



Home Stretch For Uhuru Kenyatta



A question of Legacy As Kenyan Leader Enters Last Year in Office



Gambia-A Unique Voting System Producing Results

- **Burundi-Recognition For 1972 Hutu Genocide**
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More Than A Game-AFCON and the Changing Dynamics of Football

By Ajong Mbatndah L

Finally, Cameroon is hosting the African Cup of Nations. Initially slated for 2019, it has suffered postponement after postponement for diverse reasons, and quite honestly for a country with the kind of football pedigree Cameroon has, some of the postponements have been under humiliating circumstances.

After promising that the tournament will not be moved, it was taken to Egypt in 2019, and Cameroon given the hosting rights for the 2021 edition, then came the COVID 19 and the tournament was moved to 2022. Hardly has the elite soccer tournament in Africa gone through so much drama in recent times. Drama at the level of Cameroon where there has not been a fully functioning football association for decades. That between the award of hosting rights and the tournament proper, Fecafoot, the local football association is in its third President speaks volumes.

Controversy as well at the level of the Confederation of African Football-that between the award of the hosting rights to Cameroon and the tournament proper, CAF is in its third President-Hayatou, Ahmad Ahmad, and now Motsepe, speaks volumes. Beyond the shores of Africa, the world football governing body FIFA seems to be maneuvering in the shadows to take out the potency of the AFCON, while European clubs where the bulk of the African stars ply their trade have increasingly thrown shade at a tournament that is watched by millions across Africa and the world. It is no doubt that even before the tournament opened, President Paul was taking a victory lap of sorts. Cameroon is hosting the AFCON at last but at what price and to what effect?

The last time Cameroon hosted the AFCON was in 1972. The country won the trophy for the first time in 1984 in Ivory Coast. Prior to the current edition, the Cameroon national team dubbed the indomitable lions has won the tournament five times ...all on foreign soil. For football lovers, it was a huge deal when Cameroon was designated to host the tournament for the second time.

If the quality of football is below expectations, it will not be due to the quality of stadia. Billions of frs cfa have been spent to put up new

sporting infrastructure across the country. The tournament will be taking place in stadiums that should compete with the best in other part of Africa and the world.

The scorn and disrespect from the international scene on AFCON should be eye opener not just to CAF, but to all Africans. From clubs attempting to hold back players contrary to international regulations, to attempts to change the schedule and talks of making the tournament every four years so the world cup can be every two years, if Africa does not up its game, it is its interest that will be sacrificed at the altar of international interests.

If the continent is unable to respect itself, how will the international community respect it? How many times have we heard interminable quarrels on match bonuses? What is so African about the AFCON when three quarters of the players ply their trade out of the continent? When three quarters of the coaches are foreigners? When the few Africans who served as coaches are on the lowest ranks when it comes to comparing the salary scale?

Tournaments like AFCON offer the world the opportunity to know more about the host country and the continent. There are things that are difficult to hide and for all the glamour and glitter, all is not well with Cameroon. The Olembe stadium in Yaounde which will hosting the opening and closing ceremony has been one of the most dramatic stories of the preparations. Initially called the Paul Biya stadium, the project became an embarrassment gulping down way more than its initial cost, workers striking on regular basis for unpaid bills, and completion later than expected resulting in several tense moments with CAF. It came as no surprise when the name of Paul Biya was surreptitiously dropped from the stadium.

Still the tales of corruption have been many, inflated bills, funds siphoned and irrespective of whether Cameroon wins the tournament or not, calls for a serious audit of the whole nations cup venture, and expenses incurred may not die down with a restive population.



Ajong Mbatndah L, Managing Editor

Beaming the spotlight on Cameroon will open the world up to the crisis in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon which has taken a huge toll on human life and property. Over half a million people have been displaced, children have been deprived of education in some parts for five years now. For two years running now, there have been cold blooded massacre of students whose only crime was braving it to school.

While the leadership and political elite has excelled in fomenting and fanning the flames of chaos for selfish political reasons, the world will equally be treated to the legendary hospitality of Cameroonians. A country that over the years has hosted refugees from Chad, Nigeria, Niger, Central Africa, Liberia and many other countries. A country where football is worshipped like a religion. It is hard to count how many times football has served as the only glue holding together a deeply fragmented polity.

In addition to the numerous AFCON victories cited earlier, the country has produced some of the biggest African names to grace the game of football on the global stage. From Roger Milla, Thomas Nkono, Bell Joseph Antoine, Patrick Mboma, Samuel Eto'o Fils and many others. Led by Tataw Stephen plying his trade in the local league in Cameroon, the Indomitable produced one of the greatest upsets in football history when they defeated Argentina led by the legendary Diego Maradona in the opening game of the 1990 world cup in Italy.

For all its international glory,

the game is barely surviving in Cameroon, corruption, incompetence, and unbridled greed have brought the domestic league to its knees. The hosting of the AFCON coincides with the election of Samuel Eto'o, arguably the biggest African star on the global scene as the President of the FA. In a country where good news or federating events have become increasingly rare, the victory of Eto'o generated excitement, and for a variety of reasons.

His humble background gives people hope that grass to grace stories are still possible in Cameroon. Hope that that the generational shift that Cameroon needs is possible. Hope the voices of people can be heard. Hope that the country could be more receptive to prospects of dual citizen so as to draw its sizeable and industrious diaspora into the nation building process. Despite the huge stakes and tensions that surrounded the elections, that its conduct was relatively hitch free and the vanquished congratulated the victor is a lesson that should transform into the broader political sphere where for decades elections have been plagued by brazen irregularities and outright rigging.

Hopefully the tournament is fun and hitch free so that the success could caution the world against taking the continent for granted. More importantly, the prayer should be for the AFCON spirit to reawaken the reconciliation spirit amongst Cameroonians, hopefully it reawakens the patriotic fiber in the leadership-one that will see them earnestly think of a lasting solution to the English-speaking regions, one that will see them open to sincere dialogue, for one is needed. Hopefully that after this AFCON, President Biya cleans house, and sorts out the transition equation so he can finally take that deserved and frankly overdue rest that he needs.

This issue of PAV takes a look at the presidency of Uhuru Kenyatta as he enters his last year in office, there are stories on Nigeria and challenges for the Buhari administration, fighting insurgents in Mozambique, Africa's battle with COVID 19 and more -Happy new year and Happy reading!!!



Simon TIEMTORE
Founder and CEO

Simba was founded by Simon Tiemore a West African immigrant from Burkina Faso. He came to the U.S. in 1998 to pursue higher education and greater opportunities for himself, his family, and his community.

He experienced first hand the many challenges immigrants face on their journey and vowed to one day find better ways of providing financial services to truly meet the needs of immigrants

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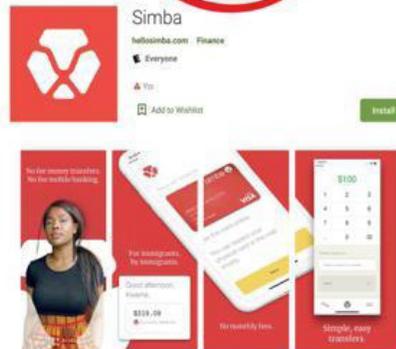
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A Look At Key African Elections For 2022

By Prince Kurupati

The year 2022 is a big electoral year for most countries across the African continent. Some countries will be choosing new national leaders during the year while others will go to the polls to choose new members of parliament as well as local government representatives. Looking ahead to Africa's 2022 elections calendar, here are some key elections to watch.

Mali – Presidential Election scheduled around February 2022

2021 was a tumultuous year for Mali as the country witnessed two coups. Both coups were spearheaded by Colonel Assimi Goita. After the first coup, an interim government was appointed but after failing to heed to the decisions made by the coup leaders, the interim government was dethroned and the coup leaders headed by Colonel Assimi Goita took reigns. Colonel Assimi Goita in deliberations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) agreed to pave way for democratic elections in the country to eliminate military rule by the end of January 2022. Owing to that agreement, there is a high likelihood that national elections in Mali will



Africa wants to see more of ballots and less of bullets.

take place in February 2022. A high number of contestants have already expressed interest to partake in the upcoming elections. For the general Malian population, the upcoming elections present an opportunity to correct past wrongs and put the country on a stable footing through electing able leaders.

Sudan – Presidential Election scheduled officially for 2023 but may be pushed back to 2022

In 2019 following massive demonstrations countrywide, Sudan's

long-time leader Omar al-Bashar was dethroned. Following al-Bashar's ouster, a civilian interim government was put in place to oversee the day to day operations of the country while a substantive date for a democratic election to choose a new leader was being chosen. Unfortunately, things did not go as planned as a coup took place in October 2021. Things from the get go after the coup were tough for the military leaders thus prompting the immediate reinstatement of the civilian interim government headed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok.

When the civilian government was reinstated, an agreement was reached between the military and Hamdok to hold democratic national elections in 2023. However, massive demonstrations have since become a norm in the country as the general population disprove the agreement. They want the national election to be expedited. Though the interim government is still holding firm with its decision to conduct elections in 2023, protracted demonstrations in the country will certainly cause a change of mind and the country might hold elections at an earlier date than 2023.



Tense relations between Prime Minister Hamdok and the military could derail the electoral calendar in Sudan

Chad – Presidential Election scheduled for summer 2022

In 2021, people from all walks of life in Chad travelled to various voting booths to cast their votes in the presidential election. After the votes were cast and tallied, then incumbent Idriss Deby was declared the winner. The victory meant that he would lead Chad for a sixth successive term. Unbeknown to many however was the fact that the day the results were announced was Idriss Deby's last day on earth. The following day, the newly declared president passed away. The unfortunate incident led to the emergence of a transitional military council led by Idriss Deby's

son Mahamat Idriss Deby. The transitional military council seized power for an interim period stating that during its tenure, it was to lay out a roadmap for the reintroduction of democracy. This to be done in the summer of 2022. For the second time in a period of one year, the people of Chad will go to the polls to choose a new president.

Guinea – Presidential Election scheduled for 2022

Guinea is another country that witnessed a coup in 2021. The country’s long-time leader Alpha Conde was deposed by the military in September 2021. The coup leaders seized power and till now, they are overseeing the day to day operations of the country. Up until this point, the coup leaders have not entered into any negotiations with regional bodies nor have they laid out a roadmap back to democracy/civilian rule. The inability of the coup leaders to outline a roadmap back to civilian rule has angered the UN, African Union and ECOWAS. The latter two have since suspended Guinea’s membership.



President Joao Lourenco will likely bag a second term when elections take place in Angola

Owing to the growing international resistance of the military government as well as the growing tensions in the country amongst the general population towards the military government, there is a general consensus amongst political analysts that the military leaders will feel the heat and eventually pave the way for democratic elections to take place.

Kenya – Presidential Election scheduled for August 2022

For the first time in a very long time, the Kenyan presidential election

is not drawing much attention beyond the Kenyan borders. This largely necessitated by the fact that in the build up to the election. There haven’t been any glaring public spats between the aspiring presidential candidates as well as their supporters. The two main rivals going head to head in the election are Willian Ruto, the current deputy president and opposition leader Raila Odinga. The incumbent Uhuru Kenyatta is coming to the end of his second and final term and kudos to him, he hasn’t attempted to break the constitution by vying for a

third term.

Angola – Presidential Election scheduled for late 2022

In Southern Africa, most revolutionary parties have found the going tough in recent times against new and emerging opposition parties. In 2022, Angola’s revolutionary party Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola/Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) will have its own test when it goes head to head against a united opposition running under the coalition United Patriotic Front. MPLA is currently riddled with factionalism at the moment and analysts view the 2022 election as the opportune moment for the opposition coalition to wrestle power from the revolutionary party which has been at the helm since Angola attained its independence from Portugal in 1975. In 2021, southern African nations Malawi and Zambia saw opposition parties win presidential elections and there is a general feeling that the trend may just transcend to Angola in 2022.

What Legacies Will Define Uhuru Kenyatta's Era As Kenyan President?

By Samuel Ouma



A question of legacy as President Kenyatta enters his final year in office.

As a result of the fact that the next election will take place in less than nine months, it is now reasonable to conclude that President Uhuru Kenyatta is on his final lap as Head of State and that the legacy he leaves behind will remain in Kenyans’ memories well beyond August 2022. President Uhuru Kenyatta is currently serving his final term as Head of State.

The son of the founding father and first President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta, came to office in 2013, and his term is slated to end on August 9, 2022, when the country will hold its general elections.

A second and final term was secured for him in the August 2017 elections, with 54 per cent of the popular vote securing his re-election. Rail Odinga, his main opponent, was

successful in his attempt to overturn his election victory in the Supreme Court.

On September 1, 2017, the country's Supreme Court declared his re-election invalid and ordered a new presidential election to be held within 60 days of the verdict. Following the expiration of the time, a fresh election was held on October 26, and he won with 39.03 per cent of the vote, despite the opposition's boycott of the polls.

In 1997, Uhuru made his first foray into politics when he was elected chairman of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) in Gatundu South, in the heart of Kenya's central region. Later in the year, he ran unsuccessfully for the Gatundu South Constituency parliamentary seat.

In 1999, the late Daniel Moi, Kenya's second president, appointed him to the position of chair of the Kenya Tourism Board, a government-owned parastatal organization. It was because of his commitment to President Moi that he was nominated to the Parliament in 2001, where he served till he was appointed Minister of Local Government. He would also go on to become the first vice-chairman of the Kenya African National Union (KANU).

In 2002, the late President Moi endorsed him as his successor; nevertheless, he was defeated by Mwai Kibaki, Kenya's third president. He accepted defeat and served as the head of the opposition from 2003 to 2007.

Instead of contesting President Kibaki's re-election bid in 2007, he withdrew his candidacy and endorsed his re-election campaign. He led KANU into a partnership with President Kibaki, who was running against the leader of the opposition ODM party, Raila Odinga.

Kibaki was victorious in the highly contested 2007 elections, but a dispute over the results resulted in the 2007-08 violence, which cost the lives of more than 1300 people. The



President Uhuru Kenyatta and opposition leader Raila Odinga signing the BBI report on November 22, 2020. Political tensions have reduced in Kenya under his watch. Photo Courtesy.

two parties reached a power-sharing arrangement to bring the mayhem to a close, with Kibaki remaining president and Raila remaining Prime Minister. Uhuru Kenyatta was appointed as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, fulfilling Kibaki's share of Cabinet positions.

In 2013, he founded The National Alliance (TNA), which partnered with William Ruto's United Republican Party (URP). He contested for presidency on a joint ticket with Ruto, who served as his running mate. In March 2013, he was elected as Kenya's fourth President.

As the 2017 elections approached, Kenyatta and Ruto decided to disband their separate parties and establish the Jubilee party, which defeated the combined opposition, the National Super Alliance (NASA).

When President Kenyatta retires, he will leave behind a nation that is stronger and more united than it was under his predecessors. With the historic handshake that took place in March 2018, the son of Jomo Kenyatta was able to bring the two groups of Luo and Kikuyu together, who had been at odds since independence, for the first time in decades. The handshake resulted from a peace agreement reached between Kenya and Odinga, a former rival who has now become a friend,

following the instability that engulfed the country following the bungled 2017 presidential elections.

He has also been in the vanguard of the struggle against the historical marginalization of some groups, launching development projects across the country and ensuring that all communities are represented in the country's leadership, among other accomplishments.

«Kenya is about all of us. We will not be able to succeed until we all work together. It necessitates the participation of everyone. This, in my opinion, is the spirit of the handshake. If it had only been about two people, we would not have gotten to where we are now.

It is not about two individuals; instead, it is about regaining control of the country's affairs. It is about reassuring the people of a nation that they are a valuable and integral part of their country,» President remarked on May 28, 2021, when he welcomed a delegation of elected Luo leaders at the State House.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is another area in which the country performs admirably. In just eight years, the country's gross domestic product (GDP) has more than doubled, rising from Ksh 4.74 trillion to Ksh11 trillion, more than the previous administration

combined. Kenya's GDP was Ksh6.4 billion in 1963, based on the then-current exchange rate, and the administrations of Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel Moi, and Mwai Kibaki combined increased the figure to Ksh4.5 trillion at the end of the twentieth century.

President Kenyatta's legacy will also be remembered for his contributions to improving the lives of Kenyans and connecting Kenya with its neighbouring countries, and the development of the country's transportation industry is a significant part of that legacy. The introduction of several infrastructure projects has been witnessed by Kenyans, with some projects

already completed and others in the final stages of development.

Examples include the LAPSET Corridor Programme, the largest and most ambitious infrastructure project in East Africa, connecting Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, and serving as a model for other similar projects. The project has several essential components, including Lamu Port, the Lamu-Ethiopia-South Sudan highway, the Lamu-Juma-Addis Ababa railway, an oil refinery, and a 2240-kilometre pipeline connecting oil fields in South Sudan to the refinery at Lamu Port. Lamu Port is one of the most essential components of the project.

An additional major transportation infrastructure project now under construction is the Kenya Standard Gauge Railway. The SGR connects Mombasa in the country's coastal region with Malaba in the country's western region, covering a distance of 969 kilometres. Project Phase I, which covers 472 kilometres between Mombasa and Nairobi, and Phase 2A, which goes from Nairobi to Naivasha, has been finished. Phase II, which runs from Nairobi to Naivasha, is still in the works. It is still unclear when work will begin on the stretch of the road connecting Naivasha and Kisumu.

