfDB) is Africa's premier development finance institution. It comprises three distinct entities: the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Development Fund (ADF) and the Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF). On the ground in 37 African countries with an external office in Japan, the AfDB contributes to the economic development and the social progress of its 54 regional member states.

Currently, at the helm of this continental behemoth's affairs is Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, renowned development economist and a former minister of agriculture in Nigeria and is the eighth elected President of the African Development Bank Group.

He was elected for his first term as president of the development finance institution on May 28, 2015,

by the Bank's Board of Governors at its Annual Meetings in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The first Nigerian to occupy that position, he has announced his intentions to pursue a second term in office at the bank's annual meeting in Equatorial Guinea.

Significantly, his proposed candidacy for second tenure as AfDB president has drawn the firm endorsements of President Muhammadu Buhari, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Perhaps, this may not be surprising because Adesina has demonstrated with his life's trajectory that development economics fundamentally addresses transformation of the human condition for good.

While the ECOWAS decision backing Adesina's second tenure was

announced at the end of the 56th ordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, held recently in Abuja, Nigeria, the Executive Council of AU proclaimed its support during the 36th Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council, held during the AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 6-7 February 2020. The African Union Executive Council comprises 55 ministers of foreign affairs representing the member states of the African Union.

According to the ECOWAS, "In recognition of the sterling performance of Dr. Akinwumi Adesina during his first term of office as President of the African Development Bank, the Authority endorses his candidacy for a second term as the President of the bank," ECOWAS said in a communique



a reality.

Adesina has served in a number of high-profile positions internationally, including with the Rockefeller Foundation, and was Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development from 2011 to 2015, a career stint that was widely praised for his reforms in the agricultural sector. The former minister brought the same drive to the Bank, making agriculture one of the organization's priority areas. In 2017, he was awarded the World Food Prize.

The World Food Prize Foundation lauded Adesina's qualitative leadership and his visionary roles over the past two decades in promoting Agriculture with the Rockefeller Foundation and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

During his tenure, the bank has seen its fortunes rise on several fronts, including the largest general capital increase in its history with a capital base of \$208 billion dollars. In the 2018, Aid Transparency Index Report, released by 'Publish What You Fund', the African Development Bank was ranked 4th among 45 development organisations around the world.

In Johannesburg in 2018, the bank launched the Africa Investment Forum, a fully transactional platform, to attract investment into Africa, with participation from private sector investors, pension and sovereign wealth funds, Heads of State and government officials to discuss specific investment deals. The Africa Investment Forum was an outstanding success by all measures.

The forum delivered an impressive US\$38.7 billion in investment interests, all done in less than 72 hours!

However, an apparently contrived crisis is stewing at the Bank. The AfDB president's unopposed second term nomination doesn't appear to sit well with some non-African shareholders, one of which was strongly opposed during his first term election. Recently, there had been some strong Board resistance by a number of non-regional member countries who were opposed to the COVID-19 support facilities and the lifting of partial sanctions for countries such as Zimbabwe and Sudan.

Besides the dispute over the pandemic support fund, there is complaint by some members of the AfDB staff against Adesina's running of the bank. These allegations which were looked into confidentially by the Bank's Ethics Committee, have been circulated widely and against Bank rules by a certain non-regional Executive Director who it is reported has never hidden his opposition to Adesina.

Among several allegations are that Adesina intends to 'Nigerianise' the AfDB by giving compatriots key positions and granting lines of credit to leading Nigerian companies with ease."

Facts on the bank's website contradict this as an approved list of projects show that Senegal, Cameroun, Tanzania, Rwanda, Namibia and others are key beneficiaries of about 75 projects worth \$64.5bn. These countries have



*demonstrates uncommon leadership qualities of modesty and foresight in tackling the challenges of hunger and poverty in Africa says President Buhari.*

projects specifically targeting them, while Nigeria benefits more from multiple-country focused projects.

The publication of the allegations in a prominent French newspaper is providing credence to the perspective that this is a concerted effort by some forces to undermine Adesina's credibility and thwart his deserved re-election. Interestingly, about a month ago, on March 13, a break-away group from the rank of petitioners filed a complaint against a key non-African Executive Director for allegedly misleading and manipulating the members of the group against Adesina.

Throwing more light on the botched plot to derail Adesina's reelection, a staff group clarified their position: "We were members of the group called 'Group of Concerned Staff Members' until we understood that we were being manipulated by a group of non-regional Executive Directors, not for the good governance of the African Development Bank but to discredit the candidacy of the current President for his re-election."

They further expressed outrage at the actions of an elected staff member, the Executive Director, who uses a group called 'Group of Concerned Staff Members' to take the AfDB hostage.

More, the breakaway group contended there are serious and repeated breaches of the Code of Conduct by the said Executive Director. The fact that the said Executive Director had breached the confidentiality requirements of the

rules and regulations of the Ethics Committee, by providing "exhaustive reports of all discussions (during meetings or by email) between members of the Ethics Committee," was damning.

Adesina, in a formal response to the allegations, insisted that: "The African Development Bank has a very high reputation for good governance", adding that he has confidence in the Board of Governors of the Bank and pleaded that the Ethics Committee should be allowed to do its job without interference.

It is beyond doubt that Adesina will certainly have his day to defend himself. The emerging consensus is that on every single allegation, he is confident that he will be vindicated.

According to Henry Louis Gates, former leader of the African and American Research Institute at Harvard University, "People are afraid, and when people are afraid, when their pie is shrinking, they look for somebody to hate. They look for somebody to blame. And a real leader speaks to anxiety and to fear and allays those fears, assuages anxiety."

Within the limitations of the continent's extant peculiar political and economic milieu, in his five years in office and counting, Dr. Adesina has spoken to continental anxiety and to national fears and allayed those fears as well as assuaged the anxiety. This is his forte.

\*Chukwuma is a public issues analyst



*With President Macky Sall of Senegal at the summit of West African leaders in Abidjan, the leadership of Adesina is lauded by many leaders in the continent.*

# Down But Not Out-Former Finance Minister Komi Koutché on his Political Travails

By Ajong Mbapndah L



**Komi Koutche and team believe his persecution is political with the intent to convict by default the most feared political opponent of the regime.**

**R**ecently slammed with a heavy jail sentence on what he considers as trumped up charges the former Finance Minister of Benin is refusing to go down, and certainly not without a fight, a fight he thinks President Patrice Talon is scared of. In a recent interview, Komi Koutche says the cavalier manner in which the whole trial took place follows a systematic pattern of the current President trying to take out political opponents who pose a strong threat to his 2021 reelection agenda.

Under President Talon, the democratic gains of the last thirty years are being erased at a very alarming rate and the people of Benin must brace up to challenge this, says Koutche considered by many as the most formidable challenger that President Talon has now. While this is still to be verified, the extraordinary lengths that the government of Benin went to see this prison sentence leveled on him is unprecedented in the country's history.

I am Confident that the system in place that is destroying the values that have powered our country for

about three decades now cannot last for a long time says Komi Koutche in discussing his political ordeal and other perspectives.

***Thanks, sir, for accepting this interview, as we were getting ready for his interview, word came from Benin that a jail sentence of 20 years had been slammed on you for various charges, what is your reaction to this?***

Komi Koutché: Thank you, sir, for giving me this occasion. In response to your question, I will just tell you that I am not surprised. Beninese or people who know a little bit about what Benin has become since 2016 when Patrice Talon became the head of the state are not surprised either. He clearly stated that what makes an African President renew his mandate is not the results of his actions, but his capacity to be a strong man who frames his own legal context and builds his own institutions to neutralize major figures or challengers who do not share his point of view. That is what he is doing. He has a specific plan

for all those figures who can contest and beat him in the next presidential election in Benin. After many other figures of opposition (included the former President Boni Yayi) who have already been sentenced on bogus charges by Talon's private justice or pushed into exile far from their country, I am the latest on the list after almost three for years of a bogus process that I cannot waste your precious time to expose here.

***How do you intend to fight back these charges and restore your good name?***

Komi Koutché: Let me just let you know that there are no charges against me, but there are bogus fabrications of a government that has decided to run the state like a private company for the sole interest of the president and his supporters, and who cannot exist without neutralizing the major figures of the opposition. Just talking about the recent developments on the case without a brief overview of the whole matter could make you miss important aspects that your readers will need to base their judgement.

Let me restate that I have held many prominent political and professional positions in my country. My last position was the position of Senior Minister of Economy and Finance. Politically, I am also a major figure in my country. I was elected member of parliament in 2015 and narrowly missed to become the president of the parliament (the second personality of the country after the President) by one vote (41 votes for me and 42 for my challenger).

Before all this, I was CEO of the national microfinance fund, one of the major institutions established in 2006 to fight against poverty. During my tenure, all the legal audits were done according to the law and everything was approved by both the auditors, the government and the international organizations like for example the Islamic development bank. Also, under my tenure, that institution was the first public institution of support to microfinance to be certified ISO 9001 in the world. I left that position since 2013 and have held different ministerial portfolios.

Everything started in 2017 when Patrice Talon and his government broadcasted that they audited my management at the head of that fund. I just heard this through the new paper. How can you audit the management of someone without associating him to get his version of the charges you are raising against him? I filed an appeal at the constitutional court which stated that the government had violated the constitution as it is not possible to audit one's management without associating him to hear his version. At that time the Minister of Justice was Joseph Djogbenou a personal lawyer of Patrice Talon. He left this position later to become President of the constitutional court. Therefore, he proceeded to reverse the decision on my case to state that this was not a violation of the constitution.