We must not fail to include the

Nairobi Expressway, which is projected to relieve traffic congestion in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi. It spans from Mlolongo to the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, via the city centre, and out to the James Gichuru road intersection in Westlands. When completed in March of next year, the 8-lane elevated dual carriageway is expected to drastically alleviate traffic congestion on Mombasa Road and reduce travel time between Mlolongo and Westlands to 20 minutes, according to project estimates.

Kenya has seen a significant transformation following the unveiling of Kenyatta's Big Four Agenda in 2008, which included manufacturing, universal health care, affordable housing, and food security. Millions of Kenyans now have access to healthcare services because of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and many health facilities have been renovated or built entirely new.

According to statistics, more than 200 community health units have been established, and more than 7000 community health volunteers and a large number of healthcare professionals have been recruited due to the program's implementation.

Further removing all fees from community and county referral health facilities, the Kenyatta government is now focusing on expediting staff recruitment, strengthening links between local and higher-level health institutions, improving financing delivery timelines, supplying medical commodities, coordinating and managing the overall program and infrastructure.

The National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) is being reformed, a mandatory universal health coverage scheme is being established, an essential package of healthcare services is being adopted, and health coverage for 1 million low-income households that will be biometrically registered are being prioritized.

The government is further creating low-cost housing in Nairobi and its vicinity through



President Kenyatta has led by example in the fight against COVID-19.

the Affordable Housing program. In accordance with the State Department of Housing and Urban Development, the construction of houses at Park Road and Stoni Athi has been completed, while the construction of houses at Pangani, Kibera Soweto East Zote «B», and Starehe is still in progress. The houses will provide cheap accommodation to a section of Kenyans who are struggling to meet their daily needs.

Some enterprises that were on the verge of collapsing, such as the Kenya Meat Commission, have been resurrected, providing a much-needed boost to the country's

manufacturing industry.

In education, the Policy on Universal Access to Basic Education was adopted, which assures that all students graduate from elementary school and go on to high school. It has also re-established Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutes to accommodate students who are unable to continue their education at a university or college level.

In addition, Kenyatta's administration scrapped off the 8-4-4 education system, replacing it with the Competency-Based Curriculum.

The country has entered a debt crisis

despite all these accomplishments and many others. This is predicted to harm the next administration. As of July 2021, the entire governmental debt stood at \$7.7 billion, representing an increase from \$1.8 billion when he assumed the presidency. Kenya's lenders are dominated by the World Bank, which ranks first. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Chinese government are among the others.

The Kenyatta government has also failed to solve the widespread corruption problems that the country is facing. Top government officials who embezzled billions of dollars from the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) during the Covid-19 affair, the National Youth Service scam, and the Afya House scandal, among other scandals, are not being prosecuted.

Furthermore, he has a reputation for undermining the constitution by failing to comply with court orders and turning to appeals whenever a decision is reached. As part of this effort, his government is alleged to have filed an appeal with the Supreme Court in an attempt to overturn a Court of Appeal decision that agreed with a lower court ruling that a constitutional amendment proposal put forward as part of the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) was ineffective and unconstitutional.

However, Senator Kimani Wamatangi believes that President Kenyatta still has time to cement his legacy by implementing an economic stimulus program worth KSh26 billion (\$234 million) that he announced on October 20.

Economic stimulus measures are meant to jump-start the economy, generate jobs, and please President Uhuru Kenyatta's electoral base in the run-up to the 2021 General Election.

«If the president's proposal is implemented, we could witness a country that is beginning to recover from the technological setback that was caused by Covid-19,» Wamatangi explains.



President Kenyatta opening a USD1.5 billion Chinese-built railway linking Rift Valley town and Nairobi. His successor will meet infrastructure in better shape.

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Lonsa controls the following entities:



Infrastructure development



Infrastructure development



Infrastructure development



Logistics



Housing



Renewable Energy

Cameroon's President Biya Gives Confusing Appraisal Of War Against Anglophone Separatists

By Andrew Nsoseka

In his traditional end of year speech, Cameroon's President Biya in assessing progress and efforts in the fight against Separatist fighters in Anglophone regions, fighting to create a breakaway state called Ambazonia, gave a self-contradictory assessment. In his speech, the President claimed that a large number of fighters in Anglophone regions, as well as in the Northern regions where the state is fighting Boko Haram have surrendered and are now being transformed in the Disarmament and Demobilisation Centres.

Still, on the war against Ambazonia Separatists, the President said the separatists have increased attacks, employing the use of more sophisticated weapons. "I am pleased to note that a large number of our compatriots who had joined armed groups have accepted my peace overture. Many Boko Haram members have laid down their arms and are being catered for in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Centres in the Far-North Region. The same holds true in the North-West and South-West Regions where many members of armed groups continue to surrender." President Biya told Cameroonians in his speech.

He further stated that "However, many of our compatriots remain within the ranks of armed groups. They continue to engage in criminal activities, increasing attacks with improvised explosive devices and murders of unarmed civilians."

The President's claim of the surrender of Separatist fighters and at the same time increasing attacks is self-contradictory, given that just a few separatists cannot carry out attacks that more fighters were not able to. In his administration's systematic manner of operation, the president failed to give figures to back up his claim that many fighters had heeded his call and are increasingly



Mixed messaging from President on the conflict in the English speaking regions.

decamping.

So far 64 ex-separatists in the two Anglophone regions are known to have graduated from the centre and were all absorbed by the country's own Telecommunications Company, CAMTEL. Apart from these, no others are on record to have left the centres in Bamenda and Buea, since the creation of the Centres on November 30, 2018, by Biya, through a Presidential Decree. Unofficial numbers put the total of those who have surrendered or those found in the centre at about 300. This number beggars that found in single separatist camps littered in villages and towns in the two Anglophone regions where separatists are operating and recruiting on a rolling basis.

In 2021, government forces in Anglophone regions witnessed several devastating attacks and humiliation at the hands of separatists. It was in

2021 that the country's elite force, the Rapid Intervention Battalion saw 15 of its men killed by a separatist commander and fighters, self-styled General No Pity who has continued to be a nightmare to troops fighting separatists in the region. His activities were so devastating to troops' morale that the government started arresting his family members including his ex-girlfriend of five years ago in an effort to force the separatist commander to surrender to stop attacks against government forces. This however did not yield any fruits as he continued his attacks. His activities are said to have bolstered many fighters and even those already sapped by the fighting. Unlike in the previous years when the separatists were mostly on the defensive, they now appear to increasingly be the ones attacking government forces.

Separatists in Anglophone regions

are increasingly employing tactics like guerrilla attacks and ambushing of state security officers leaving many killed. The action of troops on the ground, like mass and blanket punishment of locals whenever separatists attack troops on the battlefield, has rather created more dissenting voices against state forces. Such attacks are also said to be the driving force behind why so many have joined forces with separatists.

President Biya's ill-informed claim that many fighters are heeding his call to disarm is another indication that government will again pursue an unproductive war effort that will only end in more deaths, with civilians paying the heavier price. Speech after speech since the crisis started, the President relying on make-believe pictures painted by his administrators, has continued to drum for more fighting believing that

it will solve the crisis.

In several outings by Cameroon's ministers, especially those from Anglophone regions, they have continually claimed that the government is winning with the military option. Ministers like Paul Atanga Nji of Territorial Administration even proclaimed that "President Biya has already won the war. What we have now are pockets of resistance". This declaration came before some of the most devastating attacks on the country's security forces by separatists whose agenda unlike that of the government, is to make the two English Speaking regions "ungovernable".

Reacting to the president's speech. Maxwell Bone who has written extensively about the crisis said the assertion that many fighters have heeded the President's call to disarm "is simply not consistent with reality."

In several instances, government officers have presented persons passing for separatist fighters purportedly coming from places where locals cannot recognise them. Such events are often highly mediated. However, when it comes to the number of those who have surrendered so far and how many

have been trained and given promised jobs as an alternative to fighting, the officials in charge have often maintained sealed lips.

In his speech, like other previous ones, Biya urged the population to collaborate with state forces. He also promised that wherever sponsors of separatists are located, the government will hunt them down.

While ignoring the human rights abuses committed by state forces, the President said "we plan to enlist the support of a wide range of partner States by debunking falsehoods about our country's human rights situation propagated within international circles by some of Cameroon's detractors."

On pursuing other avenues to solve the crisis apart from daily fighting, the President said "True to our commitment to peace and tolerance, we have continued to demonstrate openness and readiness for dialogue in order to call a halt to this crisis that has wreaked far too much suffering on our populations." He however weakened this statement and claim, by furthering that "Thus, after holding the Major National Dialogue, we have continued to accelerate and deepen decentralization."



The speech offered Cameroonians a rare opportunity to catch a glimpse of President Biya whose normally rare public outings have been further reduced to the strict minimum.



Ex-Separatist Fighters present weapons used for the armed struggle. The government has been slow in facilitating the transition of ex fighters.

The decentralisation sold by Biya's regime as a panacea to the Anglophone crisis is widely unpopular in the regions. The promised decentralisation which he said he is not in a haste to fully implement has not pacified or deterred any separatist agenda and is viewed by many to be outdated. Even the clamour by moderates for a return to the two-state Federation as agreed during the reunification is also becoming unpopular.

Though often presenting himself as a proponent of dialogue as a way out of the crisis, the President and his Government have seemingly turned down proposals like that of the Swiss to mediate between the Cameroon government and separatists. It is said that hardliners in Biya's administration are convincing the President that troops are making progress on the battlefield, and as such, there is no need to accept talks with separatists.

Gambia's Unique Voting System May Just be the Panacea for Africa's Disputed Elections

By Prince Kurupati

On 4 December 2021, Gambians from all walks of life travelled to various voting booths in the country to cast their votes in the presidential election. The election was the first since the removal of long-time authoritarian leader Yahya Jammeh in 2016. In the lead up to the election, there were two issues of interest amongst many political analysts as well as the greater community as a whole. First was of course the issue of the contesting candidates – who was going to win the election to become Gambia's next president. Second, was the issue of the country's unique voting system – was the traditional marbles voting system going to be preserved in the 'newly emerged democratic environment'.

With regards to both issues of interest as stated above, everything went according to 'tradition'. The status quo was preserved with regards to the contesting candidates as the incumbent Adama Barrow garnered 53% of the votes cast while his closest rival only managed 28%. Coming over to the country's unique marbles voting



The indigenous ballot system in Gambia has produced better elections than others across the continent that gulp humongrous amounts with catastrophic outcomes. Photo courtesy.

system, the authorities in the country saw it fit to preserve the system as it was viewed as the best out of all possible alternatives. The reasons forwarded in support of the marbles voting system are solid and thanks to this, they seem as the perfect panacea

to Africa's age-old electoral fraud problems. In this article, we are going to cite these reasons highlighting and exposing how they can be a cure to Africa's highly contentious elections but first, lets get to understand what the marbles voting system really is.

Understanding Gambia's Unique Marbles Voting System

The marbles voting system was first used in Gambia in 1965, the year Gambia attained its independence from British colonial rule. Ironically, it was the British who introduced the marbles voting system as they saw it as the best fit for the country's population which at the time was riddled with low literacy levels. Since that time, the system is still regarded as the best voting system by Gambian authorities.

The marbles voting system replaces paper ballots with marbles (stones). The system also replaces ballot boxes with a metal cylinder with a hole in the top. The metal boxes are placed in the voting booths and they are separated by colour for candidate identification purposes. Also, a candidate's photo is placed on the centre of each metal cylinder for ease of identification. To place a vote, voters need to drop a marble in the metal cylinder representing the candidate of choice.

Once all votes have been cast, vote counting starts immediately on the spot. The marbles cast are emptied



Drumps with names of candidates labelled on them, the system in Gambia has been in place since the 1960s. Photo courtesy.

into a square tray that is dotted with holes. Once the holes in the tray are evenly filled, the total is tallied and recorded on the spot. If there are still more marbles left in the metal cylinder, they are also emptied into the square tray and the process is repeated. Once all marbles have been counted, the results are showcased on the spot thus ensuring fairness.

The Pros
Simplicity

Arguably, the biggest advantage of the marbles voting system is that it is a simple voting system. Owing to this, this system is accommodative to all types of voters regardless of their literacy levels. With the marbles voting system, the issue of spoiled ballots is non-existent. Likewise, the issue of assisted voters (voting) is also significantly reduced. This necessitated by the fact that the elderly and the illiterate need no supervision when casting their votes, all they need is to drop a stone in the metal cylinder of their preferred candidate and the voting is done.

Looking at most electoral races in Africa, many disputes have arisen from the issue of assisted voters. In Zimbabwe for instance, there have been allegations that the individuals tasked with helping the elderly and the illiterate amongst other disadvantaged groups took advantage of the inability of these people to independently cast their votes by placing votes on the candidates of their choice rather than the candidates these people want.

Prevents Ballot Stuffing

Ballot stuffing is one of the most popular forms of electoral fraud in Africa. Though some decisions have been taken by individual states as well as regional bodies to prioritise



The recent re-election of President Adama Barrow was not contested and this speaks volumes on the efficacy of the system in Gambia. Photo courtesy.

the use of transparent ballot boxes for easy identification of ballot stuffing, the problem is still prevalent in most countries on the continent. This largely necessitated by the fact that in some remote areas, ballot boxes may arrive late (sometimes done deliberately by the authorities) at voting booths thus forcing voters to cast their votes at night or in the early hours of the day where visibility is still low. When using metal cylinders, the issue of ballot stuffing is significantly reduced as voters as well as election agents can tell if the cylinder is empty by the sound made by the marbles as they hit the bottom part of the cylinder.

Prevents Double Voting

The use of the metal cylinder is also a great aid in preventing double voting. When the stakes are high like in a presidential election, the

contesting candidates and their support teams may try by all means to turn the tide in their favour. This includes indulging in unscrupulous tendencies such as encouraging some voters to engage in double voting. When using the marbles voting system, this however is not possible. This necessitated by the fact that when a voter casts his/her vote, the sound is audible to everyone including the election agents. If a second sound becomes audible when the same voter is behind the booth, it becomes clear that an attempt has been made to commit electoral fraud. Right on the spot, investigations will start to rectify the situation.

Affordability

The adage 'he who pays the piper calls the tune' applies very much to Africa when it comes to national elections. Most countries have

adopted while others are adopting the biometric voting system. This system is widely regarded as the best system at the present moment in ensuring credible and reliable polls. However, while this is the case, the biggest shortcoming of the biometric voting system is that its an expensive system. As such, some countries end up 'selling their souls' to get and set up the biometric voting machines. Often however, the move sees the distributors of the machines attaching stringent conditions that are in their interest rather than in the country's interest. Gambia's unique marbles voting system guards against this as it is an affordable and sustainable voting system that requires less resources to set up hence can be done without the help of external actors who may have their own warped interests in a country's election.

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It's 2022, Hello Nigerians, Fasten Your Seat Belts!

By Richard Mammah



We have shown a high level of resilience to record some significant achievements despite the turbulence that has characterized our economy, says President Buhari.

2021 has quite clearly been a roller-coaster period for many Nigerians. It has been a year where the country and its citizens were immensely challenged across many fronts but still managed to end the year without going out on the count.

Beginning with the management of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a year that showed both the promise of resurgence as well as the looming spectre of a potential relapse.

In the economy front, it was not a dissimilar picture. The nation formally slipped off the second recession in the Muhammadu Buhari presidency with official inflation numbers also declining, more so when the numbers are contrasted with the overly negative showing that was the case during the year before.

Latching on to the improved numbers from this turf, President Muhammadu Buhari was quiet gung-ho in his new year statement.

‘On the economy, we have shown a high level of resilience to record some significant achievements despite the turbulence that has characterized

our economy and indeed the global economy. The lessons we have learned and keep learning from COVID-19 have encouraged us to intensify efforts to mitigate its socio-economic effects on our Nation.

The major wins we have recorded can be clearly seen in Nigeria’s most recent Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The 4.03% growth recorded in the third quarter of 2021 is indicative of the recovery being recorded in our economy and the confidence that is being shown through the policies that our Administration has put in place after the outbreak of the pandemic.

We may also recall that this recent growth is closely followed by the 5.1% (year on year) growth in real terms recorded by Nigeria in Quarter 2 of 2021. This growth was one of the best recorded by any nation across Sub-Saharan Africa. The 5.1% growth at that time was and remains the highest growth recorded by the Nigerian economy since 2014.’

But the word from the streets was not as assuring as the new

improved numbers were suggesting: with continued high food prices, fluctuating value of the naira relative to the US dollar and many other global currencies, as well as an overly parlous economy overall, many remain despondent. And understandably so too.

The big elephant in the shop in the outgoing year was once again insecurity. As the year came to a close, pitched and sporadic battles and actions continued to be waged and witnessed on this front between Nigerian security forces and an expanding range and numbers of insurgents: Islamists, bandits, kidnappers...the nation has continued to witness a most confounding security crisis that ranks quite squarely with some of the most troubling insecurity encounters that Nigeria has been held in since Independence.

Going forward then, the plain reality therefore is that in 2022, the nation’s leaders have to put all their wits together to douse the very many simmering flames that are already showing up on the radar. And

one prime advice from a seasoned observer and commentator: a winner takes all attitude will not cut it. And the simple reason behind this thinking is that things are indeed so bad with not much very visibly being expected to change at the moment.

The notable social commentator and Associate Professor of Law at Baze University, Abuja, Dr Sam Amadi sees a mixed bag of fortunes for the country in 2022:

‘Bad governance will continue. Economic trends will continue on the bad. GDP will improve because of the containment of COVID. More people will become poor because of deregulation and removal of subsidy without appropriate and balanced growth strategies. Political violence will increase in the run up to the 2023 elections and there will be a general decline in good governance across the country as politics is prioritized over governance.’

A matter of economics

With oil prices fairly comfortably above the 50 dollar mark for almost two years running, it is clear that the nation has since come out of its most debilitating low price regime for its subsisting prime revenue earner.

Recall that when Nigeria returned to democratic rule in 1999, crude oil was selling for an average of \$16.56.

Prices continued to rise and fall across the years and in 2018, seemed to have come close to an equilibrium price of \$57.77.

In 2020, clearly the worst period of the COVID-19 pandemic viral outbreak in economic terms, crude oil prices plummeted to as low as \$32.25.

But for much of 2021, it has hovered around an equilibrium price of \$57.83, and even in the last week of 2021 maintained an upbeat figure of \$79.

However, any gains secured by this burst of good fortune continue to be threatened by two factors: parlous local refining infrastructure which continues to dictate an anomalous situation where the country continues



Insecurity remained a huge challenge for Nigeria in 2021. Photo courtesy.

to spend huge amounts of foreign exchange in importing refined products while also sustaining a very costly but controversial subsidy regime.

Labour and Civil Society protests

On account of a projected ending of the fuel subsidy regime in the incoming year, organised labour and civil society groups in the country have already signalled their intention to undertake different levels of protests and have commenced

mobilising for same.

The fuel subsidy removal is being compounded by a hike in electricity tariffs as well as a spike in the costs of domestic gas. It is a triple whammy that the workers say would further impoverish a citizenry that is already most afflicted across many fronts.

Politics

Without discountenancing the other challenges, it is however politics that will be the real big

theatre of activity in 2022, the eve of the General Elections that should usher in a new set of leaders into the leadership of the nation, both at the centre as well as in many of the sub-national entities.

With candidates expected to be thrown up by the parties from the second quarter of the year and with formal campaigns expected to be in top gear during the fourth quarter of 2022, and ahead of the elections proper in February 2023, there is

already an escalating spike in political activity, beginning with the off-season elections in Ekiti and Osun States whose processes are scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2022.

Security

Also of critical note is the security situation which has continued to be of marked concern to both the leaders and the led on account of the very many theatres of insecurity that have been opened all over the country. Interestingly, security pressure is one of the reasons given by President Buhari for controversially withholding his constitutional assent to the Electoral Amendment Bill 2021.

But out there on the streets, in their farms, on the roads and across the plains, the people continue to be faced with the tough sceptre of insecurity.

Perhaps someday the issue of the value and worth of the life of the average Nigerian would begin to be taken more seriously within the country. But until then, and to paraphrase the other junior national team coach, Fanny Amun, the country still continues to ‘wobble and fumble.’ Which, indeed, is a real pity.



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Burundi: Truth And Reconciliation Commission Approves 1972 Genocide Against Hutu People

When presenting a 2021 progress report before the Parliament on the 20th December, the president of the truth and reconciliation commission (CVR) qualified the 1972-1973 crimes as a genocide against Hutu people in Burundi. The Parliament called the government to recognize the genocide. Divergent opinions have since then risen from political leaders and civil society organizations.

By Egide Lucky



The Parliament adopted the CVR report stating that a genocide was committed against Burundian Hutu people in 1972-1973.

“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission solemnly declares that the genocide crime was committed in Burundi in 1972-1973”, said Pierre Claver Ndayicariye, CVR president during the report presentation.

According to him, several factors led to the conclusion that there had been a genocide against Hutu people in Burundi.

“There had been systematic and massive violations of human rights conducted in 1972 and 1973 against Burundians from Hutu ethnic group by the regime of Michel Micombero,”

also said Mr. Ndayicariye.

He added that there are tangible and irrefutable proofs that there had been plans to exterminate Hutu people in Burundi. The proofs are obtained from political, administrative and judicial decisions that had been taken by the Micombero regime.

“CVR interviewed 955 people aged between 60 and 94, from different ethnic groups and social tenets”, he mentioned.

The investigations show that different institutions including the head of state, local administration, UPRONA party, justice and the army participated and contributed

in the arrests and assassinations that targeted Hutu people, he also said.

For him, the discovery of human remains from mass graves proves that the 1972-1973 killings had genocidal intention: “In many provinces, the mass graves were dug before the genocide in 1970 and 1971”.

Hence, 19,897 human remains have been exhumed from 691 mass graves out of 1900 already identified by the CVR in 10 provinces in Burundi: “Mass graves are telling signs that the regime of Micombero planned and carried out killings against Hutu people.”

According to archives, a council

of war made up of soldiers was established and sentenced intellectuals and civil servants from the Hutu ethnic group to death on 6th May 1972.

However, the CVR report shows that crimes against humanity were also committed against Tutsi people in the south of Burundi, particularly in Rumonge, Nyanza-Lac, Vugizo areas the same year.

Pierre Claver Ndayicariye called on the government to ask for forgiveness to Burundians. “According to the principle of ongoing system of governance, the government should ask for forgiveness for all crimes



There had been systematic and massive violations of human rights conducted in 1972 and 1973 against Burundians from Hutu ethnic group ,says Pierre Claver Ndayicariye

committed in Burundi.”

The parliament recognizes the 1972-1973 genocide

Parliamentarians expressed several concerns before the CVR progress report was adopted.

According to Sabine Ntakarutimana, first vice-president of the National Assembly, the CVR should take serious measures to protect its informants as the genocide matter is sensitive.

“When presenting the report, you have mentioned some names of your informants. I’m concerned about their safety. There should be appropriate measures to protect them,” she said.

Pascal Gikeke, member of parliament, suggest the establishment of a fund to compensate victims and survivors of the 1972-1973 tragedy.

“Properties which belong to Michel Micombero and the UPRONA party should be seized to compensate the victims,” he said during the Parliament plenary.

For him, avoiding genocide crimes now and in the future is a right way to honor and pay tribute to the 1972-

1973 victims and survivors.

As for Olivier Suguru, the CVR should pursue investigations with further crimes that bereaved Burundi. Here, he mentioned particularly the 1988 and 1993 tragedies.

“After all those investigations, it’s necessary to compile a common report, set up a common commemoration day and build a common memorial monument for all crimes,” said the member of parliament.

At the end of the plenary, the Parliament adopted the CVR progress report and issued a statement.

“The parliament in congress adopts the solemn declaration of the CVR confirming that the massive violations committed throughout the territory of Burundi in 1972-1973 constitute a genocide against Hutu people,” said Daniel Gélase Ndirirabe, President of the National Assembly of Burundi as he read a statement issued by the Parliament.

The Parliament thereby requested the State of Burundi to recognize, through legislation, the genocide committed against the Burundian

Hutu people in 1972-1973.

It also exhorted the State of Burundi to establish a mechanism for the prosecution of the alleged perpetrators of the crimes who may refuse to ask for forgiveness so as not to put at stake the national reconciliation process.

The Parliament in congress invites the State of Burundi to initiate a national commemoration day of the genocide committed against Hutu people in 1972-1973 in Burundi, reads the statement.

Burundians diverge on the 1972-1973 genocide

Some political leaders and representatives of civil society organizations have shared their points of view after the CVR progress report that qualified the 1972-1973 crimes as genocide against Hutu in Burundi.

Olivier Nkurunziza, president of the UPRONA (the Union for National Progress) party, rejects the report: “There are points that our party cannot accept. We refute all accusations against our party arguing

that it had been among groups which planned and carried out crimes against humanity in 1972-1973.”

According to him, there is a hidden agenda that probably aims at slandering his party for political reasons. He reminds that the UPRONA party has never had any genocidal intention.

“No decision has ever been taken by UPRONA members to kill Hutu people. It was even impossible considering that some leaders of the party had been kidnapped and assassinated beforehand,” says Olivier Nkurunziza.

He asks the CVR to avoid emotions in their work: “They have to be neutral and work to find truth that unites Burundians.”

“I received the report of the CVR with disappointment and deception,” says Tatién Sibomana, a Burundian politician.

According to him, the report contains lies and contradictions. He raises, for instance, the fact that the report mixes crimes which were committed in 1965, 1967, 1969 and 1972: “That’s nonsense.”

He deplores that there is haste in the CVR activities as it jumped other important dates to shift focus on 1972: “The reasons behind the hurry may be that the term of the commission is due to expire in November 2022.”

François Xavier Nsabimana, president of the association of survivors and victims of the genocide committed against Burundian Hutu people in 1972, exhorts the international community to recognize the 1972-1973 genocide.

“We ask for moral rehabilitation of survivors and the victims’ descendants. The 29th of April has to be a commemoration day for the 1972 genocide victims,” he says.

Mr. Nsabimana calls on the CVR to pursue investigations on the 1972 crimes and other tragic events.

The Genesis Of Raila And Ruto's Feud

By Samuel Ouma

A prominent example of friends turned fierce enemies in Kenya's political history is former Prime Minister Raila Odinga and current Deputy President William Ruto, who were previously close friends but have since become bitter adversaries not only in Kenya.

Between 2005 and 2007, Ruto served as Odinga's junior political partner in the Odinga-led Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) political party. The two worked together during the 2005 referendum campaigns to defeat revisions suggested in the flawed draft constitution by the administration of then-President Mwai Kibaki.

The day was carried out by the duo's camp, known as the orange camp, which resulted in the formation of the ODM, with Ruto as the deputy party leader. During the 2007 presidential campaign of Raila Odinga, Ruto led the ODM Pentagon team, which included the current Tourism Cabinet Secretary, Najib Balala, Governor Charity Ngilu, ANC party leader Musalia Mudavadi, and the late MP Joe Nyagah, to solicit support for Odinga's presidential ambition.

They campaigned with the fervor of those who were possessed. In addition, the leader of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) rallied the Kalenjin community to support Odinga.

Ruto and his colleagues were equally outspoken when the defunct Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) under the leadership of Samuel Kivuitu messed up the presidential election results. He accused the late Kivuitu of rigging the election results in favor of their opponent, President Kibaki, and asked that Odinga be certified the winner of the poll.

It's so amusing that once-close buddies no longer read from the same script together anymore. In the presidential election of 2022, there will be a fight between the two candidates because both have declared an interest in succeeding President Uhuru Kenyatta, whose



Opposition leader Raila Odinga and Vice President William Ruto are in a succession war of sorts to replace President Uhuru Kenyatta. Photo courtesy.

tenure expires in August of next year.

The duo is well-known for engaging in public spats that have resulted in insults being hurled at one another. While Ruto has referred to the African Union ambassador as «the lord of poverty,» Odinga has often referred to the deputy president as «a robber,» according to the Kenyan leader.

«You are opposed to any development in our nation because you believe that this country should be poor so that people can continue to support you. I am telling you that we will work night and day to eliminate poverty in this nation so that your kingdom of poverty has no place in Kenya,» Ruto said of Odinga on July 3, 2019, according to the Kenyan Daily Nation.

Raila said in an assault on Ruto on July 5, 2021, «What is the source of the millions of shillings that they take around and donate to churches?» Raila was referring to Ruto. You can see them coming here dressed as though they were lambs. They are travelling from place to place donating money that has been taken.

The rift between the two leaders began shortly after the signing of the peace agreement in February 2008, as a result of a mishandled presidential

election and the next two-month period of conflict. More than 1300 individuals were killed and more than 500000 people were internally displaced as a result of the unrest.

The disagreement started from Ruto's Kalenjin group's invasion of the Mau Forest Complex, which is the largest forest block in East Africa. Members of Ruto's Kalenjin community were responsible for the invasion. The former Prime Minister called for the allocation of billions of shillings in compensation by the government in order to bring the Mau Forest deadlock to a successful conclusion.

According to a story published on September 26, 2019 by the Daily Nation, several members of the coalition government led by Ruto were opposed to the evictions, even if they were compensated, on the grounds that Odinga would gain political mileage as a result.

The second in charge gathered leaders from across the Rift Valley and told the ODM leader that his project was a waste of time. He was accused by the Kalenjin of planning to eliminate the community. Ruto expressed regret for mobilizing his supporters to vote for Odinga in 2007.

«Everything that I hear you whining about is entirely our own responsibility. But the next time, we'll sit down and have a long conversation,» Ruto was quoted as saying by one of the local daily in 2009, following a demonstration attended by Kalenjin leaders.

Following Ruto's involvement in the maize controversy while serving as Prime Minister of the grand coalition government, Odinga removed suspended him as Agriculture Minister in February. Despite being fired, President Kibaki later rehabilitated him and assigned him to the position of Minister of Higher Education.

The Minister's tenure in the Cabinet was short-lived, as he was finally fired in 2011 following corruption allegations leveled against him. He was accused of defrauding the government by fraudulently selling land to a state-owned firm.

Ruto later abandoned the ODM and joined the United Democratic Movement (UDM), before ending up in the United Republican Party (URP), which formed a coalition with the then-governing The National Alliance (TNA) and won the 2013 general elections, allowing him to be

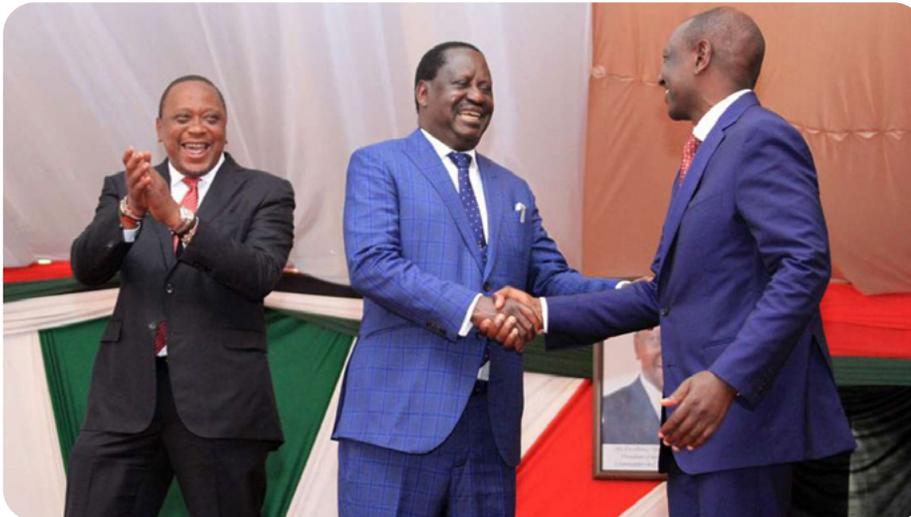
te Deputy President and Kenyatta as President.

The two became estranged in 2018 following a political truce between his boss and Odinga, which came as a result of the instability that rocked the 2017 presidential elections, which resulted in the Supreme Court rejecting the election results. Ruto was a vocal opponent of the historic March 2018 Handshake between the two leaders, which resulted in a rift with Kenyatta.

With the handshake came the emergence of the Building Bridges Initiative, which attempted to modify the constitution in order to bring the country together, a move that Ruto was adamant about opposing. He characterized proponents of BBI as self-centered leaders eager to secure lucrative jobs with large pay for themselves.

The Bill was found illegal by the Court of Appeal in August, and Ruto rushed to social media to express his delight at the decision.

«God, our heavenly Father, has intervened on Kenya's behalf and prevented the coalition of the known,



President Kenyatta laughing in the background as the two front runners to succeed him opposition leader Raila Odinga and embattled Deputy President William share a handshake.

the mighty, and the powerful from shredding our constitution,» he said in a tweet.

According to the former minister, it was Odinga who brought down the ruling party, Jubilee, by putting his own selfish political ambitions into the mix.

«The Jubilee Party was on the right track until he made his way in, when he devoured and scattered our plans. His selfish ambition drove him to launch a process to amend the constitution, not for the benefit of the population, but for his own personal gain,» Ruto declared during a campaign rally

held in Kirinyaga, central Kenya, on November 28, 2021, according to the Associated Press.

He further says that Odinga sabotaged the government's Big Four development strategy, which included manufacturing, universal health care, food security, and affordable housing, among other initiatives.

Ruto resigned from the Jubilee party and created the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), which he intends to utilize as his political vehicle in 2022. He asserted that there are elements within the State House who are working relentlessly

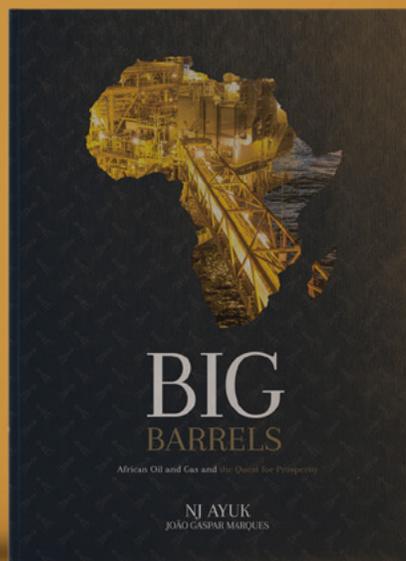
to prevent him from becoming the country's fifth Head of State and Government.

His continuous criticism of the government does not go over well with his superiors. President Kenyatta had requested him to resign if he was dissatisfied with his job.

According to Kenyatta, «if you are not satisfied with it, you should step aside and allow those who wish to move on do so, so that your agenda may be taken to the people.»

«You can't have your cake and eat it too,» says the author. At the same time, you cannot say, «I'm not going,» while also stating, «I'm not agreeing.»

The recent support of Odinga as the best candidate to succeed Kenyatta by Mt. Kenya tycoons and a group of Cabinet Secretaries has further strained relations between the two leaders. Mr. Ruto has referred to the longest-serving opposition leader as «the government's project,» promising to defeat him in the upcoming polls by a wide margin.