On April 2nd, 2018, my lawyer in



Cotonou called me to let me know that a judge wants to hear me on April 4th, 2018. Since 2016, I am in the USA. It was not possible for me to leave the USA and to arrive to Cotonou at that date. Then the judge signs a warrant of arrest on April 4th, 2018. I arrived in Cotonou early on April 6th, 2018 and showed up at the office of the judge. After many hours of hearing, he concluded that there was no matter to arrest me as the government was requesting through the persecution. He canceled the warrant of arrest and let me free. That judge will be later subjected to persecution. He was removed from his position of judge and the government changed the law on the superior council which appoints and punishes the judges.

The President now resorted to his council of Ministers and people close to him. Therefore, the justice system became his private tool to do what he wants. In July, he created a new special jurisdiction and transferred my case to that new jurisdiction. He later cancelled my ordinary passport in August and ordered my extra judiciary arrest. We filed an appeal but until the moment I am responding to these question, there was no response. It was under such circumstances that the President of the new jurisdiction, a father in law of the Minister of Justice who was pursuing me and later became the President of the Constitutional Court, asked me to show up before him. How can I show up when the same government that wants me to show up has cancelled my passport and order an extra judiciary arrest against me? Recently, the scenario was the same. My lawyer was asked to tell me to show up on April 3rd, 2020. He provide the stay home order issued by the state where I am leaving in the USA and raised the fact that all the airlines companies have cancelled , but as the goal was clear, they did not consider all this and decided to sentence me. You can then understand everything. It is regrettable that some African countries are going back to a system that we decided to abandon since the beginning of the 90s.

**why you have so far avoided showing up in court, if you are innocent or have nothing to hide, why not allow the judiciary or courts in Benin to handle the process?**

Komi Koutché: If you follow the way the government has organized this process since the beginning, you will realized that the aim was not to hear from me for any charges. The aim was to organize a process that kept me far from my country, and that could last in time to see if I will get tired to abandon my convictions and sell my soul to the government. If I did not do so, the strategy was to condemn me by default just to prevent me from contesting for the next presidential election. Can you tell me how you can cancel the passport of someone who lives in the USA and in the meantime invite him to show up before a special court in Benin? The other question I can ask you, is how do you think that a normal court can ask someone living in the USA to come to Cotonou now that the world is facing the COVID 19 and almost all the airports are closed? I never refuse to show up before the judge. When my passport was not revoked by the government, I showed up before the judge. But all the development after that as I restate in your first question showed that the aim in this bogus case is not to hear someone, but the aim is to keep someone far from his country because the President does not want to have an opposition.

**It is unprecedented in the history of Benin to have a government order an international warrant of arrest for a former top government official, under what conditions were you arrested in Spain and under what terms were you released?**

Komi Koutché: Yes, you are right. Benin has been a model of democracy for over 30 years. Our constitution was the base of everything. The different Presidents who had led the country during the last 30 years since we entered the era of the democracy in 1990 have been bound by the constitution. Unfortunately, since we



**The jail sentence on Komi Koutche has done nothing to slow down his resolve to keep fighting for the restoration of democracy in Benin.**

had a new President, a businessman who controls all the economic sectors of the country, his only aim is to sustain his power. And the only way to do so is to create bogus judiciary cases to weaken or to put in trouble the leaders of the opposition. I am not the first. All the major leaders of the opposition are today in exile. The justice in Benin has become the private justice of Patrice Talon who uses it as his personal tool for himself and against the people he is supposed to protect.

In December 2018, I was going for a conference of opposition parties in Paris where most of the major figure of opposition are in exile. The government followed my path and when transiting in Spain issues came up. The government had fraudulently notified Interpol that I had declared the loss of my passport, but I did not know. When I was stopped with my passport, the police of Spain called Benin and they lied that there was a warrant of arrest against me. Therefore, the Minister of justice had certified the already cancelled warrant

of arrest and sent it to Interpol. After many months of an overwhelming procedure, Benin was not able to prove the charge alleged against me and the Spanish justice concluded that It was a political persecution and released me.

**Considering that the government of Benin has revoked your passport, how is Komi Koutche able to move around the world now?**

Komi Koutché: We filed an appeal with Interpol which at its 109 annual meeting concluded that it was political persecution and remove the order from Benin on my passport from its database. Furthermore, the African Court of Human and People' Rights which sentenced the government to revoke the decision of cancelation of my passport. Obviously, I cannot go to my country because the government does not revoke it decision; however, since Interpol does not have anything against me in its database, I can travel until the date of expiration of my passport.



***In what shape did the government of Presidential Yayi Boni that you served under leave Benin and in what shape do you find it today, in other words, what has changed for Benin since you left office?***

Komi Koutché: What is important is what our democracy was like when Boni Yayi was leaving as President of Benin. The first indicator is that he was succeeded by Patrice Talon, a man who tried to kill him and who will later become the candidate of the opposition. Such a thing can happen only in country with strong democracy. The Benin democracy, a label for west Africa until 2016 has been destroyed. Today, instead of the parliament of Benin, we have a private parliament of Patrice Talon as he prevented all the parties of opposition from contesting in for the last election. There were protesters who were killed by the army under on his orders. Benin is not so far from what Gulag has been in the past.

The second thing is about the economy. As the last Minister of Finance and economy of Boni Yayi, I can tell you and there are many reports to testify, we left a very strong economy with a robust and inclusive GDP. The economic growth was 5,2% when we were leaving. It was inclusive as many social programs were in place to help underprivileged people to improve their living conditions. What has all this become today? Only God can tell you. Since 2016, there is no credible source of data. There is no contradiction on the performances that the government communicates. The few people who try to challenge the data that the government communicates are jailed. What I know is that we have an economic growth of almost 7%, while the index of poverty has become deeper than before and the government has to go every month to the financial market to borrow money before ensuring the essential of its action.

During the two tenures of Boni Yayi, we tried to build a strong middle class and to create programs that could ensure a transition of the underprivileged people to the middle class. all that has been destroy today



***With all what he has been through and in exile, Komi Koutche remains a formidable opponent for President Talon.***

and only people close to the President and his supporters can be wealthy. In other words, the middle class has disappeared and the underprivileged people who were in transition to the middle class have become poorer.

***What needs to be done to put Benin back on the right path and once more make it the promising example of democracy that it used to be?***

Komi Koutché: The first thing will be to reconquer the democracy. The situation of Benin today is critical and even worst than what it has been before the national conference of 1990. Benin need to be rebuilt. That requires forgiveness from all those millions of people who are injured in all sorts of ways by the actions of the current government which does not care about the wellbeing of the population. Their main has been to stifle all opposition to their bizarre type of leadership and to create a class of privileged people. The population is ready to restore the democratic values they are used to. Unfortunately, the use of the army and police to kill is a something that Beninese are not use to.

***Some of your supporters say the reason President Talon is coming after you so hard is because you are a potential rival for the 2021 elections, does Komi Koutché have any political ambitions or plans to***

***challenge Talon in 2021?***

Komi Koutché: That sums all the agitation from President Talon and his team towards me. The President is seeing in me, his strongest challenger and since he wants to maintain power at all cost after taking control of all sectors of the economy, the only strategy guiding all this is to make me unable to run for the next election as he already did for other leaders of opposition.

This interview is been done at a time when the Africa is beginning to feel the crunch of the coronavirus, what is your assessment of the response from government in fighting the pandemic, and what advise do you give to your compatriots in Benin to stay safe?

Komi Koutché: We have to worry about the potential development of the coronavirus in the coming weeks in Africa. Regarding how the situation is hard for the developed countries, it is important to be thinking about what the situation will be if the crisis has to reach a certain level in Africa. I must recognize here that some African leaders have took the threats of the coronavirus seriously and initiated some relevant dispositions that need to be highlighted. For example, for the west African region, which is the region I know the best, countries like Senegal, Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Niger take the crisis in serious. However, there are some countries that are still playing with this dangerous crisis which may not be far from a world war III. For

example, the borders and the airports of Benin are still open while the number of cases are increasing.

***As a former finance Minister, you certainly understand the impact that the coronavirus will have on African economies, what are some of the things Benin and other African countries could do to mitigate the economic shock from the coronavirus?***

Komi Koutché: The coronavirus will leave the world in a new situation. We are undoubtedly moving toward a new order in the world. The crisis will impact most of the economies but will also create a mutation in the interactions among people. In the countries where the leaders will not be able to find the right solutions, the crisis could lead to social crisis that can cause a problem of stability and security. The only way to mitigate, is to be aware that this crisis can be more dangerous than a world war III, as there is no party to discuss a cease fire with. Once the leaders are aware of that; they will need to find strong solutions that can simultaneously address the coronavirus and prevent from social crisis. That is where we have to congratulate the African leaders who have initiated solutions to address the crisis and to help their populations also during this period of crisis.

As we wrap up this interview, what are your future plans, when do you plan on returning to Benin?

Komi Koutché: Thank you for this occasion. Let me not disclose my strategy here. You will see later what I am going to do.