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Jimmy Avendano is the Operations Manager for Amazon Fulfillment. Prior to joining Amazon in May, 2021, he served as Director of Operations for Port to Port International Corporation for 8 years and as the Director of the MBA Program and Continuous Education at the Universidad Privada de San Pedro Sula – USAP in Honduras and the University of Twente in the Netherlands where he was a Researcher and Ph.D. candidate. Jimmy was educated at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras from which he received a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, and at the Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) of the University of Twente where he was awarded M.S. in Geographic Information Science.

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Growing Fears Of Another Rwanda-Uganda Clash In D.R.Congo

By Maniraguha Ferdinand



Ugandan and Congolese troops have been fighting ADF in Eastern Congo. Photo courtesy.

Fears are growing that the new great Congo war may be looming after Ugandan armed Forces (UPDF) have been deployed in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to fight Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a former rebel group turned a terrorist organization.

The Ugandan army entered Congo in early December 2021 after multiple terrorist attacks which hit Kampala since October.

It is feared that Uganda may clash again with Rwandan army in Congo after feuds that has distanced once old friends since 2017.

Rwanda and Ugandan army clashed on this land, in Kisangani city two decades ago. By Then each was backing a different faction of the RCD rebel group. Each side lost dearly.

Early December, Rwandan spokeswoman, Yolande Makolo admitted to RFI that Government is following closely, UPDF activities in Congo.

She didn't elaborate much but analysts started fearing that Rwandan army (RDF) may also enter Congo if felt threatened by UPDF presence.

A veteran journalist, Marc Hoogsteijns who covered East Africa for more than 25 years recently wrote that Ugandan entry into Congo may cost the world another great war.

Hoogsteijns urges that UPDF may divert from its first mission once in Congo and tries to equip rebel groups made of Rwandans operating in that great country so that they prepare to attack Kigali.

Rwanda has been accusing Uganda of supporting those groups such as P5 of former Army Chief of staff, General Kayumba Nyamwasa, FDLR among others, though Kampala kept denying wrongdoing. Kampala also accused Rwanda of supporting ADF though the latter recently caught planning attack against Kigali. No independent body has been able to verify accusations.

"The drums of a bigger war in the Kivu's are beating louder and louder every day", said Hoogsteijns.

Both Rwanda and Uganda have signed security related agreements with Congo, including those that could allow them deploy forces if

needs be, to fight insecurity in Congo.

It is in the fulfillment of President Felix Tshisekedi's promise to the people of the East who have suffered insecurity for over 25 years.

Brian Mukalazi, the Country Director of Every Child Ministries Uganda recently wrote an opinion piece, where he said that animosity between Rwanda and Uganda cannot put Rwanda at ease when Uganda is nearby in Congo.

"Given their rising animosity, these two countries, if both are invited into DR Congo, could spell doom for DR Congo and the entire Great Lakes region. For decades, DR Congo has been used as a fertile ground for breeding rebel activities and some of the rebel groups are said to be backed by DR Congo's neighbours", he wrote.

However, Uganda is confident that it will not fuel animosity with Rwanda, since the southern neighbor had been briefed before UPDF cross to Congo.

"The beauty is that Rwandans know what is happening on the ground. They have good intelligence and I

am sure they have intelligence on the ground. I don't think it is in Rwanda's interest to confront the UPDF at this particular time", Uganda's State minister for International Affairs Henry Oryem Okello assured.

Early 2020, President Paul Kagame vowed to backfire if anyone tries to burn his 'house'.

"When you have so many grass-thatched houses next to each other, you don't want to play games of throwing fire because you might get burnt too", he said.

"So for us we don't play those games of setting fire to other people's homes. But we invest ourselves and everything we have in trying to make sure that our homes and houses are well-protected, that they don't catch fire easily. And make sure that whoever wants to set fire to our houses will do it at a very huge cost to himself", he added.

UPDF together with FARDC (Congolese army) have been boasting victories over ADF since December, and Rwanda is yet to announce if UPDF activities threaten its security.

Foreword by Samuel Eto'o Films

HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER

THE 4P'S TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER



EYONG ENOH

Cabo Delgado: A Stage Of The Long Battle To Defend The Sovereignty Of Mozambique, And SADC

The battle for Mozambique's sovereignty is becoming increasingly complex as soldiers from the country and the SADC region have fallen in battle in Cabo Delgado province, where terrorists linked to the self-proclaimed Islamic State are carrying out bloody attacks that have killed nearly 4,000 people, including members of the Defense and Security Forces and civilians. In the fight, despite the fact that the Mozambican forces have the support of SADC, Rwanda, and the South African military company Paramount, the terrorists are still active. In October 2021 it was four years since the first terrorist attack in Cabo Delgado and the Mozambican president exhorted, last December, the soldiers in combat to make 2022 a decisive year for the end of terrorist incursions. However, doubts hang over that goal because the terrorists are showing resistance and with a tendency to spread the attacks to other provinces.

By Jorge Joaquim

At least one member of South Africa's military was killed on 20 December in fighting between Mozambican and allied forces and terrorists in Macomia district, Cabo Delgado. The deceased soldier was a member of South Africa's special forces — and would be the first member of the special forces to be killed in action in 32 years, since the so-called Border War when apartheid South Africa fought to prevent Angola's and Namibia's independence.

The South African government confirmed the loss in a statement. The South African soldiers were ambushed by insurgents east of the village of Chai, in Macomia, according to a statement from the South African Department of Defence. The soldiers managed to fight through the ambush but were attacked again while waiting for a helicopter to come and evacuate them. "During this incident, an SANDF (South African National Defence Force) member was shot and declared dead on the scene," the statement said.

This is the first SANDF combat death in this mission. However, there's been a lot of loss of joint troops. Heavy fighting between Mozambican and allied forces and terrorists in Cabo Delgado has been reported.

The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Mission in Mozambique confirmed on 24 December that "SAMIM forces suffered three casualties," during an



offensive around Chai administrative post, detailing "one fatality and two wounded, while Mozambican forces suffered six casualties," including two fatalities. The Mozambican government confirmed the casualties for the first time, announcing two soldiers had been killed and four wounded.

One Tanzanian soldier died during an offensive by allied forces that destroyed an insurgent camp south of Chitama, Nangade district, on Saturday, 25 September. Three members of the SAMIM force were injured: two soldiers, also from the Tanzanian People's Defence Force, and one soldier from the Lesotho Defence Force.

More than 600 women and girls have been kidnapped and enslaved by a group linked to Islamic State in Cabo Delgado province since 2018, says Human Rights Watch. Some of the

women and girls have been rescued by Mozambican and regional forces

fighting the insurgency, but many are still missing. HRW's report is based on interviews with 37 people, conducted remotely between August 2019 and October 2021. The interviewees included former abductees, their relatives, security sources, and government officials, and monitored media reports about kidnappings. The insurgents "forced younger, healthy-looking, and lighter-skinned women and girls in their custody to 'marry' their fighters, who enslave and sexually abuse them," HRW said. "Others have been sold to foreign fighters for between US\$600 to US\$1,800. Foreign women and girl abductees, in particular, have been released after their families paid ransoms, HRW said.

However, in recent days, there have been reports of terrorist attacks in Niassa, apparently carried out by insurgents on the run following the offensive by SAMIM and Mozambican forces.

Niassa: a new stage of attacks

An officer of the special nature reserve of Niassa province was killed by the terrorists in Naulala village, Mecula district on 20 December. Niassa's secretary of state Dinis Vilanculo confirmed the loss to state-owned TV, adding that the attackers set homes on fire and abducted some of the villagers. Vilanculo also said that Mecula town was now hosting approximately 3,000 people who had been forced out by the attacks.

President Filipe Nyusi has told people not to panic over recent terrorist incursions in Niassa province, promising that the Defence and Security Forces (FDS) are already controlling the movements of the insurgents. During his state of the nation address to parliament on 11 December, Nyusi said that the recent movements of terrorists heading north to the Tanzanian border, and westward to Niassa, were a direct result of the pressure being applied by the FDS and its allies, who have captured most insurgent bases in Cabo Delgado province.

However, Nyusi stressed that although the joint operations of the Mozambican army and troops from Rwanda and the Southern African Development Community had made progress in reducing the terrorists' ability to fight, the focus continued to be on cleaning up the areas where terrorists remained. He said that about 200 insurgents had been killed in combat, and named

11 terrorist leaders who had fallen, including Rajabo Faquir, killed on 18 November, “considered the number 3 in their hierarchy”. The president dismissed the role of poverty and social inequality in the rise of terrorism in Cabo Delgado, saying that “there is no rational narrative behind terrorist actions. What we are facing is simply banditry.”

In fact, the outbreak of terrorist attacks in Niassa province is not surprising. The insurgency’s expansion was expected, given the military pressure they experienced in Cabo Delgado. The goal of terrorists is to continue to sow terror within the communities, as well as the dispersion of military forces fighting terrorism in Cabo Delgado. However, The terrorists would not be able to operate in the same way in Niassa as in Cabo Delgado, since the province had no access to the sea, and this would make logistics harder.

Troops from the joint Mozambican, Rwandan and SADC force were seen in certain districts of Niassa province, according to local sources, in an operation apparently aimed at clearing out possible terrorist positions and hideouts. The operation also aimed at preventing terrorists from escaping from Cabo Delgado into neighbouring Niassa.

Speaking to Rwandan state television last week, Rwandan president Paul Kagame said his country’s forces had gathered intelligence suggesting that insurgents

intended to expand into Niassa province. “Having secured Cabo Delgado, their plan was to take over another — a province called Niassa,” he said. Research published earlier this year by Maputo-based think tank IESE found that the insurgency had installed “radical religious cells and recruitment mechanisms outside Cabo Delgado, particularly in Nampula and Niassa.

South Africa’s deputy president David Mabuza has said that the possibility of the insurgency in Mozambique spilling into neighbouring states cannot be ignored. He defended the South African government’s decision to support Mozambique’s fight against terrorism, saying, “Our involvement in stabilisation efforts in Cabo Delgado is in the country’s national interest”. Mabuza added that the Southern African Development Community’s (SADC) member states needed to cooperate better and to share intelligence to prevent future insurgencies. He was answering questions in the National Assembly, in November.

Lacking of a clear combat strategy Opposition parties Renamo and MDM have complained about the



failure of the state intelligence service, SISE, to anticipate the terrorist attacks in the north of the country. Both Renamo leader Ossufo Momade and MDM leader Lutero Simango blamed SISE for neglecting its duty of protecting the country against terrorism, and instead engaging in corruption. Some members of the Defence and Security Forces are allegedly charging people in exchange for escorting them along the Mueda - Mocimboa da Praia - Palma route. The charge varies between \$63-78 per vehicle. The cost to bus companies of this illegal charging was the reason why the bus fare had gone up for passengers.

Mozambique and Tanzania have been criticised by the United States for failing to respond effectively to terrorism threats. In its annual terrorism report for 2020, the US State Department includes Mozambique in a list of “terrorist safe havens”, defined as places where terrorists can operate, recruit and organise relatively safely, due to inadequate government control or political will. “Mozambique does not have a counterterrorism strategy to guide operations, and mid-law enforcement agencies lack the training, equipment and overall capacity... to proactively detect, deter or prevent acts of terrorism.”

Tanzania is named as a recruitment and transit point for terrorists and criminal organisations operating in Mozambique. The report said that commanders of the security forces of the two countries had signed a memorandum of understanding about joint counterterrorism operations, intelligence sharing and extradition. Tanzania had also announced the extradition to Mozambique of 516 people arrested in relation to terrorism in Cabo Delgado, it added.

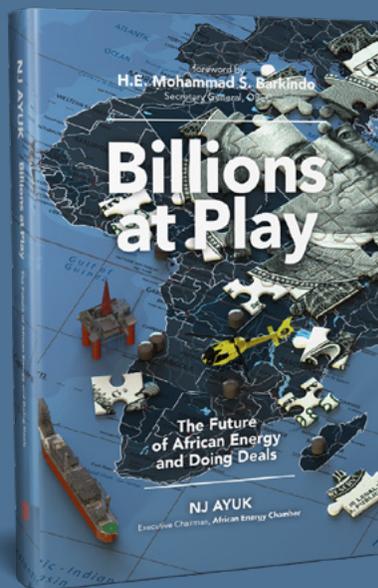
However, the core problem for security provision in Cabo Delgado is that there are few troops in the pro-government coalition and a huge amount of geographic area that they must protect as civilians return to their homes. In the bigger picture, there is evidently much more to be done. According to one estimate, over 2,000 insurgents are unaccounted for, as are hundreds of hostages. Stability in many areas remains fragile, as evidenced by the limited numbers of displaced people returning home and the caution from humanitarian agencies in resuming operations.

As the SAMIM mission heads towards the end of its current mandated deployment in mid-January, the mission continues to make some operational gains, but still faces a series of unresolved questions about its long-term future.

Billions at Play

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by NJ AYUK



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A Glance Into Malawi's Challenging Post Covid19 Socio-Economic Strategy

By Joseph Dumbula

Before the year 2021, came to end, Malawi President Lazarus Chakwera announced a bold post-Covid19 economic recovery strategy which is meant to take the Southern African nation out of its economic woes exposed through an unprecedented high cost of living.

According to Chakwera, the strategy is meant to foster recovery for the Covid-ravaged economy at a time when the pandemic's assault against people's livelihoods, incomes, and businesses is continuing and entering its fourth wave.

The strategy runs until 2023 and is roughly to the tune of half a billion Malawi Kwacha.

Critically, the plan has sights on expanding agricultural production, which is Malawi's economic mainstay, improve the mining sector and the construction industry.

For instance, the plan postulates that to upgrade the agricultural sector, there is need to increase, and diversify agricultural production for export and formalize informal economic activities, but must also help restructure the economy by stimulating other sectors like mining, infrastructure development, and manufacturing.

Throughout the year, Malawi's highly dominating news has been about the rising cost of living decidedly cemented by the loss of power for the Malawi Kwacha against major trading currencies.

In fact, there have been a series of nation-wide demonstrations against inflation which reached 11 percent.

But Chakwera insists recovering the economy must begin with authorities to cut costs.

"I am ordering all Ministries to review their plans for local and international travel during this period, as well as



President Lazarus Chakwera announced a bold post-Covid19 economic recovery strategy which is meant to take the Southern African nation out of its economic woes

their plans for the procurement of new vehicles during that same period. The outcome of their review must be the submission of revised and scaled down plans that limit spending on travel and new vehicles to what is deemed absolutely necessary. I myself have not added a single new car to my convoy, but continued to use the cars inherited from my predecessor and so I expect every Ministry under my Administration to do the same." He said through the end of year address.

But stakeholders say the plan can only be a success story should it also

focus on taming corruption.

In a statement, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace said the plan needed to also have cleared stated accountability monitoring tools.

This comes as so far; two cabinet Ministers are facing corruption charges for over discharging their duties.

Minister of lands, Kezzie Msukwa was arrested on the new year's eve for allegedly offering land to some Asian traders who gave him millions of Kwachas and a Mercedes Benz.



President Chakwera fired Energy Minister Newton Kambala over his alleged role in illicit energy supply contracts.

Earlier in the year, Chakwera also had to fire Energy Minister Newton Kambala over his alleged role in illicit energy supply contracts, charges he is challenging in court.

Local media quote economic Milward Tobias as having said there has to be a strong balance between micro and macroeconomic players in a bid to balance the performance of the economy.

Meanwhile, former ruling Democratic Progressive Party, through Spokesperson Shadreck Namalomba has quashed the ambitions saying they are too futuristic.

"The President must reverse the high salaries and benefits that he gave to himself and his cabinet and reduce the cabinet size. He also needs to reduce the number of advisors, evict from the state house all extended members of his family feasting on public resources, remove Value Added Tax on essential goods such as cooking oil, provide bailout funds for SMEs and provide cash transfer to the most vulnerable people" Namalomba said.

But, the Malawi President feels his government has over the last two years done enough to control the performance of the economy.

"Although those mitigation efforts by my Administration have not completely ended the financial suffering in our midst, the situation now would have been far worse if we had not intervened. It is because we intervened that our economy has shown more resilience than the economies of our neighbors. Because we intervened, Malawi is one of only two countries in the entire SADC region that did not go into a recession in 2020. Because we intervened, Malawi's incomes only suffered stagnation, while per capita GDP in

neighboring countries suffered regression. Because we intervened, Malawi registered one of the lowest numbers of food insecure households in the region, which declined by 37 percent.” he said.

Meanwhile, Chakwera has lamented dwindled Covid19

vaccination, a thing he says is also impacting negatively in the quest to revamp the economy.

“So far, only over half a million people in this country are fully vaccinated, which is less than 5 percent of the targeted 11 million people we need to vaccinate to reach

herd immunity. We actually have vaccine doses that are in danger of expiring, because so many of you are not getting vaccinated. But the bottom line is this: we cannot recover the economy as fast as we want to until we all get serious about getting vaccinated and observing such

measures for stopping the spread of the virus as wearing masks, washing hands, and keeping a distant from others and crowded spaces.” He said.

Until now, there have been slightly over two thousand deaths since the first case was recorded in April 2020.

Condolence Messages Pour in for South Africa Anti-Apartheid Hero Desmond Tutu

By Prince Kurupati

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, an iconic figure in the fight against Apartheid in the 80s and early 90s in South Africa died on Boxing Day. Tutu who was ill for a long time having been diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1997 succumbed to the disease according to Roger Friedman, the spokesman for the Desmond Tutu Intellectual Property Trust.