***And a last question on the future of Benin, what gives you a reason to hope and what are your fears?***

Komi Koutché: I have strong reason to hope for my country. The most important one is the level of determination of the youth. I do not have any fear because I am confident that the system in place that is destroying the values that have powered our country for about three decades now cannot last for a long time.



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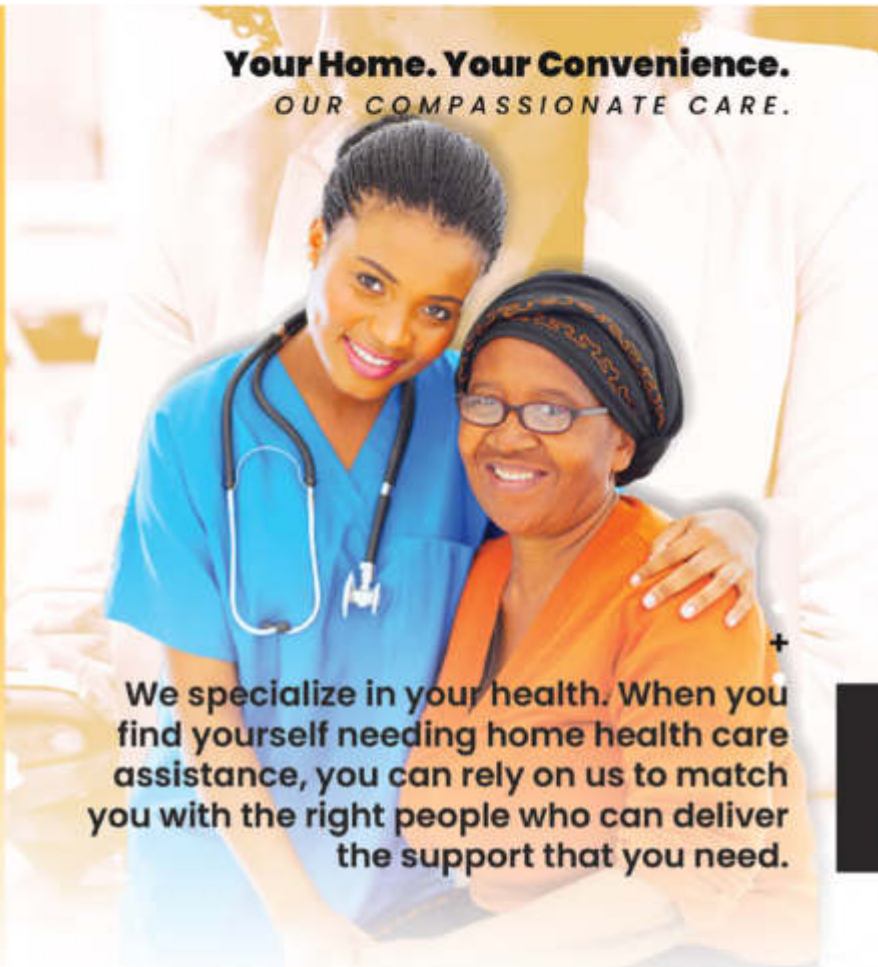


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# Malawi proceeding with electoral calendar despite Covid-19 fears

By James Mwala



*President Mutharika is in the battle of his political life.*

**T**he Southern African nation is defying recent developments to do with the novel Covid-19 pandemic by carrying on with processes to do with the next fresh presidential elections due early July.

Thus far, two people have died in Malawi and the positive cases seat at 17 with over 50 people under quarantine.

The country has since launched a National Response Plan which is worth US\$203 million (MK150 billion). So far, US\$ 9.1 million (MK6.5 billion) is available, leaving a resource gap of US\$ 193.7 million (MK 142.7 billion).

There are also fears that the Ministry of health admitted that there could be other people in the public domain who are infected but have not been tested.

Most of the people found positive are of Asian origin and travelled to Malawi. Thus far, only two natives are

among those positive.

Recently, health minister Jappie Mhango asked people manning borders to walk the talk in ensuring all people undergo the routine tests.

There have also been matters rising that some people are still using unchartered routes to enter Malawi.

However, voter registration exercise is still proceeding. The Constitutional Court had ordered that the elections be held in 150 days and the Malawi Electoral Commission is reportedly yet to pen court for a possibility to halt the exercise in the wake of the pandemic.

The first phase of the registration has since thrown off across some seven districts and MEC insists that they will wait for court to make a stance, a statement that casts shadows on whether the electoral body has really written the Judiciary or not.

Earlier on, Mhango sparked a

social media storm for proposing that the exercise be stopped.

Court has also not accepted the application to extend the calendar. As it is, parties are expected to submit nomination papers next week.

In an interview with local media, law expert Garton Kamchedzera said the Minister does not have any legal mandate to further the order because it was the Consultational court only that can alter the ruling.

«The ministers have to reckon they do not have a mandate for such a decree. Only the court that ordered for the fresh elections that can make the ruling. It is in the hands of MEC to write the court on this matter,» said the University of Malawi law Professor.

Malawi has over the last four months been undergoing a political turmoil over developments to the nullification of the presidential elections in which Peter Mutharika

was declared the winner.

At the moment, pressure is still mounting on Mutharika to fire the current crop of commissioners at the electoral body who were admonished by the court.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court has thrown out MEC's application on its intent to be represented by South African based lawyers.

MEC has since presented its application against the ruling for a fresh election.

However opposition party lawyers denounced the grounds saying the Commission brought before court redundant stances.

The legal incidents come after the court has also granted an injunction to the Human Rights Defenders Coalition against the order for a 21 day lockdown by President Mutharika.

Analysts say the incidents show the highest fight between the arms of government.



# At Just 23 Years Old, Emma Theofilus Becomes Africa's Youngest Minister

By Prince Kurupati

At 23 years of age, most African youths will just be fresh from college and applying for entry level jobs to acquire some work experience. However, Emma Theofilus is no ordinary lady. At just the tender age of 23, she now has her first job and it's a massive one; the job is to lead Namibia's ministry of Information and Communication Technology as the Deputy Minister.

The appointment of the 23-year old Emma Theofilus, a recent law graduate did raise eyebrows amongst many people. In a world in which governments are accused by many of employing different strategies purely for the purposes of political grandstanding, the appointment of Emma Theofilus to some seems like a plot to gain the sympathy of the youth specifically the female population. However, Emma Theofilus believes that her ascension to such a high government post is by no means a political grandstanding move by Hage Geingob and his government.

Shooting down the assertions of political grandstanding, the fiery and seemingly confident as well as independent Emma Theofilus said, "I do not think I am special, but I do not think I am inexperienced, and I do not think being young or female has anything to do with my appointment. Anything I set myself to and any environment I want to work into, I can do it; so the issue of inexperience does not hold any water."

In as much as her role as the Deputy Minister means that she will be working under the Minister Emma Theofilus says that she is not going to solely operate as an understudy. According to her, the role of Deputy Minister is not an insignificant role, but rather an important role which allows the Ministry to fully function and to achieve its objectives. "So of course the minister, being the head and political appointee, and the deputy minister allow the whole



*Power to the Youth. Emma Theofilus is Deputy Minister of Information and Communication Technology at just 23.*

ministerial position to function. It is a supporting role, just like any law has supporting regulations to allow it to function...I do not think that being a deputy minister is a role that cannot be brought to life, the person should know what they have planned for that position and anybody can do it, it is not an insignificant role."

Africa's youngest minister went on to state that her work is already cut out as she is going to prioritize first the passing of critical information bills which allow the smooth dissemination of information. "The ministry of Information and Communication Technology has an important role to disseminate information of the government. I feel that needs to be improved so that people know exactly what government plans are underway

and the role the government plays." The access to information and the cyber bill is already being debated in the Namibian Parliament.

Emma Theofilus says she will use the experience that she got during her time at school when serving in various positions including her roles as a junior mayor and deputy speaker of the children's parliament to get going in government. "As a former debater and law graduate, you can expect robust debates in parliament. As long as I have the support and guidance, I do not think I would go wrong. I will bank on the experience I have, but I am also willing to take advice and guidance from those that have been there before me."

Though not coming from a politically active family, Emma

Theofilus has been politically active since the early days. In 2015, she was elected the Junior Councilor of the City of Windhoek. In the following year, she was elected the deputy chairperson and speaker of the Children's Parliament. Between the period 2015 to 2017, Emma acted as the Secretary General of the Unam student representative council.

During her university days, Emma was an avid debater who at one time had this to say about democracy. "We should not only raise complains and concerns, but also offer recommendations and solutions to pertinent issues affecting us such as unemployment, we should involve ourselves in matters of national development."

Her appointment as a deputy minister thus gives her the room to practice what she was preaching that is, to 'offer recommendations and solutions to pertinent issues'. Her stellar work in her past roles albeit in less powerful institutions suggests that she is up for the job.

Emma did her studies at the University of Namibia where she graduated with a Law degree. Soon after completing law school, Emma was employed by Namibia's Ministry of Justice working as a legal officer. During her short stint as a legal officer, Emma helped to draft human rights reports and to implement Namibia's human rights strategy. Emma also holds a Diploma in African Feminism and Gender Studies from the University of South Africa. In addition, Emma does also hold a Diploma in Business Management from Amity University.

Emma was appointed the deputy minister of Information and Communication Technology as part of President Hage Geingob's list of eight non-voting members and was sworn in on Sunday 29 March. By virtue of being appointed deputy minister, Emma Theofilus also became a Member of Parliament as according to Namibian law.



*Story 12 Pic 2. Emma Theofilus is confident in her ability to do the job despite questions about her experience.png*

# Zimbabwe Plans to Compensate White Farmers with Land

By Prince Kurupati

The corona virus pandemic has had me glued to my TV and my Smartphone for updates every minute more so considering that we are currently in a 21 lockdown in Zimbabwe. As I was checking my new Twitter updates this other day, I came across an interesting headline which stated that a conference for corona virus had been suspended because of the corona virus pandemic! One amused reader in an effort to highlight the irony of the headline commented that 'a group of clairvoyants had suspended their plans for the upcoming holidays because of unforeseen circumstances!' – Quite funny but at the same time ironical.

The above just illustrates some of the most ironical things that we may come across in this world. In Zimbabwe, the government in a rather ironical move has mooted that it plans to compensate former white farmers with land. Well, though this is just still being debated and not yet in implementation, it's quite puzzling to think that the government which confiscated land from white farmers often in violent manners and vowed never to reverse the land reform thus give back land to whites now wants to compensate the white farmers with the same land that it took from them.

At the turn of the millennium, then Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe decided to change the country's constitution with the sole aim of bestowing upon himself massive executive powers. The move was supported by the elite section of his party while those at the grassroots and the opposition supporters were against the move. As according to Zimbabwean law, to wholly change

the constitution, he had to call for a referendum. He did so and he asked his supporters to vote for him by placing an 'X' next to the YES vote. Come the day of voting, the majority of voters decided to vote against the move to change the constitution opting to place their 'x' votes next to the NO vote.

Mugabe's loss in the referendum was his biggest defeat ever in any form of an 'election' and as such, he decided to react. His reaction was to adopt a populist stance with the aim of gaining the support and sympathy of Zimbabweans. The first populist policy that he set in motion was the implementation of the Fast Track Land Reform. Through the Fast Track Land Reform, Mugabe gave leeway to the Zimbabwean population most notably the war veterans and top ruling party officials to take land away from white farmers in any way they deem necessary. In their thousands, war veterans and ruling party officials did embark on violent seizures of white owned farms.

In the short term, the Fast Track Land Reform did work in Mugabe's

favour as it enabled him to receive the support of war veterans and all those who had benefited directly or indirectly from the land reform. However, the violent nature of the land reform angered the white farmers, farm workers, independent farm organizations, trade unions, the main opposition parties at the time as well as the international community. The loss of support from key institutions, sectors and individuals in both the local and international community in the long term triggered economic collapse in Zimbabwe.

By 2008, owing to the adverse effects of the Fast Track Land Reform as well as other populist policies that Mugabe later on implemented, the Zimbabwean economy had virtually collapsed. The country had a useless currency, electricity was almost non-existent so too were food commodities in shops and medicine supplies at hospitals and pharmacies. It is at this time that Mugabe decided to enter into a power-sharing government with Morgan Tsvangirai of the main opposition party MDC-T. The power-sharing government did help

Zimbabwe to improve its economic fortunes more so thanks to dollarization.

One of the provisions that led to the establishment of the power-sharing government was that a new constitution was to be introduced by the time that the Unity government comes to an end in 2013 (the power-sharing government was to be in existence for five years and then an election to follow guided by the new constitution). After nationwide consultations, a new constitution was introduced and in one of its provisions stated that Zimbabwe was obliged

to compensate white farmers whose land was seized by the state.

After the introduction of the new constitution, Zimbabwe failed to make any substantial moves to compensate white farmers due to economic woes. It was only in 2019 that the country started to make some sort of positive steps towards compensating white farmers as it set aside US\$17.5 million coupled with 380 million Zimbabwean dollars. In its 2020 budget, the government promised to disburse US\$21 million for the same purpose. In as much as these are commendable moves, the amount of money that the Zimbabwean government has been setting aside for compensation purposes fall far short of what the white farmers are demanding. The committee that represents white farmers in negotiations with the government is demanding nearly US\$7 billion.

Perhaps noting how difficult it will be for the cash-strapped Zimbabwean government to compensate white farmers in monetary terms, Zimbabwean president Emmerson



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa shakes hands after addresses a meeting attended by farmers and businessmen from the Zimbabwean White community ahead of elections in 2018. Photo AFP.



Mnangagwa has decided to employ a different strategy. In a recently published government Gazette, Land Minister Perence Shiri said that the new regulations in relation to white farmers' compensation "are to provide for the disposal of land to persons entitled to compensation."

The regulations published in the Government Gazette are however unclear in terms of the 'how' part, that is, how the government is going to distribute the land or most importantly, which land will be used for compensation purposes. White farmers all lost commercial farms and as such, it's only obvious that any land they would appreciate is land for commercial farming. Most commercial farms are now owned by officials and individuals aligning to the ruling party so if the government wants to retake the land, it will offend a majority of its supporters. Is Emmerson Mnangagwa willing to dispossess his fellow ZANU (PF) friends? That's the big question.

Mnangagwa's ascension to power was aided by factional wars within ZANU (PF). The two factions that were fighting to push their candidates to replace Mugabe all consisted of top powerful politicians who did own farms; some individuals even owned multiple farms. As a way of inflicting further damage to his opponents in the Machiavellian way, that is, totally vanquishing the opponent, Mnangagwa may probably be looking at confiscating land from his factional opponents and handing it back to white farmers. Already, a number of Mnangagwa's opponents have lost their farms as they are charged with various felonies. At one point, former First Lady had to engage in near fist fights with the police after her farm was under siege. It's possible therefore that Mnangagwa may be looking at dispossessing his opponents from their land and hand it over to white farmers.

There have been talks in the media and amongst the citizens in general that many top government officials do



own multiple farms. This is something that maybe true but does need to be verified. For some years now, the Ministry of Lands has been said to be conducting land audits to determine who owns what and to redistribute farms that are found to be owned by one person. Owing to bureaucratic red tapes, the land audits are too slow hence it's not really clear what the results of the audits per year look like. By empowering the Ministry of Lands to do its job diligently and timeously, Mnangagwa can indeed find a substantial amount of land for redistribution to white farmers. However, this will also result in him offending some of his top government and political allies as it is these people who supposedly own multiple farms. The question therefore comes back, is Mnangagwa willing to take the risk and offend his allies all in the aim of compensating white farmers?

Another strategy that the government can employ is to divide farms. Already, the Minister of Lands Perence Shiri stated that the government is looking at cutting farm sizes so that those with large farms that are being underutilized will be handed out to skilled farmers.

Again, though commendable, this move will likely put Mnangagwa in a conundrum as he will offend some of his top allies who own the largest and often underutilized farms.

White farmers on the other hand who stand to receive land as compensation have shown that they are in support of this recent move. The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) which is comprised of the largest group of white farmers evicted from farms under Zimbabwe's controversial land-reform programme has welcomed the deal offered by government to give them land in lieu of compensation. In an interview, Ben Giplin, the CFU director said the compensation plan may not affect all white farmers, "The measure will likely apply to a limited number of about 200 foreign citizens covered by ratified Bippas (Bilateral investment promotion and protection agreement) and possibly several hundred farmers who are classified as indigenous."

In as much as compensating white farmers with land is a conundrum for Mnangagwa, it is also a dilemma for white farmers themselves. Most of those who lost their land during the Fast Track Land Reform

had purchased their farms after independence thus they had not benefitted from the colonial era. The Land Reform according to Mugabe was done to correct colonial imbalances hence most white farmers should not have lost their land in the first place. What this shows is a clear infringement and disrespect for the right to property by the Zimbabwean government. Having already shown a lackadaisical approach towards safeguarding property rights, how sure are white farmers that the government will in future also violate their property rights and seize their farms for a second time? This is a big question for white farmers.

Mugabe seized farms in 2000 because he had lost popular support. If Mnangagwa loses popular support, what can stop him from implanting populist policies just like what Mugabe did. This is the dilemma that white farmers face. Leases and title deeds were seen as worthless by Mugabe in 2000 and as such, they are not a sure guarantee that when the going gets tough, leases and title deeds will be enough to prevent the government from seizing land once more.





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## The African Energy Chamber interviews Leoncio Amada NZE, its new Executive President for the CEMAC region



Executive President for the CEMAC region, Mr. Leoncio Amada NZE.

**H**e addresses key topics including the inclusion of women in the energy industry, the importance of local content policies

The African Energy chamber's (<http://EnergyChamber.org>) new Executive President for the CEMAC region, Mr. Leoncio Amada NZE examines the current state of the Equatoguinean energy industry amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the oil price war. He addresses key topics including the inclusion of women in the energy industry, the importance of local content policies and the creation of enabling environments that are attractive to foreign investors.

**Under the leadership of H.E. President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Equatorial Guinea has grown and still has a bright future for its oil and gas industry. As the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons of Equatorial Guinea pushes forward with its Year of Investment campaign, what can we look forward to?**

The Year of Energy initiative launched in 2019 by the Government

of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea through the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons was a great success for the country. This initiative made Equatorial Guinea the hub of the oil and gas industry at an African level, through the organization and hosting of conferences with international reach, including the APPO CAPE VII Conference, The Oil and Gas Meeting Day and the 5th GECF Summit.