During the late years of Apartheid rule in South Africa, Desmond Tutu fought a relentless battle against white minority rule. His efforts saw him dubbed the ‘nation’s conscience’ by both the black and white populations in South Africa. Post-Apartheid, Desmond Tutu was at the forefront in unifying the nation to become the Rainbow Nation as it is affectionately known today where both whites and blacks co-exist peacefully.

The late Archbishop was given the honour to chair the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a commission set up to look into the injustices committed during Apartheid era with a view to healing the nation. Earlier on in 1984 at the height of the Apartheid, Desmond Tutu received the prestigious Nobel Prize for his non-violent opposition to white minority rule.

The death of Desmond Tutu has thrown South Africa and the whole world in mourning. In wake of his death, condolence messages keep coming paying tribute to a man



Archbishop Desmond Tutu was an iconic figure in the fight against Apartheid.

who was the moral compass for the Rainbow Nation, South Africa.

Cyril Ramaphosa – South Africa’s President

In his condolence message, the president of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa described the late Archbishop as “one of our nation’s finest patriots”. The South African president said of Desmond Tutu, “A man of extraordinary intellect, integrity and invincibility against the forces of apartheid, he was also tender and vulnerable in his compassion for those who had suffered oppression, injustice and violence under apartheid, and oppressed and downtrodden people around the world”.

Nelson Mandela Foundation

“He was larger than life, and for so many in South Africa and around the world his fate has been a blessing. His contributions to struggles against injustice, locally and globally, are matched only by the depth of his thinking about the making of liberatory futures for human societies.”

Barack Obama – Former U.S. President

In 2009 during his presidency, Barack Obama bestowed upon Desmond Tutu the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In his condolence message, Obama said, “Archbishop Tutu was grounded in the struggle for liberation and justice everywhere. He never lost his impish sense of humour and willingness to find humanity in his adversaries.”

Joe Biden – Current U.S. President

“His (Desmond Tutu) courage and moral clarity helped inspire our commitment to change American policy toward the repressive Apartheid regime in South Africa. His legacy transcends borders and will echo throughout the ages.”

Thabo Makgoba – Current Archbishop of Cape Town and metropolitan of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa

“Desmond Tutu’s legacy is moral strength, moral courage and clarity. He felt with the people. In public and alone, he cried because he felt people’s pain. And he laughed... no, not just laughed, he cackled with delight when he shared their joy.”

Dalai Lama – Tibet’s spiritual leader

The Dalai Lama said that in Desmond Tutu, the world has “lost a great man, who lived a truly meaningful life.”

Justin Welby – Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby described the late Desmond Tutu as “a prophet and priest.”

Boris Johnson – British Prime



Minister

“He was a critical figure in the fight against apartheid and in the struggle to create a new South Africa – and will be remembered for his spiritual leadership and irrepressible good humour.”

Amnesty International South Africa

“Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu was a beacon of light for the human rights movement in SA and globally. His commitment to equality and rights for all served as a much-needed moral compass during the turbulent apartheid era and today, we send our condolences to his family. Rest in Peace.”

He was larger than life, and for so many in South Africa and around the world his fate has been a blessing, read a statement from the Mandela Foundation.

Cameroon: Military Scorched-earth Policy Creating More Dissenting Voices, Swelling Separatist Ranks

By Andrew Nsoeka



Business premises burnt to the ground in Mbengwi-Road neighbourhood in Bamenda after separatists attacked a BIR convoy.

On Wednesday, December 8, 2021, soldiers in Cameroon’s Northwest regional capital, Bamenda conducted an operation that ended with scores of houses and businesses burnt down to the ground. According to video evidence and testimony of some witnesses, several persons were also killed in the operation, and some were burnt alive. The locals blamed state security

officers for the killings and burnings. This was, however, not the first case where soldiers fighting separatist fighters have used blanket punishment on civilians, or communities suspected to be hosting separatist fighters. Since the crisis started and took an armed twist, several villages have been documented to have been burnt down by state security forces in their campaign supposedly targeting

separatists.

The Centre For Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, CHRDA based in Buea, Southwest Region of Cameroon in its last update of burnt villages and communities said as of August 2021, the number stood at 238. An official of CHRDA told Panfrican Visions that as of early 2022, the number should be nearing 250 villages burnt down by state forces.

In a communique released on Friday, December 10, 2021, the Ministry of Defence, MINDEF in reaction to the Mbengwi-Road incident confirmed the operation carried out by state forces. Mbengwi road was the latest community hit with such blanket punishment that targeted every, in the guise of going after separatist fighters operating in the area.

MINDEF stated that at about 3 PM on December 8, a convoy of the country's elite force, the Rapid Intervention Battalion, best known by its French acronym, BIR was immobilised in the Bamenda-Mbengwi stretch of road, using a wired Improvised Explosive Device, IED.

The operation, going by local sources and even the Ministry of Defence, MINDEF press statement, was a retaliatory one by the military who set out to avenge a separatist attack on a BIR convoy. "With the use of a wire-controlled improvised explosive device, IED, the

insurgents immobilised the convoy of the Defence and Security Forces, before opening heavy fire on the latter," MINDEF said in a statement.

The aftermath of the operation rather depicted an attack on the locals and not the separatists as claimed by the MINDEF statement. Locals testify that in rage, the backup troops sent following the immobilisation of the BIR convoy by separatists rather descended on locals and their properties, burning and shooting indiscriminately. What caught the attention of many, was the widespread burnings that left several structures destroyed.

In several videos making rounds on social media, several houses, businesses and even dead bodies are seen, as a result of the fire set by the soldiers and shooting that accompanied the burnings. The locals testified that the burning and killings were orchestrated by the rampaging soldiers. Media reports put the number of those burnt alive at five. Statistics provided from locals in the area say at least six persons were killed and several others shot and wounded.

Panoramic amateurish video taken by some of the victims from hiding spots shows wide sections of the targeted neighbourhoods with its structures going up in flames.

In the Ministry of Defence's



Parked cars were also torched by soldiers in Mbengwi Road and surrounding communities

Statement, Navy Captain Cyrille Atonfack in his press release said local military units in the areas were deployed as a backup to secure the area where the BIR convoy was immobilised. However, what those on the ground witnessed was an invasion of their homes, shootings, and burning of houses and businesses which forced many to flee their homes.

The MINDEF statement claims that the only fire incident in the Mbengwi-Road incident was recorded during a gunfire exchange during which a warehouse of explosive devices was ignited. The statement said the fire spread to nearby houses. On the contrary, the fire incidents were recorded at Mbengwi Road, Azire, Hospital Roundabout and Rendezvous neighbourhoods. The videos taken by locals using smartphones show several houses on fire, and it was not only in a single location as claimed by MINDEF. MINDEF claims that those who died during the retaliatory attack were four separatists, but video evidence shows at least two apprentices at a metal workshop killed and partially burnt during the operation. The two were identified by locals who said they were young children. At that scene, there was a third survivor with a bullet in his leg.

Satellite imagery of the affected

neighbourhood showed that the fire was not in a single location too. In a statement released after investigations, the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, CHRDA and Cameroon Anglophone Crisis Database of Atrocities said the burnings were deliberate.

"The scale and distribution of burned buildings, plus the distance between these burned sites, demonstrate that this incident was a deliberate burning of the community rounding Mbengwi Road by the state security forces," they said.

The action of state troops contravenes Article. 8 (2) (a) (iv) of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court which spells out what constitutes a war crime. Here it defines it to include "Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly."

Also, Article 85 (3) (a), plus art. 51(2) of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977 also states that "Intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the

natural environment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated" is an act that shall amount as a war crime.

The incident has received wide condemnation, with critics saying that such blanket actions rather fuel the conflict and drive many who are readily recruited by separatists to fight against government troops.

Several ex-separatists when asked why they took arms against the state, have often said the burning of the villages, and indiscriminate killings made them join because they knew that the soldiers will not spare them even if they were not fighting. Such blanket punishment has also made it increasingly difficult for locals to trust and collaborate with state security forces in their campaign against separatists. This has further driven the separatist claim that the state forces are fighting all Anglophones and not just those with arms, making many refer and see the soldiers "they" vs "us" Anglophones.

Though a result of their own doing, this has also made the government troops to see the general Anglophone Community as sympathisers and accomplices to separatists, and as such used it to justify their blanket punitive actions.



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Africa Must Step Up Participation in Vaccine Research - Zacharia Kafuko 1Day Africa Director

By Ajong Mbapndah L

The continent of Africa has not actively contributed to the research that has gone into the current crop of vaccines on the market, and this has created a ripe environment for the thriving of misinformation, and growth of the distrust of western therapeutics, says Dr Zacharia Kafuko, 1Day Africa Director.

Discussing COVID-19 perspectives in Africa, Dr Zacharia Kafuko says if the continent is able to reach a point where African researchers will conduct research and conduct clinical trials where Africans will participate and all this carried out on the African continent, vaccine trust will be realized.

While this future as envisioned by 1Day Africa is still work in progress, Dr Kafuko urged Africans to massively get vaccinated to ease the impact on health care systems and economies across the continent.

Could we start with an introduction of your organization 1Day Sooner and 1Day Africa?

1Day Africa is the African Chapter of 1Day Sooner, an international non-profit organization that advocates for people who want to participate in high-impact medical trials, including COVID-19 challenge trials.

The African Chapter of 1Day Sooner works to implement strategic goals of 1Day Sooner that are applicable to the unique context of the continent. Africa faces many healthcare system challenges that have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and highlighted the need for future pandemic preparedness on the continent. One of the critical observations that have been highlighted in this pandemic is that Africa as a continent has not contributed its fair share to medical research and clinical trials even for medicines being used on the continent. This is where the mission



1Day Africa aims to improve the continents contribution to medical research , says Zacharia Kafuko

of our organization lies. 1Day Africa aims to improve the continents contribution to medical research by encouraging participation of Africans in medical research and clinical trials both as researchers and as trial volunteers.

What do you consider as high-risk trials and what benefits do people get from participating in medical trials?

High risk trials are clinical trials where participants are inevitably exposed to adverse effects as a result. The actual adverse effects can vary depending on the type of trial involved but generally are interpreted in terms of possibility of hospitalization and the possibility of mortality. Covid-19 challenge trials are an obvious example of a high-risk trial. I should mention here that all clinical trials are designed to have the very least possible risk of a fatality. This risk is assessed based on a multi-

factor-variables system. At 1Day Sooner for example, our research department worked on an interactive risk model which estimates the probability of hospitalization or death for participating in a Covid-19 challenge trial.

The benefits of participating in high-risk clinical trials (and all medical trials in general) must be understood from the perspective of altruism. That means on the part of the trial participant, they are effectively contributing to ending diseases. This is achieved first by helping scientists understand the disease better which translates into better care, prevention, detection and testing for that particular disease. The second is by helping researchers come up with better, safer and effective drugs for diseases (preventive and curative). Something that ultimately benefits the wider population. Just as a reminder, each one of the Covid-19 vaccines we are now using were

tested for safety and efficacy using clinical trials where trial volunteers participated in. It is important also to emphasize that ending diseases means researching them and conducting clinical trials for their treatments. We have diseases that have lingered for decades especially in Africa - and part of the reason is the slow pace of the research in such diseases.

May we have an overview of the COVID 19 situation in Africa today especially with the new variant?

The Covid-19 situation in Africa is not very different from what is obtaining in other parts of the world. Most of the new infections now being reported are due to the omicron variant (B.1.1.529) which was first detected in and reported in South Africa. This variant has gone on to spread across the continent of Africa where surges are being reported. This variant is spreading like no variant has done prior and while it is true that it is less virulent and hence less fatal, the situation is still very delicate as it is straining the continent's already fragile health care system. With about 9.9 million total infections and more than 220, 000 deaths - these are figures that should prompt all of us to think about what needs to be done.

For all the issues that Africa has in a broad sense with its healthcare infrastructure, the number of casualties remain low compared to the rest of the world, what do you think accounts for this?

This has been a recurring point of conversation and inquiry for a while now. There are obviously several factors that have been given to explain this, but the majority of those proposed factors have not scientifically been researched on to quantitatively and confidently create credibility. The most persuasive

argument which was actually researched on suggested that the reason for the low cases and mortality is the continent's demographic age structure. We already know that Covid-19 is severe in older people, especially those above the age of 65, but the age demographic structure of Africa is much lower than that. For example, the median age of sub-Saharan Africa is at 18 years while the median age for North and South America, Europe and Asia ranges from 32 to 42.5 years.

Further, it is worth mentioning that Africa also lacks sufficient testing capacity which means that several cases go undetected and hence unreported. It is therefore a good practice to be overly cautious when looking at the continent's statistics because, there are lots of rural communities where access is extremely limited and even in urban areas many people have not been tested, creating an under-reporting of the extent of infections and the severity.

Recently there was a proposal from members of 1Day Sooner Africa for a Pandemic Insurance Fund to the World Health Assembly, how did this come about?

1Day Sooner as an organization has very strong vaccine equity principles which have led to several efforts to not only engage with the global community on issues of vaccine access beyond the human challenge trials but also take steps to mitigate the impact of unequal access to vaccines in the face of vaccine nationalism. This proposal was a collective one from a team that was constituted following efforts to replicate the pattern that helped solve the Ebola crisis of West Africa in 2014 as led by Mosoka Fallah. The idea was to have the Ebola veterans (those who worked to end the 2014 outbreak in various



9.9 million total infections and more than 220, 000 deaths are figures that should prompt all of us to think about what needs to be done, says Zacharia Kafuko.

capacities) lead the plea for assistance to the international community. It was decided that the petition as carried through the open letter would better be addressed by the World Health Organization. Specifically, our believe was and still is that all countries of the world need to come together to end the pandemic - especially the wealthy countries and those that have been

producing vaccines. The way to get all the countries to agree and commit themselves to the ethical principles of vaccine equity and now future pandemic preparedness through a pandemic insurance fund was to have these countries vote on the record during the World Health Assembly. That is how we re-aligned our efforts towards that crucial goal.

May we know the reaction of the WHO and other leading global stakeholders to the proposal?

The first thing to mention is that this campaign is still ongoing and the WHO at this stage has not officially written to us in response or reaction to this proposal. We do know that the principles and the requests being made in this proposal also resonate with the WHO and we acknowledge the heavy amount of work being put into similar efforts. We remain convinced and confident of the ultimate global benefit of having a pandemic insurance fund set up to gear the world to respond better to pandemics in the future and ensure that health equity is achieved. We are hopeful that during the next sitting of the WHA, a positive will be achieved. In the process of this effort, we have received great support from leading global experts from all the continents in the world. Additionally, the West African Health Organization has both supported this open letter and has partnered with us to work towards its success. As for other global stakeholders like pharmaceutical companies we hope they will join this effort.

In addition to advocating for the creation of a pandemic insurance fund, the letter from to the WHO called upon all countries with surplus vaccines to donate them to COVAX or directly to countries in need and calls upon pharmaceutical companies to set up vaccine development facilities in low- and middle-income countries, has there been any progress on this front?

It is safe to say that a lot has happened on this particular front. Indeed, a good number of wealthy countries have in recent months made several donations of vaccines to LMICs. I cannot say that these donations are a



From WAHO Assembly of Health Ministers (in image WAHO team - in blue the Director General - Stanley Okolo) - November 2021.

direct response to the open letter but, this is still an important step towards the removal of barriers to vaccination in LMICs. The United States of America has made donations of millions of vaccine doses around the world and continues to do so. Other countries are equally making similar efforts using vaccine diplomacy. Over 90 million doses have been donated to COVAX by different countries, the European Commission donated 100 million doses and the US has donated 140 million doses and pledged 500 million more.

Pharmaceutical companies have been making steady progress in expanding vaccine manufacturing to the continent. Moderna announced in October of 2021 that it will set up a vaccine plant in Africa which are all positive indications.

In follow up to the vaccine

issue, it is one thing to have them available, it is another thing altogether for people to take them, what do you make of the strong resistance and skepticism that some Africans have against vaccines?

It is true that Africa has seen a high case rate of vaccine hesitance and it is true that having the vaccines is one thing and people taking them is another. Part of the reason that has gone into this unfortunate situation is something I hinted on at the outset. The continent of Africa has not actively contributed to the research that has gone into the current crop of vaccines on the market. This has created a ripe environment for the thriving of misinformation and growth of the distrust of western therapeutics.

This is why our organization recognizes this lack of African

researchers and African trial participants in clinical research as a hindrance both to health autonomy and vaccine acceptance on the continent. Beyond this mistrust, misinformation and conspiracy theories, the fact remains that, vaccination is important and safe. Even the recent omicron-aided surge of cases in Africa, they have been found to be predominantly among the unvaccinated. The same fact holds for other parts of the world. If the continent is able to reach a point where African researchers will conduct research and conduct clinical trials where Africans will participate and all this carried out on the African continent, vaccine trust will be realized. This is the future we as 1Day Africa envision for the continent, but for now let us all get vaccinated as we have seen the impact of the pandemic if not on health care systems, then on

economies.

What other recommendations do you have as African countries grapple with Covid 19 related challenges?

Covid-19 is a global pandemic and at the very least, it is international - our response must likewise be global or international. There is need for collaboration and fairness in implementing response strategies. Finally, I call upon the African Union to create continental medical research facilities to conduct research on diseases that are affecting the African population - some of which are endemic and have continued to exist for decades and in the process cash-strapping the national health budgets in an effort to contend.