These international events showed the world the great potential of the country as a destination for foreign investment and put into perspective the opportunities and benefits that Equatorial Guinea offers to foreign investors.

With the efforts deployed by the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons during the Year of Energy, EG-Ronda (the bidding round) carried out in 2019 was successful. It notably resulted in the concession of 9 oil blocks to internationally-renowned companies and, for the first time the country's history, 15 mining blocks were granted.

The Year of Investments 2020 is build-up on the Year of Energy, through which the government intends to diversify and strengthen

the national oil sector through the implementation of downstream and infrastructure projects such as the construction of two modular refineries, of a methanol-to-gasoline plant, of strategic storage tanks for refined products, etc. All these projects are aimed at creating jobs for the locals, promoting energy security in the country, and achieving the transfer of technology in favor of local companies that would work in collaboration with large multinationals in the execution of these projects.

All these initiatives allow us to affirm that the hydrocarbon sector will continue to be the locomotive of the Equatoguinean economy for many years to come.

**For many years, Equatorial Guinea has been exploiting its resources and exporting them. What is the importance of the country focusing on developing its midstream in order to add value to its industry?**

Oil has been and remains a blessing for Equatorial Guinea. Revenues from oil exploitation have allowed the country to build basic economic

infrastructures such as airports, ports, highways, power plants, drinking water systems, social housing, etc. However, upstream activities are capital intensive. Although they generate a lot of money for the companies involved and the host governments, they do not generate many jobs as most of the operations are automated.

Hence the importance of promoting and developing the midstream segment in order to locally process and transform part of the crude oil and gas that the country produces. In doing so, related sectors and industries are created, generating more local jobs and encouraging the creation and entry of local companies in the value chain.

**Last year, the Department of Local Content launched its first ever CSIR book in order to highlight the socio-economic contributions of the oil and gas industry over the last 25 years. How can Equatorial Guinea build on the contributions of projects such as the Bioko Island Malaria Elimination Project, the Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program and the Baney District Hospital Project which covered malaria reduction, healthcare, access to clean water and infant mortality rates?**

Equatorial Guinea's oil and gas industry has been very instrumental in supporting the national government in the realization of projects with a social impact throughout the national sphere. This includes the construction of educational centers, hospitals, playgrounds, drilling of water wells and more. The Malaria elimination project in Equatorial Guinea, financed by the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons together with the oil companies and implemented by the Ministry of Health, is also of great importance to the country.

Furthermore, with the support of the government, the laboratory in the

city of Baney (also financed by the oil sector) has become the spearhead in the strategy for the fight against COVID-19. The center has been certified by the WHO and has the capacity to carry out more than 150 COVID-19 tests per day.

These type of social policies and projects must be equally supported, financed and accompanied by national companies in the oil sector. To do this, it is necessary to look further into local content policies and encourage the creation of dynamic, efficient, and profitable local companies that are capable of competing at the international standards levels required by the sector in which we operate.

**Through its Gas Mega Hub project, Equatorial Guinea plans to deliver on expectations of successful cross-border gas cooperation. How do you foresee the COVID-19 pandemic impacting these plans?**

The Mega Hub Gas Project is an ambitious and innovative project within the policy of zero gas flaring promoted by the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons.

Its conception, planning, and execution are being carried out within the framework of the expectations that the parties involved agreed upon. The destruction of global oil demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the oil price war between Russia and Saudi Arabia, have brought oil prices to very low levels in the international markets. This dynamic can jeopardize certain investment projects that many companies have in their portfolio. The current situation will force many companies to cut investment projects to try to navigate the crisis that is plaguing us if the host governments do not activate supportive mechanisms in favor of the oil sector. We trust that this is not the case of the Gas Mega Hub project, since it is of great significance for Equatorial Guinea and the subregion.

**The Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons announced that it was waiving fees for oil**



*The hydrocarbon sector will continue to be the locomotive of the Equatoguinean economy for many years to come says Leoncio Amada Nze.*

**and gas services companies operating in the country amid the oil price war and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. How does this move encourage further investment and continued relationships with major companies?**

We are facing an unprecedented crisis with disastrous and unpredictable consequences to the oil industry, in combination with the historical fall in crude oil prices in the international markets to levels only seen during the Gulf War.

The measures adopted by the Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons come at a time when both the service companies and the oil industry in general are going through very difficult times.

The Ministry of Mines and Hydrocarbons has been very proactive. However, we believe that other institutions and departments of the public administration should adopt similar reactions and initiatives to support the oil and gas sector as a whole. This could occur through production and service companies safeguarding the operations and stability of the oil sector, on which the country's GDP depends at 91%. This is a task that appeals and requires the sense of responsibility of all the actors involved.

**Governments play a key role in seeing through the growth**

**and development of the sector. What can African governments do more to support oil and gas companies in order to increase the pace of exploration and production?**

In any sector or economic activity, foreign and local investment are directed to those areas and places where the returns on investment are acceptable for people who decide to risk their capital. The same is true in the oil sector. African governments need to be much more flexible when it comes to fiscal terms of oil contracts, especially in the exploration and development phases to attract investment. To maintain the production plateau over time, investment in exploration is required. For this to be possible, the fiscal terms of oil contracts must be even more flexible in these times of crisis.

**In encouraging investors to enter African markets for the development of the oil and gas industries, what is the role of policy certainty in creating enabling environments and boosting investor confidence?**

Foreign investment is directed to places where there is a perception that the invested capital is protected, and the rules of the game are transparent, respected, and applicable to everyone. It is in this sense that African countries must insist and work on the consolidation of the rule of law,

transparent, stable and predictable fiscal frameworks, and finally, respect for the sanctity of contracts. All these factors contribute to the creation of a stable business environment that attracts foreign investment and generates confidence.

**Where does change need to begin in order for us to see more women in senior-level positions in Africa's energy industry?**

A society that marginalizes half of its population cannot reach its full potential.

We can extrapolate the same analysis to the oil and gas industry. We believe and know that women have a lot to offer to our industry. There are talented women on the African continent, capable of holding positions of leadership and direction in the African oil industry. We have started to see few women in management positions, but we believe that is not enough. We might need to have a local content policy based on women empowerment in the oil and gas sector. More can and should be done.

We men in the African oil industry are fathers of women, sons of women, and husbands of women. We would like our daughters and spouses to access leadership positions in any sector as long as they have the necessary skills and experience for such a position. Men have a



responsibility to model this change.

***Africa still lags behind the rest of the world in education and skills development, how can the continent utilize its hydrocarbons industry to foster wider economic growth?***

The African oil sector can and has the necessary capacity and resources to improve and promote quality education, the use of new technologies, and the promotion and incentivization of private initiative. All of this is possible through the implementation of a rigorous and coordinated local content policy to ensure technology transfer.

***As the climate change debate continues, what does global pressure to move towards a renewable energy focused energy mix mean for countries across Africa that are still plagued with energy poverty?***

The debate on climate change is very important and with far-reaching socio-economic implications for all

countries and continents.

From my point of view as an African businessman in the hydrocarbon sector, I would say that climate change is undoubtedly real and affects us all. Arguably, we all have a moral obligation to do something to reverse the situation.

We also have to be aware of our socioeconomic reality. Africa is the continent that pollutes the least. Yet, it is the least industrially and technologically developed continent. It is also the continent with the least financial resources to invest considerably in renewable energy in such a way that they have a real impact on our energy basket. Oil and gas continue to be the main source of income and engine of development for African countries. We can be asked to contribute to the fight against climate change, but we do not believe that it is reasonable to ask our governments and people to compromise or risk economic development under the pretext of fighting against climate change.

We have to strike a pragmatic



***Leoncio Amada Nze says African governments need to be much more flexible when it comes to fiscal terms of oil contracts.***

balance between the efforts we have \*Courtesy of Africa Energy Chamber  
to make in the fight against climate change and the real needs of our people.

## THE VACCINE OF PEACE; RETHINKING THE PANDEMIC OF VIOLENT CONFLICT

*By Rev. Fr. Canice Chinyeaka Enyiaka, Ph.D\**

Without any Town, it is a similar story of military power, deafening silence, pain, and lobbying strategy, confusion. We see a puzzling international diplomacy, world that is now frozen and standstill because of a blind disobedience to border crossing rules, or any form of coercion, COVID-19 has taken over the world stage in the last three months. From the local communities to the international stage, individuals, families, state and non-state actors are scrambling to contain, mitigate and confront a virus that disregards socioeconomic status, atomic and nuclear weapons of war as well as racial differential.

From Wuhan to Berlin, Washington DC to Paris, from Dublin to Abuja, Madrid to COVID-19 has pushed peoples and nations to the

edge, instilled fear, shaken the core of our position of strength. It has exposed our vulnerabilities and the emptiness of the powers we arrogate to ourselves as individuals, peoples, and nations. The virus calls us to rethink global peace and to flatten the curve of violent conflict that plagues the human family. The heroic action of healthcare workers, first responders, and others on the frontline who put their lives on the line across the World to save lives invite us to the basics of «humanity» and «humanness» as we face the present challenges. Without the grocery-store stockers, the healthcare workers, the farmworkers,



***Fr Canice Chinyeaka Enyiaka.***



*UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called for cease fires in conflicts so that attention can be focused on COVID 19.*

the first responders, we would be in a more precarious situation by now. The virus has shredded what we call power and might literally as kings and princes struggle for ventilators with the common man as 1, 475, 676 people are fighting for their lives today with 87, 469 recorded deaths globally.. The mighty now depend on poor farmworkers to have food on their table. We see nature's comedy play out before us.