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In 2021, Healthcare in Sub-Saharan Africa Accelerated like Never Before

The pandemic illuminated gaps in healthcare infrastructure across the continent

By Eyong Ebai*

Our purpose at GE Healthcare is to improve lives in moments that matter, and we do so by partnering to help deliver more sustainable and accessible precision healthcare. It has been a year to the day since I started my new role leading the GE Healthcare business in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The year has continued to experience heightened anxieties, further lockdowns and personal losses. The effect on economies, education and healthcare systems in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to be felt and are exacerbated by what can be described as discriminatory vaccine policies and travel restrictions on many African countries during the emergence of Omicron variant in recent weeks.” As a result, countries, businesses, and individuals have been forced to adapt. The pandemic illuminated gaps in healthcare infrastructure across the continent. With grounded flights and closed borders. It impacted people’s ability to travel for quality care, which brought a focus on filling those gaps closer to home. Plans were developed to bolster healthcare infrastructure in every Sub-Saharan African country so that communities would have access without needing to travel. Now, we have an unparalleled opportunity to have the biggest impact on healthcare infrastructure in generations. We have political and economic focus, a faster decision-making culture, and the opportunity to implement digital and artificial intelligence-enabled solutions that can bring better healthcare to more people. Funding is also being made available by local and global financial institutions that have invested millions of dollars in the healthcare sector this year to create opportunities and arrive at the right solutions to save lives.

Accessibility is one of the main issues in SSA. What changed this



Eyong Ebai is General Manager Sub-Saharan Africa, GE Healthcare.

year was the speed in which key projects were delivered in both the public and private sectors. As part of our ongoing commitment to provide quality healthcare, GE Healthcare contributed to a number of major projects this year.

We inaugurated a first-of-its-kind comprehensive Cancer Center with Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral & Research Hospital (KUTRRH). The Center will provide lifesaving equipment along the cancer care pathway – from screening and diagnosis to staging to determining treatment. The Duchess International Hospital also opened in Lagos, as a multi-specialty privately-owned hospital. GE Healthcare completed the delivery and installation of equipment with a full range of solutions for improved healthcare across Nigeria. In Uganda, the first Afri-Egypt Health diagnostic center opened through a partnership between GE Healthcare and AFRI PHARMA. The center includes potentially life-saving equipment to better serve the surrounding communities. Finally, we continued to deliver on our services contracts across SSA.

To accomplish all of this, and continue our success into next

year, we have been focused on our local workforce. Localization is the best strategy for long-term success because local teams are invested in their own communities. Our employees have the resilience, drive, and ability to overcome tremendous obstacles. In the past year, traditional business models were largely torn up and thrown out the window. Instead, we found creative thinking, flexibility, and the ability to figure things out in record time were implemented to adapt to the new environment – and this approach continues to be met with success.

The pressure of quick decision making made a difference for and motivated individuals within the organization as nothing else had in the past. Decisions that historically took months had to be done within days and being in crisis management mode actually made us perform better. If I look back over the last year, I would say there were very few bad decisions made. Instead, we reduced bureaucracy and focused on what matters. Since COVID, we have learned to look at things in a lean way, cutting out the waste. I think it challenged how a business operates, and the healthcare infrastructure across SSA benefitted.

Improving lives in moments that matter

SSA has seen incredible growth and serves as a market where healthcare can ‘break new ground’ in terms of innovative models and solutions. Across the continent, GE works as part of an ecosystem to deliver tailor-made services that look beyond just technology to offer solutions and make a positive impact. The focus is always on partnerships and the patient. They are at the center of everything we do as we work to help clinicians make more accurate diagnoses, reduce incidents of disease, and improve outcomes.

To me, in 2020, we were laying the groundwork – monitoring and doing our research on how to adapt to change and new challenges. 2021 was a year of action, speed, and innovation. Looking ahead, we must all work together to rise to challenge and I can see that all the stars are aligned.

In the coming years I expect to see the biggest ever improvement in healthcare infrastructure to date. This will be accelerated further by the actualisation of the African Continental Free Trade area, which will have a significant impact on accelerating trade across the continent. This is expected to be a game-changer for development ambitions, especially for the healthcare sector over the medium term. It provides a unique opportunity to promote inclusive growth and accelerate the post-pandemic recovery.

We have done solid work this year, and we are poised for success as we look to 2022. We are improving lives in moments that matter for communities that matter, and that is truly a reason to be proud.

*Eyong Ebai is General Manager Sub-Saharan Africa, GE Healthcare

Repositioning Africa under the AfCFTA

By Zion Adeoye*

Established in 2018, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), represents perhaps Africa's biggest opportunity for the next few decades in its battle against poverty of all forms, energy and infrastructure included.

Against the backdrop of the tens of millions of Africans that have been plunged into extreme poverty by the onslaught of the covid-19 Pandemic, a strong case must be made for a speedy implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. It is projected that under the AfCFTA, extreme poverty will significantly decline across the continent; West Africa for instance would witness the biggest decline in the number of people living in extreme poverty namely a decline of approximately 12 million people, which is more than a third of the total for all of Africa.

But beyond extreme poverty eradication, it's about time that the true economic might of Africa is realized through intra-African trade. Compared with Asia and Europe with 59% and 68% intra-continental trade, only 17% of exports from African countries are intra-continental (World Economic Forum), due to age-long tariff and non-tariff barriers, which the AfCFTA is essentially established to eliminate.

The fact that intra-African trade constitutes only about 2% of global trade means there are significant gains to be realized if the AfCFTA is properly implemented. A continent that controls vast resources and a 1.2 billion-strong consumer market should be an economic no-brainer of a success, especially considering its young burgeoning and vibrant population.

The African socio-economic and political construct under the AfCFTA dispensation must be able to provide security for the youth- security of livelihood, security of movement, security of innovation, security of lives and property. AfCFTA must be driven by the raw socioeconomic and might of a young and vibrant population



Zion Adeoye, Managing Director For Centurion Law Group's AfCFTA Desk.

and SMEs, not big government and big multinationals.

Cooperation on Infrastructure

The African Development Bank estimates that that Africa's infrastructure needs amount to \$130–\$170 billion a year, with a financing gap in the range \$67.6–\$107.5 billion. However, the lack of cooperation on infrastructure has been as deleterious to African development as the lack of funds, which is always the first to be touted.

To make the AfCFTA work, there is a need to connect African economies both regionally and on a continental scale through reliable infrastructure, which is conceptualized, financed, and protected in common. Duplication and waste in infrastructural development must be jettisoned for optimal development of a regional or continental infrastructural blueprint.

Cooperation on infrastructure must include security infrastructure. What happens North of Mozambique should not be disconnected from solutions deployed South of Nigeria. We cannot promote trade without protecting production and investment across the continent. Mozambique's insurgency

problem is not just a Mozambican or Southern African issue, it is a threat to the entire continent and there must be concern and commitment to action in Abuja and Accra as there is in Pretoria and Pemba.

Cooperation on Energy

Africa's energy poverty or its deficiency in any form is bad for business, both for Africa and the rest of the world. More than 600 million people in Africa live without electricity, including more than 80 percent of those residing in rural areas. Only two countries in the region, Mauritius and Seychelles, have near universal electricity coverage. Household electricity access is 75 percent or higher in only six nations in Africa. Almost two-thirds of the countries in the region have household access rates of less than 50 percent

While nations of the world must continue to make real commitment to tackle climate change, African nations, which have been responsible for a significantly lower amount of carbon emissions, must situate their commitments on carbon emissions within the bounds of reason while

the global community must make proposals to African nations within the bounds of justice and fairness. It will never be unreasonable or an anathema for African nations to seek to develop their natural resources to power their industries and secure the future of their young and growing populations after being held back from home-grown development for generations. Never again must the relief of the rest of the world be placed disproportionately on the backs of Africans.

The development of Africa's oil and gas resources does not preclude the development of renewable energy. Africa has untapped renewable sources wherein production costs are falling rapidly; renewable energy also offers transformative potential to relieve Africa from energy poverty. Under the AfCFTA, member countries are obligated to align local laws with broad regional plans. As such, unified energy sector interventions and plans would result in growth of renewable production providing cheaper power to the continent and increased access to electricity enabling spillovers from the use of innovative technology. Movement of People and Social



REPOSITIONING AFRICA UNDER THE AFCFTA

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Integration

It is not by accident that the most glowing example of free trade and perhaps regional prosperity, also epitomises free movement of people. The AfCFTA document pays the most luscious lip-service in the history of humanity to free movement of people, which is perhaps the most insurmountable obstacle for true integration in Africa. Clearly this remains an ultra-sensitive issue for more developed nations in Africa but we must remember that Nations are forged in history, not in nature, and often the comparative advantage of a region will significantly outweigh its historically delineated construct.

Certainly, for Africa, our historical segregations and amalgamations must be jettisoned for true cooperation for development. The defects of history must not detract our potentially glorious future. No price could be placed on the opportunity afforded a young European to prospect on a continental scale, with the whole of Europe representing a nation to work, live and love even while historical identities remain celebrated.

The concept of shared prosperity is something we have to embrace, and Africans must decide whether we want to continue to be poor neighbours with tall walls or

wealthy nations with picket fences. Xenophobia and self-hate will have to be relegated while we build an enduring African commonwealth. Make no mistake, these are mutually exclusive.

Perhaps Africa has a unique opportunity to set a model for the rest of the world to follow on how regional cooperation can be meaningful, genuine and all-serving. Our rich culture of communal interdependence and vested engagement should be a valuable resource in the age of social distancing.

Cooperation on Implementation and Compliance

The mere existence of the AfCFTA document and endless discussions on its potentials will do nothing for African development. If we all agree that an African aggregation that can compete in a fast-moving world is an imperative, then each nation's commitment to implementing and complying with what has been agreed must be unalloyed.

Real cooperation and commitment begin with having the very best hands and heads converging on rule making, implementation and monitoring under the AfCFTA framework. A flood of issues including protectionism, unfair competition, subsidies, currency manipulation, exchange

rates, trade disputes and sanctions will now have to be dealt with in great detail within the AfCFTA framework. Ultra-Political representations will be insufficient, and technocrats must be allowed free rein to develop a robust body of rules of engagement and dispute settlement without inordinate political interference.

The seriousness of AfCFTA implementation also prescribes the need to avoid the analysis paralysis of unattainable consensus. There has to be an efficient means of reaching decisions which African nations must commit to even when these rules become unfavourable.

Communication, Energy Technology and Shaping Future Industries

Africa needs more channels of communication to connect African businesses and organizations. Poor communication networks have been a hindrance to the advancement of African economies. Advanced Information and Communications technology (ICT) can result to enhanced connectivity within Africa and help to increase access to goods and services. Under the AfCFTA, there is a need for the deliberate harmonisation of policies and regulations pertaining to ICT

infrastructure in order to boost cross-border interconnections.

Even while still battling with debilitating energy poverty, Africa must reposition to shape future industries. Much of the resources that are essential to future industries and technology are abundant in Africa, and while holding the aces, playing second-fiddle is not an option for Africa in the next industrial revolution. Further, many African companies are exporters of natural resources or raw products as opposed to finished or processed goods. Developing industries is therefore key as it provides African companies with the capacity to process raw materials and export finished products. Governments must also implement strategies that develop industrialization across a variety of sectors as this will increase the global competitiveness of the continent. Understanding Africa's position in respect of the above is key to maximizing the value of the AfCFTA.

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Energy Transition Takes Centre Stage At Africa Energy Futures Forum

By Ajong Mbapndah I

The debate on energy transition dominated discussions at the Africa Energy Futures forum held recently in Texas on the sidelines of the 23rd World Petroleum Congress in Houston, TX, USA.

Put together, and facilitated by a dynamic team led by Arete Amana, some of the high profile participants at the event included guest of honor Nigerian Petroleum Minister Chief Timipre Sylva, Roger Brown, CEO of SEPLAT Energy, Zakaria Dosso, Managing Director Africa Energy Investment Corporation (AEICORP), A Representative of the Group Managing Director, Nigerian Petroleum Corporation -NNPC Mr Mele Kyari, Eng Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary of Nigerian Content Development Board, Angelle Kwemo of Believe in Africa Foundation, Dr Peter Ntephe CEO of ERHC Energy, Waeil Al-Athram of African Petroleum Producers Organization and many others.

Addressing the forum, Nigerian Petroleum Minister Chief Timipre Sylva started by taking strong exception to the travel ban slammed on African countries following the Omicron variant of COVID -19. It is sad that only African countries



The debate on energy transition dominated discussions at the Africa Energy Futures forum.

were singled out for the travel ban, whereas it was known to be more rampant in some European countries, the Minister pointed out. Though the ban affected the effective presence of several dozen confirmed participants, Chief Timipre Sylva lauded the efforts of the Africa Energy Futures team for

defying the last-minute challenges to hold the important forum.

Building on issues surrounding the travel ban, Chief Timipre Sylva said it was just a reminder that Africa has to wake up and put its act together. The same thing is going on with the energy sector he said, where Africa

is being forced into choices that are unrealistic, and do not meet the development priorities or agendas of the continent. The developed world cannot just force Africa to accept energy transition without Africa having a say, and without the continent taking into consideration its own realities, Chief Timipre Sylva said.

Chief Sylva touted reforms and progress that Nigeria had made under the leadership of President Buhari. In order to avoid the pitfall of unreliable foreign funding Chief Timipre Sylva indicated that Africa was surging on with plans for a continental based financing structure and mechanisms that will see Africa take the lead in funding its own projects.

SEPLAIT Energy CEO Roger Brown shared perspectives his company was making with regards to energy transition. While transition was important, talking about the future as if there was no present was counterproductive, he cautioned. Looking at the history and economic



Panelists pose for a picture after one of the spirited sessions at the forum

realities of Africa, it was neither feasible nor fair for the continent to be placed on the same pedestal as the developed world or western nations when it comes to issues of energy transition, he said.

Though he had to rush back to Nigeria for all pressing matters, the Group Managing Director, Nigerian Petroleum Corporation -NNPC Mr Mele Kyari shared perspectives on what the leading energy company in Africa was doing to catch up with rapidly development trends in prepared remarks through a company representative. The groundbreaking reforms been rolled out at the NNPC will optimize results from multiple perspectives including transparency, production, accountability, general management and more, the NNPC Managing Director said.

For Dr Peter Ntephe CEO of ERHC Energy, the issue of energy transition was not one of choice for Africa. It is inevitable he said, and Africa better join the moving train or be left behind. Dr Ntephe said clearly the world was moving towards more energy efficient models .and it was in the interest of



Africa should be on the drivers seat of of its energy destiny, says Nigerian Petroleum Minister Chief Timipre Sylva

Africa to double efforts to move along with the rest of the world.

“When African governments pitch for an “equitable” energy transition, it is often an ill-disguised call for the rest of the world to wait for Africa to catch up. It will probably not happen, at least not to the extent that African countries desire,” Dr Ntephe said.

There are several options for Africa, Dr Ntephe said. One is to go rogue and forge on single-handed with fossil-fuel production and consumption, regardless of whatever the rest of the world is doing. The ability to do this however depends on several things including possession of significant global influence and the requisite technology and capital, Dr Ntephe cautioned.

Taking place on the sidelines of the world petroleum congress, discussions at the Africa Energy Features forum were animated with a variety of other experts in diverse roles sharing perspectives and trends that the energy sector in Africa should follow. Some of the key partners at the event included APPO, AEICORP, and SEPLAIT Energy.



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Now or Never: Improving Africa's E&P Terms

By Dr Peter Ntephe*



For Africa, the time to act is now or never, says Dr Peter Ntephe.

I. Introduction

The energy transition is well underway with the IOCs unabashedly transforming themselves from big oil to big energy, rationalizing upstream portfolios and moving into harvest-only mode. African E&P, historically tied to the apron strings of foreign investors, will struggle to attract new capital as fossil fuels inexorably lose legitimacy and appeal for fund managers. African governments must come to grips with reality by radically reshaping E&P terms, posthaste, to stall the evaporation of investment and a dirge for the industry on the continent.

II. Covid and Other Challenges

Prior to the Covid pandemic, several forces assailed the prospects for African E&P:

The energy transition from fossil fuels to cleaner sources;

Reduced demand, from the rise in US shale and the slowing of Asian growth rates;

Lower oil prices relative to pre-2014 highs; and

Diminished investor appetite, as result of the foregoing, for oil and gas.

Covid exacerbated those challenges but the end of the pandemic, whenever it occurs, will not diminish them significantly. The post-pandemic

challenge for African E&P then is how to attract critical investment in a world that has gone from mere wariness to being downright hostile to fossil fuels.

III. Old and New Realities

Compounding E&P's unique challenges, Africa continues to face broad investment challenges including perceptions and the reality of geopolitical risk, poor infrastructure, regulatory uncertainty and bureaucratic delay, and high cost.

Investors are lured away by not just regions but also sectors with easier entry and better returns. The intrepid fund manager's decision is easy to make when it comes down to backing a Gabonese greenfield project or investing only a fraction of the amount in a Silicon-Valley startup that, on the same chance of success, guarantees a hundred times the return in much less time.

The energy transition is expected to take 20 to 30 years but given the average time in Africa from conception of an exploration programme to first oil, projects in view now will only be coming to fruition as the transition is completed. With big oil already transforming itself to big energy and looking to reduce upstream business by as much as 60% within a decade,

the luxury of E&P investment through the transition period might not even be afforded the continent.

IV. The Case for Investor-Friendlier New Terms

When African governments pitch for an "equitable" energy transition, it is often an ill-disguised call for the rest of the world to wait for Africa to catch up. It will probably not happen, at least not to the extent that African countries desire.

There are several options for Africa, therefore. One is to go rogue and forge on single-handed with fossil-fuel production and consumption, regardless of whatever the rest of the world is doing. The ability to do this however depends on several things including possession of significant global influence and the requisite technology and capital.