The impact of COVID-19 on the collective life of the global community without respecting the territorial integrity of sovereignties and total disregard of border closures remind us of our shared humanity. It reminds us in an unusual way though, that we are 'one family under God' irrespective of socially constructed notions of human differential which individuals and groups have used to perpetuate oppression, exploitation and divide over the centuries. The virus is challenging the ideologies of extremism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism as it crosses all the lines they drew and have tenaciously protected.

The global pain of the moment is a clarion call to act in solidarity and return to the power of the common good. It calls for the promotion of the underlying human security for all, and to eschew outright reductionist approach to national security to achieve real goals of solidarity and the common good. These times call for the application of the basic human

security and solidarity that recognizes that the life of the child in the slums of Yemen is as important as that of the every other person across the globe. The lives of the persecuted Rohingya minority cannot be treated as tools for diplomatic gain.

Mahbub ul Haq (1995) once said that the primary concern of human security is not to stockpile weapons. Instead, it is concerned with human dignity and how it is safeguarded and promoted. In the final analysis, it is about the child who did not die, diseases that did not go around, a strained ethnic relationship that did not erupt, another revolutionary and agitator who was not stopped, a human spirit that was not silenced. Provoked by the ethical concern for the use of resources in development, Mahbub ul Haq questioned governments giving priority of place to armament above the provision of milk for children. He points to the fact that human security issues in a most comprehensive manner are vital to achieving peace and human development as these issues fundamentally pose threats to the dignity of millions of people across the globe. Taylor notes that the above position has put human security at the center of the global discourse on peace. Safeguarding human dignity through solidarity and social security has become more imperative than ever. The global relationship should be guided by human dignity principles as dignity is the bright reflection and

expression of every person.

Last month, the UN Secretary-General said, «The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war»(Guterres, 2020) as he called for a ceasefire in the face of the pandemic. Many member states member states, as well as non-state actors and individuals, including Pope Francis, have endorsed his call for a ceasefire within this period. Parties to the conflict in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Libya, Myanmar, the Philippines, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen have all accepted his appeal.

The cease-fire ought to continue beyond the pandemic, and a new paradigm of the «vaccine of peace» should be applied to deal with the epidemic of «violent conflict» across the globe going forward. The desire to amass weapons of war and the investment of commonwealth on military capabilities has grown among the governments of the global community. Military expenditure is given priority over fundamental human security issues in many countries of the world today. We seem to be more prepared for war than for peace, more willing to destroy life than to protect as many countries show a chaotic posture of unpreparedness in the face of coronavirus with stockpiled arms and weapons of war in place.

After World War 1(1914-1918), the global community lost more than 18 million lives. At least about 56 million people died during and immediately after World War 11(1939-1945). The theatrical flexing of muscle and senseless power-rivalry at the inter and intra-state levels has led to millions of deaths in post-World War 11 regions of the globe even after the Nuremberg Tribunal with the concept of «never again.» We continue to see the monstrous genocide and brutal destruction of human life ravaging communities of the World with the superpowers who championed never again supplying the arms and weapons of human destruction for economic gain. We destroy what we ought to protect, and we all become losers.

The folly, agony, and trauma of war extend to women and girls who are raped and sexually violated during conflicts. These women live with the emotional pain of sexual violation for the rest of their lives. Displacements, as we see across the globe today, come with the folly of war. Many children across the world have never experienced a peaceful childhood because every day, the noise of guns and bombs feel their ears, and some have been forced to be child soldiers with adverse effects that will stay very long with them. In different regions of the globe, people are maimed for life as a result of wars while others live in fear and insecurity with attendant hunger and starvation. Different countries are struggling to take care of individuals with post-traumatic stress disorder from war experiences. The folly of war is shown at the level of infrastructural destructions that will take decades to rebuild in many communities across the globe.

All our attention is on the common enemy «COVID-19». It is the common enemy for Israeli and Palestinian; for Moslems and Christians in Nigeria; for the Buddhists and Muslims in India, etc. and I agree but are we able to learn the lessons the moment is offering us. I argue that a look at the human, economic, social, and environmental destruction caused by the act of war in the last two centuries will show that we are more dangerous enemies to ourselves than COVID-19.

Across the globe, healthcare workers and scientists are working hard to save lives and to find the vaccine for the cure of COVID-19. They are living and renewing the globalization of compassion and seeing everyone in the World as our brothers and sisters. It is the soul of solidarity and commitment to the common good. We have seen a great show of social solidarity and connection in our different communities across the world. COVID-19 which I think is an invitation to use the vaccine of peace to remedy the pandemic of violent conflict in our communities. It invites us to dialogue and proper allocation of resources.

We must remember that, «Every

gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, and the hopes of its children. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some fifty miles of concrete pavement. We pay for a single fighter plane with a half

million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people»(Eisenhower, 1953). The above words speak us in these times and call for reexamination the use of global resources and the way we manage conflicts. Those words call for a change of paradigm. The paradigm shift ought to focus on engaging the human spirit and time honored values that can secure a peaceful and sustainable human family. It challenges us to properly place our priorities as a global community.

War is the defeat of humanity and it degrades all of us.

The vaccine of peace returns us to the infinite dignity of each human person and the recognition that we are embedded in webs of mutual obligation. It is time for world leaders to channel just a fraction of the resources spent on war and military arms towards peacebuilding. Guns and bombs have always failed humanity. It is contradictory and I should say not acceptable that we put all our resources to fight COVID-19 from killing people only to turn around tomorrow and kill ourselves at the battle field. The act of war is the real pandemic and it makes man wolf to man. It is time to commit to

applying the 'vaccine of peace' to cure the pandemics of violent conflict because "Peace is the only true direction of human progress – and not the tensions caused by ambitious nationalisms, nor conquests by violence, nor repressions which serve as the mainstay for a false civil order" (Paul VI, 1968).we are 'one family under God' and the path of peace is not impossible.

\*Rev. Fr. Canice Chinyeaka  
Enyiaka, Ph.D.

(Program Development Specialist,  
Interfaith/Community Outreach)

Global Peace Foundation

## A Brand of Scintillating Quality and Pure Luxury in Champagne De Watère

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Previously 'exclusive to Europe' award-winning luxury champagne brand – Champagne De Watère, has recently launched in USA, a reason for champagne lovers to raise a glass in celebration of a brand that is likely to see rapid expansion across the globe.

This unique brand with two 'Great Gold' medals under its belt from the prestigious International Wine Guide Awards 2016, is produced since 2011 in the champagne region of France using traditional viticulture methods – (by hand wherever possible) and given up to 85 months to develop its full unique flavor, which is six times longer than usual.

Martin A. Konorza, Owner and President of Champagne De Watère, believes that this champagne is at the height of great quality and pure luxury. In an interview with Pan African Visions, Konorza, a man of ancient French Lineage thinks that the champagne is an exceptional brand for people who love class. He also sheds light about his family's champagne tradition and information about the champagne varieties.

**Could we start with a background or historical context into the Champagne De Watère brand that you own?**



Martin A. Konorza, Owner and President of Champagne De Watère.

When I was growing up, I first tasted Champagne as a sip on special occasions. Later, in my teenage years, I tasted more and always came back to the same issue: The taste profile was

not as elaborate as I expected from the alleged "king of wines". So, I set out to find the true soul of Champagne, eventually creating my own, to show to the world what champagne can be if

nature is respected as the partner, not something that needs to be pushed in a certain direction but just guided.

The same attitude of respect goes into the branding which is clean and self-confidently understated. After all, the customer decides where and when to enjoy our champagnes and we support them with a sense of joy and lightness.

For my brand I chose my old family name "De Watère" as well as our ancient family crest, the azure blue Gryphon. Since our motto is "honor and piety" I think it fitting to creating a brand that devotes itself to a higher goal: finding the true soul of the world's greatest wine.

The Gryphon serves as the proud, self-confident guardian of our quest.

**How long has the brand been in the market and can you share its ingredients and production process for us?**

We've been in the market since 2011 when we launched our Champagnes. De Watère Champagnes are produced using the most natural methods of production to bring out the true soul of the grapes. So, we use horses instead of tractors and no chemicals. Even our steel tanks for the first fermentation are enamelled on the inside to ensure that absolutely nothing tints the grapes' flavour. We



use two grapes from the Premier Cru vineyard: Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

The Brut Blanc contains 80% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay where the Pinot Noir gives the underlying fruity body while the Chardonnay conveys more subtle aromas of cinnamon and exotic (citrus) fruit.

Our Rosé de Saignée is composed exclusively of Pinot Noir grapes which give it a rich fruitiness and an array of warm yet fresh aromas. For this champagne we employ the rarely used „Saignée Method“ which translates into „bled out“. To achieve the rosé colour and a more fruity palette, we leave the grape juice and the skins, which are solely responsible for the colour, together in the press to let the skins „bleed out“ into the clear juice. This contact can last up to 72 hours and needs to be under constant attention by the Cellar Master. he needs to separate the grapes and the skins at exactly the right moment to ensure enough flavour has transferred while the bitter tannins stay in the skins.