Without the means to go it alone, African governments must become realistic, and quickly too. Time seems to be running out so fast on fossil fuels that constricted investment wisdoms, particularly those borne out of neo-imperialism fears, must now be jettisoned. Africa's E&P terms must be made so overtly attractive that they compensate for the portents of transition and the comparative advantages of other sites and sectors.

Fundamentally changing the philosophies and content of E&P contracts appears to be the easiest route since Africa's other disincentives to investment are unlikely to be remedied soon. The PSC, Africa's dominant E&P contract, would for instance require radical review in such areas as:

Signature bonuses, which can run into tens, and sometimes, hundreds, of millions of dollars;

Production bonuses, which although contingent on production, are still a factor in the investment decision, particularly in a time of low prices;

Social projects, the expenditure on which is not usually recoverable or deductible for tax purposes;

Minimum work commitments, particularly regarding the number and timing of wells in deep offshore plays;

Minimum financial commitments, the size of which often determines the quantum of performance bonds;

Performance bonds, which are linked to minimum financial commitments but often result in a doubling of exploration outlay as banks require an equivalent amount to be deposited with them before providing the bond;

Consent fees for transfers and farmouts;

Concession rentals, which are essentially a yearly tax on the surface area of exploration acreage;

Capital allowances, which have recently grown stricter on such matters as interest deductibility;

Cost recovery and profit-sharing formulas, many of which have been designed with higher oil prices in mind; and

High taxes and royalties.

African governments must be open to revision of current contracts, where requested, and shape new contracts differently from existing ones in a way that counters fast-dwindling investment appetites.

V. Overcoming Resistance

Actuating coalescence on the need, and the political will, for change promises of course to be easier said than done. Nigeria’s new petroleum industry law, passed in 2021, is a salutary reminder. Undeniably a progression on the old 1969 law, it was still populated with the kind of E&P taxes and royalties that caused an analyst at Marix Associates, the Africa-focused US consultancy, to remark drily, “Do they think it’s still 1973?”

Africa’s energy experts must take it as a bounden duty to impress upon governments and an often-ambivalent populace the urgency of a dynamic—nay, radical—new approach to attracting E&P investment as the long-term prospects for fossil fuels grow bleaker by the day. The post-apocalyptic state of Venezuela’s industry, albeit arising for different reasons, provides a sneak preview of what the E&P landscape might look like in 2050. For Africa, the time to act is now. Or never.

* Dr Peter Ntephe is CEO of ERHC Energy. The paper was part of his presentation at the recent Africa Energy Futures forum _____



Dr Peter Ntephe first from left was one of the prominent faces at the recent Africa Energy Futures forum in TX, USA.

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A Funding Solution For The African Energy Sector In AEICORP

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Waking up to the reality that funding may not be there for energy projects, and a vision that does not align with global desires and trends, Africa is making moves to have more control of its energy future. The Africa Energy Investment Corporation (AEICORP) is one of the African solutions to the African problem of funding energy projects across the continent.

While the AEICORP may still be in its crawling phase, Zakaria Dosso, its Managing Director says the vision is big, with projections to raise about USD 500 million in 2022 to start the operational phase.

Dosso who was one of the prominent presence at the recent Africa Energy Futures Forum in Houston, TX, USA, says it is imperative for Africa to build its own capability in terms of technology, human capital, and financing the oil, gas, and energy sectors.

“If we manage to have our independence in terms of financing our energy sector, our future will be very bright. African countries must

pool their resources and efforts together to foster the development of the energy sector,” says Zakaria Dosso in touting the importance of AEICORP

For those who may not be familiar, could you start with an introduction of AEICORP

AEICORP stands for Africa Energy Investment Corporation. It was created on January 26, 2019, during the Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of APPO (African Petroleum Producers’ Organization) help in Abuja (Federal Republic of Nigeria), following the reform of APPO Fund. Its Authorized Capital is One Billion US Dollar. AEICORP primary mission is to mobilized required financial resources for the development of hydrocarbons and energy sectors in Africa.

May we know what its current membership is like and what does it take to become a member?

All APPO Members Countries



If we manage to have our independence in terms of financing our energy sector, our future will be very bright, says Zakaria Dosso.



Zakaria Dosso, second from right made the case for APPO at the recent Africa Energy Features Forum.

contributed to the APPO Fund. Thus, during the reform process, their contributions were converted into shares of the new company. So,

from Member Countries of APPO Fund, they are now Shareholders of AEICORP. The shareholding of AEICORP is simple: just share its vision and objectives of committed in developing African energy sector and subscribe to its share capital.

You have been Managing Director of AEICORP for some three years now, how has the experience been like, what progress has taken place under your leadership and where have you faced challenges?

I used to be the Executive Director of the APPO Fund. We took advantage of the reform of APPA (which was the previous name of APPO) to make the revitalization of the Fund accepted. A first consultant advised that the fund is irrelevant and should be removed. Fortunately, most of the Member Countries were not of this point of view. We brought another independent consultant who fortunately shared our thoughts on the necessity of establishing a



During 2022, we expect to raise at least 500 million US dollar equity from African countries, says Zakaria Dosso pictured here with South Africa energy Minister Gwede Mantashe.

proper financial institution with the consequent capital focused on financing the studies and projects of our natural sector of oil & gas, but also beyond that by fostering energy access in all over Africa. Therefore, the target sectors of AEICORP are Oil & Gas, Alternative Energy and Power.

Just after the execution of its Establishment Agreement, we embarked on the first round of its equity raising, but the context of the global outbreak made difficult this first step. We have gotten only the commitments from the republic of Niger for 10 million US dollar and the Federal Republic of Nigeria for more than 18 million US dollar. So in term of challenges, I can easily mention this global outbreak that reoriented the interest of countries. But now, we are very confident. Countries are more concerned about the threat coming from developed countries saying that funding for fossil fuel should stop, therefore aware of the need more than ever to have our own financial instruments which will allow us to have real control over this very strategic sector for our economies.

You were recently in Houston for the Africa Energy's Forum,

what message did you bring to the event and what is your general take on the way the event went?

The Houston event was to talk about the future of the energy sector in Africa. My main message was that we Africans have got to build our own capability in terms of technology, human capital, but above all in term of finance for the Oil & Gas and energy sectors. If we manage to have our independence in terms of financing our energy sector, our future will be very bright. African countries must pool their resources and efforts together to foster the development of this energy sector, including the hydrocarbons one. This event showed us that we have friends everywhere outside Africa willing to help us but we should first show them what we are capable of doing before requesting any assistance from them.

What was the reception of the public to the AEICORP, did you get the feeling that people understood the need for its existence and the role it wants to play?

First of all, at this stage, the public is not our aim. Those who are our

potential key partners are African Countries, Companies operating in our target sectors and financial institutions, and they are embracing the creation of AEICORP, being a development financial institution dedicated to financing the energy sector in Africa.

Africa has a very strong diaspora; in what way could they be of help in facilitating the success of AEICORP?

The diaspora can play and will play a very important role in implementing some of our innovative funding solutions. For example, their participation in the development of their home continent may happen in crowdfunding; other mechanisms can be revealed at the appropriate time.

Looking at environment in Africa today and global trends, what would the success of AEICORP mean for the continent?

Our target sectors are underdeveloped: Africa exports more than 70% of its crude oil, while importing almost 75% of its needs of petroleum products. This is a huge challenge. Moreover, more than half

the population of Africa don't have access to modern energy while most of our gas is exported, we have got to address this. The success of AEICORP will be linked to the bridging of these gaps. The challenge for AEICORP is to succeed in mobilizing, with other financial institutions, the necessary resources so that these target sectors meet the needs of our populations. Achieving this goal will be our success

As we move into 2022, may we get a preview of what the year will look like, what are some of the major events or expectations that AEICORP has for 2022?

During 2022, we expect to raise at least 500 million US dollar equity from African countries, financial institutions, sectors' companies, sovereign funds, pension funds, etc.

We are planning to fully start operations in the second half of 2022.

We are also working to bring on the same table, national sector companies with financial institutions to discuss major structuring projects, both national and regional, and initiate solutions to their financing.



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Energy Transition Dominates Africa Energy Futures Forum 2021.

Despite last minute glitches from the travel ban that frustrated plans of many, the Africa Energy Futures Forum 2021 in Houston, TX, USA, was a huge success. Guest of honor Nigerian Petroleum Minister Chief Timipre Sylva, Arete Amana of the Africa Energy Futures

Forum, Roger Brown, CEO of SEPLAT Energy, Zakaria Dosso, Managing Director Africa Energy Investment Corporation (AEICORP), Eng Simbi Wabote, Executive Secretary of Nigerian Content Development Board, Angelle Kwemo of Believe in Africa Foundation, Dr Peter Ntephe CEO of ERHC

Energy, Waeil Al-Athram of African Petroleum Producers Organization and other high profile panelists, participants enjoyed spirited discussions on energy perspectives in Africa. PAV shares some photos from the momentous event.







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Senegal Seeks To Learn From Mistakes Of Other African Countries And Reverse 'Resource Curse'

By Kester Kenn Klomegh



Civil Society Meeting on Revenue in Senegal.

Senegal has held a well-representative meeting to seek dialogue with a cross-section of the civil society leaders, experts from different economic sectors and both public and private business leaders for the management of revenues from the country's oil and gas, hydrocarbons and energy resources in the country.

Senegal, located on West African coast, has a population of approximately 15.9 million. While the economy is mostly driven by mining, construction, tourism, fishing and agriculture, it has state revenues from exploitation of some natural resources. These revenues largely constitute the national budget.

With the utmost ambition and desire for all Senegalese people to benefit and prosper from their country's natural resources, President Macky Sall demonstrated his determination to implement reforms to exploit Senegal's hydrocarbon potential. The move to propose a framework that will mandate accountability and transparency in the management of resources to ensure that oil and gas production will be conducive and significant towards the well-being of the entire nation.

Senegal is looking towards learning from the mistakes of other African countries in an attempt to reverse the so-called "resource curse" that plagues many oil and gas producing African countries. In a further demonstration of enlisting public opinion, such a broad meeting was called to brainstorm for ideas and incorporate into a national development programme.

"It is extremely important to remind you all today, we remain convinced that the promotion of a participatory, multi-institutional, and collaborative approach is imperative for capable governance and guaranteeing sustainable prosperity," stated President Macky Sall of the Republic of Senegal.

Under this new legislation, the citizens of Senegal will have a seat at the table, with civil society to play a leading role in driving the discussion surrounding the monetization of the country's oil and gas industry. This landmark act will ensure a trickle-down economy that guarantees investments within petrochemicals, agriculture, power, gas, and transportation, thus expanding the economy and facilitating the creation of many jobs for Senegalese citizens.

While the undeniable impacts of climate change continue to be taken into consideration, Senegal is driven towards eradicating energy poverty, and notes that development of the nation should be prioritized, and this will be done through oil and gas.

Poised to catalyze Senegal's economy, oil and gas exploration and production are at the forefront of providing efficient, low-cost energy solutions in accordance with the primary objectives of the Plan for an Emerging Senegal. Thus, with the country's first oil production geared for 2023, President Macky Sall has put into place, the requisite systems necessary to strengthen the revenue from the exploration and production of hydrocarbons for the benefit of Senegalese civil society.

The Senegalese Presidential Council is, however, praised for the distribution and supervision of the management of revenues derived from the exploitation of hydrocarbons. It marks a significant step towards the leader's desire for oil and gas to be conducive to the well-being of all Senegalese people. It further shows efforts in involve civil society in significant issues relating to

the socioeconomic growth.

Abdoulaye Wade's decision to run for a third presidential term sparked public backlash that led to his defeat to current President Macky Sall. His election was primarily due to support from the broad-minded democratic groups. The 2016 constitutional referendum limited future presidents to two consecutive five-year terms. In February 2019, Macky Sall won his bid for re-election; his second term will end in 2024.

Reports show Senegal is committed to harnessing its oil and gas resources to drive socio-economic growth, and support a national development model – the Emerging Senegal Plan. Senegal is working collaboratively with external and regional partners to position itself as a globally competitive hydrocarbon producer.

In 2021, the country saw several significant achievements regarding its top two energy projects, according reports provided at last African Energy Week (AEW) held in Cape Town, South Africa.

As one of Africa's leading natural gas markets, boasting over 450 billion cubic meters of reserves, Senegal is aggressively pursuing industry expansion with the aim of establishing the country as a regional gas producer and exporter.

Senegal's National Oil Company (NOC), for instance, has been advancing the industry. With a participating interest in all upstream commercial hydrocarbon activities, the company has accelerated oil and gas exploration and production, effectively positioning Senegal as a regional gas hub and global competitor.

The company has effectively navigated the global pandemic, enhancing industry activities and introducing key investment opportunities to international stakeholders and driving a strong discussion on the role of Senegal in Africa's energy future.

It's largest project, the Greater PAU – JAN. 2022 – MAG 0122 VOL III

Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project, is the deepest offshore project on the continent, and is set to unlock approximately 15 trillion cubic feet of gas. Jointly developed by BP,

Kosmos Energy, Societe des Petroles du Senegal (Petrosen), and Societe Mauritanienne des Hydrocarbures (SMHPM), with BP as the operator, the project has set a high standard for other African gas markets looking to

enhance development.

Senegal enjoys mostly cordial relations with its neighbors – Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Mali and The Gambia. It is a member of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States

and also belongs to the 16-member regional bloc, the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS).

Q&A with Capt. Irene Koki Mutungi, Kenya Airways

As the air transport industry and airline travel recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for qualified personnel, including pilots and technical staff, will increase, and the industry may again be faced with the prospect of a critical labor shortage. Outside of human resources departments, women hold relatively few senior executive positions within the industry. The same is true on the flight deck, where women represent about 5 percent of the global pilot population and an even smaller percentage of captains. Both the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have ongoing gender diversity initiatives, but women still face significant workplace barriers. When Irene Koki Mutungi joined Kenya Airways in 1995 as a second officer flying Fokker 50s, she became the first female pilot in the airline's history. In the 26 years since, Capt. Mutungi has achieved a number of other "firsts," including becoming the first female captain at the airline (on the Boeing 737) and the first African woman to qualify as a captain on the 787. The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Q: At what age did you start flight training and where? Where did you complete your training?

A: I was 17 years old when I began my flight training. I began in Kenya at the Kenya School of Flying and completed at Crabtree Aviation, Guthrie, Oklahoma, U.S.

Q: In which aircraft are you type rated?

A: I am rated on Cessna C150, C172, Piper PA28, C310, C402, Fokker 50,



When Irene Koki Mutungi joined Kenya Airways in 1995 as a second officer flying Fokker 50s, she became the first female pilot in the airline's history.

Boeing 737, 767 and 787.

Q: When did you transition to flying 787s? When were you promoted to 787 captain? How does the 787 compare to other aircraft you've flown? Do you have a favorite aircraft?

A: I transitioned to the B787 in 2014. I was promoted as a captain. The Dreamliner is the most sophisticated commercial airliner on the market right now. Due to technological innovations, a lot of the workload is reduced compared to other aircraft. As much as I love flying the Dreamliner, I have a soft spot for the B767. I guess because I flew it the longest.

Q: What are your favorite routes to fly?

A: I love flying to the U.S., Europe

and the Far East. I get to experience the extremely busy airspaces and adverse weather, which is a challenge I like to take on. The airspace in Africa is not as busy and we don't have extreme weather like hurricanes, snowstorms, etc. Apart from that, most destinations are great. I get to see different cultures, try their cuisine and sightsee. Basically, it's a paid holiday.

Q: Your father was a pilot at Kenya Airways, but initially he didn't want you to become a pilot. Why not, and what changed his mind?

A: Having been a pilot, I don't think he thought I could cope with the lifestyle, as a woman. He thought about the challenges of having a family and flying and was not sure it was the best for me at that time.

There was also uncertainty of how my male counterparts would accept me with all the stigma surrounding the male-dominated career, as I would have been a first. It took my persistence and convincing from his friend Capt. J.M Ririani, who owns the Kenya School of Flying, to let me give it a shot. The rest, as we say, is history.

Q: Early in your career, a passenger initially declined to board the aircraft when he realized you were one of the pilots. Were you surprised by his reaction? What type of reaction, if any, do you get from passengers now? Do men and women have different reactions?

A: Coincidentally, the passenger who declined to fly with me was on

my first Fokker 50 flight from a city in Kenya, Kisumu. He said he was not a guinea pig to be flown by a woman. I was very surprised. The captain I was with then asked the staff to offload him. Since he really wanted to travel, he had to apologize to me first.

These days we have lots of female pilots flying all over the world and passengers are accustomed to being flown by them. Occasionally you do get a few who want to meet me because they followed my career path or consider me a role model to their kids.

Q: In your career to date, you have accomplished a number of memorable “firsts”— first female pilot at Kenya Airways and first female African 787 captain, among others. You were also on the Forbes list of 20 Youngest Power Women in Africa in 2014. Do you see yourself as a role model for young women, particularly young African women? Did you have any female role models in aviation when you were training to become a pilot and as you moved up the ranks at Kenya Airways? If so, who were they?

A: I consider myself a role model for young women and men as well. As a mother of boys, I’m all for empowering women, but let’s not forget the next generation of boys. I go out and give talks at schools and aviation clubs as part of what I consider my mentorship responsibility to the youth. It is very fulfilling.

I had a female role model briefly when I started flying, in Oklahoma. She was the chief pilot at my flying school and always reminded me flying was about skill, not gender. Unfortunately, she was killed in an aircraft accident.

At Kenya Airways I did not have any female role models as I was their first female pilot and the only one for six years.