Both of our champagnes are available in 20cl format which we call Petites“. They are aimed at those people and moments only wishing for one glass to support their special occasions. And since every moment



*A view towards the village from De Watere vineyard atop the hill where the vines grow The vineyard is in the Premier Cru Village of Avenay Val d'Or.*

can be special, a Petite can easily be carried with you wherever you go.

***In what parts of the world is Champagne De Watère in distribution?***

Our champagnes are available in Europe (which is mainly the

European Union, plus Switzerland) as well as in the USA. Our accessories are available for worldwide delivery from our website.

***It is our understanding that the brand was recently introduced into the US how has the reception been like?***

The reception has been good so far, better than anticipated. That's why we are now in talks with distributors as well as retailers to make it even more convenient for our customers.

***There are so many Champagne brands out there, what is unique about De Watère and why should people go for it?***

Since its inception it has been my goal to find the true soul of champagne to make sure that people's special occasions are complimented with a worthy companion. To do this, we have gone back in time to find the methods used when champagne first ascended to its mythical standing as the king of wines: before the Industrial Revolution with its mass production. So, if someone wants to know what champagnes could have tasted like before this industrial age, they go for ours.

***Your brand of Champagne has earned global recognition with a number of international awards, could you shed light on some of these awards?***

Oh yes, we have received quite a few great medals which I see as a compliment and as proof that even in our modern mass-product



focused world, people continue to appreciate the individual, original styles of our champagnes. We do not participate often but only at select wine competitions.

Recently, we won Great Gold at the Catavinum World Wine and Spirits Competition for both of our champagnes which makes us the only brand to have won this for both champagnes. We won the same medal in 2016 for both champagnes, too. (They changed their name from "International Wine Guide Awards")

Apart from this, the French wine authority Gilbert & Gaillard awarded our Rosé de Saignée a Silver medal, and awarded Gold to our Brut Blanc. This repeated our success there from 2016 when we entered before.

A big compliment are the two medals we won at Berlin Wine Trophy which is the biggest wine competition in the world under the patronage of the OIV and the UIOE. There, we won Gold for the Rosé de Saignée and even Grand Gold for the Brut Blanc.

## What other champagne brands or winery products does your company have in the market?

Since De Watère is its own brand in its own right and we are not a champagne dealer, we do not carry other champagne brands.

We do however see De Watère and our values as a lifestyle brand,

changing the champagne world. In tune with this we offer clothing items as well as travel luggage.

Our clothing line is complimenting the younger, more informal person. We offer zip hooded jackets, to simply throw on when a summer evening hits you with this refreshing gust, while sitting outside enjoying time with your friends and loved ones. More is to come.

The hand made luggage comes in two variants and two materials; leather or vinyl with antibacterial lining.

The Traveller is a hand luggage sized, ultra light bag to accompany the customer on any journey they take, hopefully meeting new people, places and making great memories.

The Messenger, that fits perfectly up to 15 inch laptops, is the everyday companion, giving you that assurance that you will achieve what you set out to do.

All our accessories proudly bear the azure Gryphon as the guardian every step of the way.

## In terms of price, how affordable are De Watère products?

When I started De Watère and



when we went through all the steps of production that are done manually, I quickly found that we will arrive at a premium price point for our Champagnes. So, our premium price is rather a consequence of the steps we take to be as natural and as close to the original, authentic champagne as possible. Yet, we are still at a very competitive price compared to our premium champagne peers. In Europe, our Premier Cru Brut Blanc retails at 125€, while the Premier Cru Rosé de Saignée retails at 145€.

Our Petites start at 21€ for the Premier Cru Brut Blanc and 23€ for the Premier Cru Brut Rosé de Saignée. They are also available as

"Petites Collection" which is a gift set containing one Petite of each and two champagne flutes; ideal as a present or to gain a taste of De Watère. The set is priced at 49€.

## For people who live in parts of the world like Africa, and others where they cannot get it from shops, how can they get De Watère products if they are so interested or get curious?

We have been able to accommodate basically every order. For people wishing delivery to countries outside of our distributed markets, please contact us and we will organize shipment.

## It is the beginning of a new year, what should we expect from Martin A. Konorza and De Watère?

Well, we have lots of plans and dreams. For starters, we plan to grow our distribution in the US as well as Europe. We are for the first time actively opening up to distributors and retailers in Europe, for example.

What's more, we plan to introduce more accessories such as polo shirts as well as a second iteration of our zip hooded jackets.

Since the current crisis has put our planned events on hold, we will have to see when it is absolutely safe for our customers to reschedule them.





# Billions at Play

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by NJ AYUK



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# Zimbabwe Reverts to Dollarization

By Prince Kurupati



**T**he corona virus pandemic has forced many nations across the world to implement different policies and programs all in the hope of protecting their people. Some governments are giving grants to small and medium enterprises, others are waiving rates and rentals while in other countries families are being given allowances to help them cope as they stay in their homes. However, the Zimbabwean government has taken a totally different route.

In Zimbabwe, the government stated that it is reverting back to the US dollar as a way of protecting citizens from the economic effects of the corona virus pandemic. Well, the logic and correlation between dollarization and minimizing effects of corona virus is not clear but the Zimbabwean government does think that allowing people to use the US dollar will help cushion them from the economic effects of COVID-19.

The official statement from the Zimbabwean government in relation to the use of the US dollar was issued by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ). In its statement, RBZ said

that the move to bring back the US dollar is part of “measures to mitigate the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the Zimbabwean society and economy.” The RBZ went on stating that it was “making it easier for the transacting public to conduct business during this difficult period by making available an option to use free funds to pay for goods and services chargeable in local currency.”

While it may be difficult to fathom how reverting back to the US dollar minimizes the impact of COVID-19, one only has to visit the last Parliament sitting that RBZ Governor John Mangudya attended to understand why the government has in recent times relaxed the use of the US dollars in some sectors and why the government did take the decision to revert back to the US dollar.

Addressing the Parliament, John Mangudya said that there was a need for the government to mop up the US dollar that was flooding the parallel market and by allowing fuel retailers to charge in foreign currency, they (RBZ) would be able to do this that is, mop up the US dollar. “The issue

is basically about supply and demand. Foreign currency earned through Diaspora remittances tends to go to the parallel market. The issue is how do we harness that money into the formal system. For instance, we have a fuel bill of \$500 million a month. So it means that if we allow, for example, 30 per cent of the fuel bill to be funded through free funds, it will result in a 30 per cent foreign currency saving, monies that will then flow to the interbank market for other uses.”

At the time, the RBZ governor said that the public should not misconstrue relaxing foreign currency use to reverting back to the US dollar. “Allowing the use of free funds within the national economy for payment... should not be misconstrued as going back to dollarization, but rather, as common good for the country to promote inflow of free funds from the Diaspora and necessary to buttress the confidence that is needed under the de-dollarization process.”

The sentiments echoed by the RBZ governor at the time seem not to hold water now as the country has now fully

redollarised. However, the intention behind the move is pretty much the same that is, to mop up the US dollar on the street and not to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. COVID-19 has given the Zimbabwean government ample opportunity to mop up the US dollar. This being necessitated by the fact that the parallel market dealings are operating at the minimum as most people are stuck indoors. Those who receive remittances from abroad (largely the majority of the country’s urban population) thus can encounter difficulties when looking to exchange their US dollars for the local currency on the parallel market. This will force them to use the US dollars more so when they run out of essential services like food and fuel.

Remittances are a major source of foreign currency in Zimbabwe with the country receiving \$635 million in 2019 alone. This therefore means that the US dollar is indeed abundant in people’s homes but often it finds its way to the parallel market where it can be exchanged at higher premiums to the local currency in comparison to official bureau de changes. COVID-19

henceforth the national lockdown imposed in Zimbabwe therefore provides an ample opportunity for the RBZ to mop up the US dollar and this is the real reason behind Zimbabwe's redollarisation.

Zimbabwe first dollarized in 2009. However, in June 2019, the government decided that its flirtations with the US dollar had come to an end and as such, it introduced a new local currency. The local currency was to be the sole legal tender and anyone who would be found selling or buying goods using the US dollar or other foreign currencies would be charged. Officially, this was the position of the government but in the streets, many citizens continued to trade in foreign currency.

Though the government at first strictly forced citizens to trade using the local currency for all transactions, towards the end of the year last year,



RBZ Governor John Mangudya.

it relaxed the use of foreign currency in some sectors most notably the tourism and fuel industry.

Zimbabwe is one of the many African nations that have recorded cases of corona virus. At the time of

writing, the country had recorded 8 cases and one death.

## How Zambian Seed Companies are setting the Pace In Waste Management

By Aghan Daniel I \*

In African agriculture, seeds play an important role in food security but may also constitute continental sources of introduction and spread of plant pests and diseases.

Variations in national standards for seed certification and quality control and in quarantine and phytosanitary measures for seed have often been cited as impediments to seed trade in these valuable inputs hence stifling the growth of the sector.

These issues dominate debates and discussions in many seed production and trade related gatherings.

One area that has however been neglected and indeed hidden in the sector is how to effectively manage their wastes, which include but are not limited to expired seeds, waste water, empty chemical containers, seed bags and expired fertilizers.

It was therefore gratifying to see this subject stirred a lot of interest from seed companies during the 20th largest gathering of seed companies in Africa organized by the African Seed Trade Association. Known as



the AFSTA Annual Congress, the event, which ended on March 5, 2020 in Livingstone, Zambia, as usual brought together who is who in the seed sector from all over the world.

The delegates noted that whereas

most of them are world class producers of seed, managing their wastes remained a challenge as it was mainly done by burying, burning or simply piling them within the firms' compounds.

This could, however, soon become a thing of the past if seed companies could borrow a leaf from an approach being undertaken by the Zambian seed industry under Zambia Seed Trade Association (ZASTA).

According to ZASTA, they have delved into an initiative that deals with maize seed waste management without compromising the environment.

The initiative, which has clearly shown early signs of innovativeness, is hoped to be soon picked up by the rest of Africa, if the early signs are anything to go by.

In the words of Ms. Perrine Nkosi Kasande, a Senior Inspector of Waste Management at Zambia's Environmental Management Authority, the seed companies are transforming their waste management in compliance with the country's Extended Producer Responsibility law, a move that should be embraced by all seed companies in Africa so as to transform waste management.

This law, mainly referred to as EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) Regulations came into force on 3rd August 2018. Since then, the Regulations is one of the tools that the Zambian Government relies on to manage, in an environmentally sound manner, packaging materials such as plastics and their resultant

waste. The seed industry is required to register under this law. Once they do so, they are expected to present to the government a strategy on how they will manage their wastes from the seeds and the containers.

According to the Executive Secretary of the Zambia Seed Trade Association, Dr Watson Mwale, the seed companies have aligned themselves with the global approach by the seed sector in waste management starting with maize seed waste.

"Our action has been informed by the fact that we deal with processes that handle chemicals, packaging materials, expired seeds among other things. All these accumulate into huge quantities, which call for engagement with proper professional conduits that can help the Zambian seed sector to properly dispose these materials that contaminate the environment if left unattended," added Dr Mwale.

How does the approach work? The new waste management solution starts with a seed company ordering waste collection service by a licensed and approved transporter (Geocycle),

which then hauls the waste to Lafarge, a local cement manufacturer for disposal. Through Lafarge's Cement Kiln, the hazardous waste is destroyed through co-processing, which results in the generation of heat energy with no waste or by products. Any emissions are strictly monitored by the company.

"We closely monitor the emissions coming from the burning of waste at our central control room to ensure emissions are within acceptable limits for the environment," says Ms. Bwalya Ndhlovu, Alternative Fuel and Raw Materials Supervisor, Lafarge.

In a sector that produces an estimated 1500 tonnes of maize seed waste per year, thus far: 2,816 tonnes of expired seed, 115 tonnes of expired chemicals, 20 tonnes of seed bags, 6 tonnes of plastic containers have been co-processed by Geocycle.

The costs of disposal are estimated at around US\$ 135 per tonne to treat seed waste and US\$ 650 per tonne for empty containers and expired chemicals.

"We are aiming to reduce this cost through adding value to the waste

through recycling," says Andrew McNaught, the lead consultant from Tandem adding that the cost reductions are expected to be realized this year with the 2020 focus being on enabling recycling of chemically contaminated plastics (in a safe and environmentally sound way) and adding value to treated seed waste.

This initiative is being spearheaded by Syngenta Seedcare with the support of Tandem Circular Consulting to facilitate research, innovation, design and implementation on the ground. The project involves eight seed companies namely Kamano Seeds, Syngenta, Seed Co., Zamseed, Bayer, Corteva Agriscience, Klein Karoo and AFRISEED.

Like Zambia, many countries in Africa experience challenges in seed waste management as there are limited solutions and service providers for disposing complex and hazardous waste streams.

\*The writer is the Communication Officer at the continental seed trade association body, The African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA). He Can be reached at daghan@afsta.org.





# Coronavirus: What Consequence on Sporting events across the Globe?

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The novel coronavirus has plunged the global sporting calendar into disarray. Football across the world has been postponed including the Euro 2020 which has been pushed back to next year.

The global value of Sports industry was estimated to be worth \$471 billion in 2018 – an increase of 45% since 2011, and before the coronavirus stopped play, the only trajectory seemed to be upwards. Now, every part of the sporting value chain has been affected by the athletes, teams, leagues, to even the media houses that broadcast these games have all been on a standstill.

With football, Golf, Tennis, Boxing and other major sports on a standstill, Pan African Visions looks at some of the major sporting events of 2020 that have been either postponed or cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic in the world.

## Cameroon's Championships on hold

The coronavirus outbreak has led to all football activities and competition in Cameroon being put on hold. The suspension announced by the country's Federation indefinitely put on hold the Elite 1 and 2 Football championships, and even the country's regional championship.

Public Works Department, PWD, Bamenda were hoping to win their first championship before the suspension of the league. The team from the North West Region of the country led the standings with 47 points after 28 games played. They are two points clear of former champions Coton Sport of Garoua. Colombe of Dja and Lobo were on a good run of results as they are placed third with 44 points in the table. Colombe, however, has a game in hand to the top two contenders.

It is still unclear as to whether the league in Cameroon will resume anytime soon, or whether it will



Cameroon's original plan was for the CHAN to be the test event for next year's Afcon.

be cancelled entirely as it has been proposed in other countries. Should the league be cancelled, it means all the efforts put in place by the Abakwa Boys will just go down the drain.

The decision has not been made yet and all indications from authorities in Cameroon are that they are hoping to end the championship no matter the cost.

## CHAN 2020 Postponed

Cameroon was hoping to host various African countries for the sixth edition of the African Nations Championship, CHAN - That has, however, been put on hold due to the coronavirus. The 4th to 25th April tournament was postponed following an extraordinary session of the CHAN organizing Committee meeting in Cameroon.

The fate of the tournament for African-based players had already been in doubt after defending champions Morocco pulled out of the tournament.

The committee cited amongst others, the confinement of population in many countries, restrictions imposed and the closure of borders

as well as disruptions in air links between many countries as factors that precipitated the postponement of the championship.

The new dates of the competition are yet to be made known and will be done so according to the evolution of the situation of the virus, Cameroon's Minister of Sports and Physical Education Professor Narcisse Mouelle Kombi said.

CAF has recently postponed this month's 2021 Africa cup of Nations qualifiers, but the African champions league final and Confederation cup final, both due to be played at the end of May, are still scheduled to go ahead. Indications, however, is that the finals will be pushed back if the present trend continues.

## Wimbledon cancelled for the first time since World War II

The world of Tennis has not been left out amongst the sports impacted by the coronavirus. One of the oldest tournaments in the world, Wimbledon have had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus, the All England Club announced on April 1. It is the first time since World War

II that the championship has been cancelled. The competition had to run from June 28 to July 11, 2020.

"It is with great regret that the main board of the All England Club and the committee of management of the championship have today decided that The Championships 2020 will be cancelled due to public health concerns linked to the coronavirus pandemic," the AELTC said in a statement. "The 134th Championships will instead be staged from June 28 to July 11, 2021."

Following the cancellation of the grass-court major, and with the pandemic worsening in Europe and the U.S, the men's ATP Tour, women's WTA Tour and the International Tennis Federation extended the suspension of professional tennis for another five weeks to July 13.

"I think we are going to have to draw a line under the 2020 tennis season," Former Wimbledon champion Amelie Mauresmo said in a tweet. "International circuit – players of all nationalities plus management, spectators and people from the four corners of the world who bring these events to life, no vaccine = no tennis."

## Tokyo Olympics, Paralympics pushed to 2021

Authorities in Japan had been hoping that the Olympic Games will be played this year or on its assigned date. That hope, though on a fine line saw the authorities carrying out preparation ahead of the start of the Games. The nail in the coffin came when countries called on the IOC, the International Olympic Committee to postpone the Games with Canada saying it will not participate. Australia meanwhile had advised its athletes to prepare for an Olympic Games next year.

With the pressure mounting, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced that the Tokyo Olympic Games will be postponed until the summer of 2021.

## EURO 2020 postponed to 2021

One of the most-watched competitions in the world, the EURO has been rescheduled to 2021 as a direct consequence of the coronavirus. The Euro 2020 was to be a landmark

event for the competition as it would mark the 60th anniversary. That will, however, be coming up in 2021.

24 teams will compete in the tournament up eight from previous years - but the biggest change is that not one nation will host matches as several cities across Europe are scheduled to host matches. England, Germany, Italy, Russia, Azerbaijan, Holland, Romania, Ireland, Spain, Scotland, Denmark were all scheduled to host matches this year, with the final played at the Home of Football

in England.

A statement from UEFA noted: "It was important that, as the governing body of European football, UEFA led the process and made the biggest sacrifice. Moving EURO 2020 comes at a huge cost for UEFA but we will do our best to ensure that the vital funding for grassroots, women's football and the development of the game in our 55 countries are not affected. Purpose over profit has been our guiding principle in taking this decision for the good of European

football as a whole."

"Football is an uplifting and powerful force in society. The thought of celebrating a pan-European festival of football in empty stadia, with deserted fan zones while the continent sits at home in isolation, is a joyless one and one we could not accept to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the competition."

Some estimates suggest that the postponement of the EURO 2020 will cost UEFA roughly £230-280 million.



**Stadiums all across have remained empty as coronavirus brings professional sports to a standstill.**  
Image REUTERS - Willy Kurniawan.



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