Airlines should offer positions to qualified female pilots more readily as part of their inclusivity programs, says Captain Irene Koki Mutungi.

Q: Did it surprise you that you were the only female pilot at Kenya Airways for six years after you joined the carrier?

A: I did not notice that I was the “lone ranger” as I had become one of the “boys” and I guess it was also focus on work and just getting work done. It ceases to be about your gender and more about your expertise and technical abilities.

Q: You were part of an all-female flight crew in 2005. How did that make you feel? Does that happen very often at Kenya Airways?

A: It was a huge milestone for an airline from a third world country. I was proud to have had the opportunity to command that flight. It is now a common occurrence to have female pilots in the flight deck at Kenya Airways.

Q: Slightly more than 5 percent of the world’s airline pilots are women. Do you think enough is being done to encourage women to go into aviation? If not, what else should the industry be doing?

A: I think more subsidies and scholarships should be made available to women when it comes to training.

Airlines should offer positions to qualified female pilots more readily as part of their inclusivity programs. Airlines should have female pilots as pivots for their projects to bring awareness to the general public. When people see the female pilots, it will garner a degree of interest.

Q: Is the aviation industry in Africa making progress in growing the ranks of female pilots? Are there still cultural barriers in Africa that make it difficult for women to go into careers in aviation? If so, can you explain or describe those barriers?

A: The evolution of the industry in Africa regarding female pilots has been phenomenal. Kenya Airways is one of the highest employers of female pilots in percentage worldwide. Cultural barriers are almost non-existent now.

Q: According to International Air Transport Association statistics, women hold relatively few CEO, COO or CFO roles at the world’s top 100 airlines. What do you think are the reasons and do you have any interest in a senior leadership role if you ever decide to reduce your flight

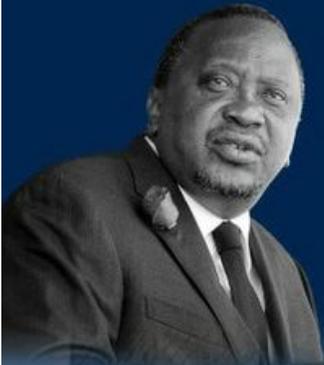
schedule? If there were more women in senior executive positions, do you think it would be easier to attract women into the industry to be pilots, air traffic controllers or engineers?

A: I think the door to fly has been opened to female pilots, but entry into the C-suite is still an unspoken preserve for men. We have very capable and qualified women to take up these positions. I hope we will see the numbers rise in the future. I definitely would also like to be a part of those women I speak about in the C-suite when I decide to reduce my flying duties. Having a female leader in management positions is key for inclusive decision-making.

Q: What would be your message to young women considering a career in aviation?

A: This is one of those industries with diverse career opportunities. There are various options like flying, engineering, accounting, marketing, name it. It has been challenging, fulfilling and lucrative. I would definitely encourage more young women to consider careers in the aviation industry.

*Published with permission from Flight Safety Foundation



PRESIDENT DELIVERS ON COMMITMENT TO REDUCE THE COST OF POWER

GAZETTE VOL. 3 7-1-22



The Ministry of Energy hereby confirms that the Kenya Gazette of 7th January 2022 has effected a **15% reduction in power tariffs**.

The Gazette notice covers the period from January 2022 to December 2022 and will therefore commence in reflecting bills covering the December 2021 period.

The tariff reduction is a fulfillment of the commitment made by His Excellency President Kenyatta to the nation, on Jamhuri day 2021 that the first tranche of 15% reduction in the cost of power will be reflected in bills covering the end year of 2021.

This reduction, coming in January, will boost livelihoods and economic growth by reducing the cost of living, put more money in Kenyans pockets and reduce the cost of doing business.

We are working hard at ensuring the next 15% tranche is effected in this quarter as promised. The ministry WILL ensure all measures that deliver on its mandate of providing affordable and accessible energy to power our growth and development.

The journey of reforms in the energy sector is irreversible. We will ensure efficiencies and optimization that improves our global competitiveness, drives job creation and powers economic growth.

Zimbabwe: Civil Society Bracing Up For Impactful Role In 2023 Harmonized Elections Of The 2023

By Wallace Mawire

The Peace Building Network of Zimbabwe (PBNZ), a network formed in 2017 and hosted by the Centre for Conflict Management (CCMT) in Zimbabwe is intensifying efforts and initiatives to play a meaningful role in peace building and promoting social cohesion in Zimbabwe.

The network is comprised of civil society organizations working in the area of peace building in Zimbabwe and are committed to the vision and mission of the network. The network envisions the realization of a conscientized society and facilitating coordinated peace building activities that contribute towards the building of sustainable peace and development in Zimbabwe.

The mission of the network includes the coordination of efforts in the development of strategic frameworks for effective peace building activities and initiatives at the local, regional and international levels. Also the network monitors and assesses situational trends in Zimbabwe and aims to respond timeously with appropriate interventions.

Rich Chere, a spokesperson from CCMT, the host organization of the network said that the network is currently comprised of at least 18 member organizations.

As a reflection of the initiatives the network is implementing to promote peace and social cohesion, a workshop with member organizations was held on 30 November to 1 December 2021 to reflect on the operating environment as the country heads towards the 2023 harmonized elections.

Previous elections in Zimbabwe have been marred by political violence. In 2021, reports of politically motivated violence were reported in the media.

Some of the organizations which



attended the workshop include, the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation (IJR) based in Cape Town, South Africa, the Zimbabwe Peacebuilding Trust, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJP), Savannah Trust, NGO Forum, Counselling Services Trust, Zimrights, Centre for Peace Initiatives in Africa (CPIA), Zimbabwe Civic Education Trust (ZIMCET), Apostolic Women Empowerment Trust (AWET) and the Institute for Economics and Peace, just to mention a few.

A representative from the network supporting organization, the Catholic International Development Charity (CAFOD) said at the workshop that the country was faced with issues such as climate change induced conflicts, Gender Based Violence (GBV), covid-induced conflicts, constitutional reform and transitional justice issues which needed to be addressed.

The representative urged the network do some situational analysis including causal analysis of the prevailing conflict issues in the

country and to identify hotspots. The network was also advised to come up with concrete plans for future work and to also engage with the electoral processes focusing on the pre-election, election and post-election period. It was also advised to do an in-depth analysis of forms of subtle conflicts and to promote openness and transparency.

According to Chere, the network is seeking to make an audit of peace initiatives across the country. It seeks to engage with institutions which include religious organizations and churches including government, the media and other civil society organizations.

Also according to Chere, the last network workshop was held in 2020. The workshop held in November 2021 focused on the current environmental scan for the country from 2021 to 2023. It assessed the political, social and economic environment. The focus was on what is currently taking place in the country and what is likely to take place between now and 2023

that works for and against conflict transformation and peacebuilding efforts.

Discussions also focused on the strategies that could be adopted the outcomes which could be realized.

According to a network spokesperson, on the political side, the inception of the Organ on National Healing and Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) and the current National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) in the country are steps in acknowledging that there is a divisive past that needs to be addressed in the country.

It is reported that since the coming into office of the current government, the situation prevailing in the country has not changed much in terms of a conducive environment for civil society organizations and the communities that they work with.

It is reported that there is intolerance, politicization, party-state conflation and a lack of trust in government institutions.

On the economic aspect, the network says that there is a need to recognize that people are fighting for economic survival, hence the need to focus on an ideology that promotes an economic agenda that is cohesive from the grassroots to the national level in order to abate the current chaos.

On the social aspect it is reported that there is a need to teach the current generation, especially children leadership values.

Some of the proposed initiatives by the network include developing a critical mass of peace builders or champions, facilitating collaborative dialogue projects where champions join together to do one thing, champions identifying dialogue projects to implement including though leadership initiatives, seeding peace and values narratives.

DR Congo: Practicing Strategies to Develop Female Leadership in the Media.

By Badylon Kawanda Bakiman

Actions with visible impacts, commitment, intelligence to influence, spirit of initiative and organization, capacity to lead and guide, vigor of persistence ... So many strategies and qualities applied by several women journalists in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Central Africa to develop their leadership in the Media. Some of them have created online Medias, magazines, hold management positions, or head desks. Experiences hailed by Human Rights Activists.

Sitting in his office, Gandie Molisho is currently director of Radio Sangomalamu, one of the community and associative radios based in Kikwit, an economic and political town in the province of Kwilu in the south-west of the DRC.

She plans weekly activities, gives directions to more than 10 officers, manages and monitors them.

“Prior this this position, I had started as a radio cantor in 2002, then recruited as a receptionist the same year. Attracted by the profession of a journalist, I learned to edit sounds in the studio. I am fully committed and I have developed, little by little, the courage, the spirit of initiative.... Training followed. The results of my work convinced my hierarchy. This is why, after two years acting as director,



La Guardia Magazine.

this hierarchy, in 2013, confirmed me as director of this radio station, «she testifies.

She claims she has never been complexed in front of the men of the media and plans several other initiatives for the development of this radio station, the building of which

was built thanks to her efforts.

The same is the case in the same town where Espérance Nzila, another woman leader who is the director of programs for Radio-Television La Voix de l'Aigle, a denominational and community media.

She says she started this profession in 2011 as a host of the show «musical therapy», a slot reserved for religious musicians.

«After this program I became a sound recording operator and I acted with full responsibility. I applied the strategy of competence and concentration despite the difficulties that did not discourage me at all,» she told Pan African Visions.

For her part, Maguy Mbuku, evolves in Kinshasa, the capital of the DRC. She created, more than two years ago, an online media www.pouelle.info, whose line is dedicated to the news and the promotion of women in the DRC and around the world.

“It was since 2005 that I started

working as a professional journalist at RTAE, the Christian channel of Pastor Sony Kafuta for a year. Then I went to Mirador TV as a reporter,» she says.

“In 2007 I was hired at RTGA (Radio-television group the future) until 2017 as a reporter, news anchor and host of the women's show 'Femina'. This is what drove me to create the first online medium dedicated to women”, she says after applying strategies of passion, determination, creativity and self-discipline.

Anna Mayimona is also in Kinshasa. Thanks to her leadership, in 1997 she created the 'Union Congolaise des Femmes des Médias (UCOFEM)' (<https://ucofem.cd/>), a structure that ensures the protection, promotion and defense of women's rights through the media.

“I have loved journalism and women's leadership since I was a child. I was inspired by several women leaders that I saw from time to time



Gandie Molisho, Manager Of Sango Malamu Radio Station.

on television. That's why I decided to become a female media leader. My dream has come true», she says.

Same with Christine Ekambo who created www.journaldesnations.net for news at home and around the world.

“It was my dream for years. I feel comfortable leading even men who respect me too”, she said.

In Lubumbashi, Haut Katanga province, in the south-east of the country, it was Godelive Nyemba who, in 2016, created La Guardia (<https://magazinelaguardia.info/>), a news magazine.

“Currently, the print of this magazine crosses borders. I am proud. I remain determined to continue this leadership to serve as an example for rising youth”, she said.

According to her, women have the skills to emerge like men. «No inferiority complex.»

In the province of Kongo central, more than 10 kilometers from Kinshasa, the capital, Nana Mbungu is emerging as director of a community radio station.

«The Promoter of this radio station discovered me during an awareness-raising activity that I was covering as a journalist. After having gathered a lot of information about me, he decided to give me this radio. This is



Esperance Nzila, RTVA Station.

the fifth year since I've been running this radio station. My strategy is management”, she says.

Molisho, Nzila, Mbuku, Mbungu, Mayimona... are among the women journalists in the DRC who have completed an obstacle course to achieve significant leadership.

They operate in a context characterized by a very political

media environment. Since the start of the democratization process in 1990, this sector has taken off.

To date, the country has more than 80 television channels, the majority of which are concentrated in Kinshasa. Around 270 radio stations, mostly community-based, as well as around a hundred newspapers, including twenty appearing online.

According to a recent study published by UCOFEM on the image of women in the media in the DRC, female leadership in these media is 17 percent in the country.

This structure has been working for several years to organize training sessions and advocacy for the promotion of gender in the media.

In a paper titled «Leader, Do You Have What It Takes», John C. Maxuelli, recognized as America's leadership expert, notes: “An important part of any leader's development

comes from learning laws of leadership, because these are the strengths that teach the basics of how leadership works”.

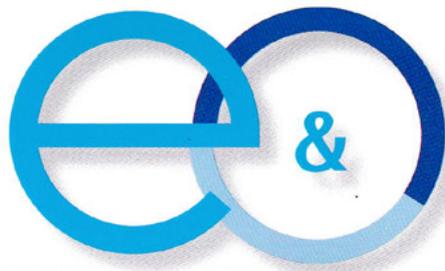
“The effective participation of women and equal leadership opportunities are recognized globally as critical factors in achieving sustainable development. Although much progress has been made in increasing the representation of women in all areas of public life since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), changes have been gradual and slow”, AfricaRenewal Magazine recognizes.

The same indicates that gender equality and the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of life, especially decision-making, are integral to the Decade of Action and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. (SDGs) by 2030

“We encourage and support women journalists who develop these assets even if there is still a lot to do. They are within their rights recognized by several instruments, both national and international”, Laurent Bwenia, one of the country's human rights activists said (END).

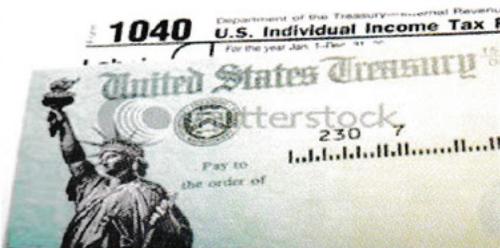


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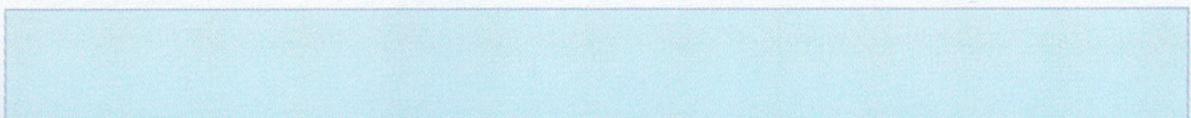
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Zimbabwean Authorities Urged To Adopt Bio-Certified Crop Initiatives For A Healthier Population

By Wallace Mawire



Wendy Madzura
Head of Agronomy SEEDCO

Wendy Madzura, Head of Agronomy with Seed-Co Group.

Zimbabwean authorities have been urged to facilitate a shift from generalized crop production to foods that are bio-certified and high in nutrients if the country is to have a healthier population.

According to Wendy Madzura, Head of Agronomy with Seed-Co Group in Zimbabwe in a presentation on scaling and impacting nutritious varieties in Zimbabwe presented at a webinar organized by the Zimbabwe Plant Breeders Association (ZPBA) on advances in breeding and dissemination of nutritional crops, although the mandatory food fortification has finally been passed as legislation in the country, Madzura says that active engagement and participation is still a challenge.

“The country needs to work on a solid strategy that will bring the ZPBA network on board and up to speed. There is a need for innovative ways of sharing and use of this vital information. There is also need for focused knowledge management. There is a gap in stakeholder participation and engagements,” Madzura said.

Madzura also emphasised the need for a bio-fortification strategy in the

country and a roll-out of bio-fortified crops if the intended objectives are to be met.

According to Madzura, bio-fortification is a sustainable agro-based intervention designed to increase the content of key nutrients in crops through breeding in order to correct or prevent micronutrient deficiencies primarily among the rural poor who are vulnerable to “hidden hunger”.

She says that bio-fortification provides a solution for global micronutrient deficiency through consumption of crops rich in essential micronutrients.

It is also reported that micronutrient deficiencies, also referred to as “hidden hunger” can result in stunting, blindness, mental retardation, learning disabilities, low work capacity and even premature death.

The Bio-fortification initiatives include provision of key nutrients such as Provitamin A: Yellow and orange maize (ZS242, SC 510 & SC 610 in Nigeria), Orange Fleshed Sweet Potatoes (OFSP), High iron and zinc: Beans (NUA 45), pearl millet, rice, maize, wheat, high protein soyabean (grain and vegetable), sorghum,

orange cassava including quality protein maize (SC 643 high lysine- and tryptophan).

Madzura added that the elimination of malnutrition in all its forms plays a pivotal role in improving the health, social and economic status of people in Zimbabwe, especially for marginalized groups like children and women.

She said that food and nutrition strategies should promote diversified, healthy eating habits and balanced diets.

She called for collective action in raising awareness on the significance of embracing bio-fortified food crops to ease adoption.

It is also added that on a global scale, at least 2 billion people primarily in low and middle income countries, do not get enough essential vitamins and minerals (micronutrients) in their daily diets.

It is also reported that the Commercialization of Bio-fortified Crops (CBC) programme was launched in 2019 to address widespread hidden hunger in Africa and Asia in South Africa.

“The consumer acceptability of OFSP and provitamin A bio-fortified maize were higher among children

compared to adults,” Madzura said.

In Zimbabwe, according to Madzura, the commissioning of the Food and Nutrition Security Committees (FNSCs) was fostered at national, provincial, district and sub - district levels to better understand the challenges and strengths within a changed socio -economic context, in order to inform a strategy to revive and strengthen decentralized coordination for food and nutrition security.

She added that in Zimbabwe some farmers have been growing vitamin A -rich maize and zinc-fortified beans, however bio-fortified crop production and consumption are low due to unavailability of bio-fortified seeds, “perceived” low yields and slow adoption.

Benefits of bio-fortification outlined by Madzura for the farmer include high yields, high nutrition and high profits. For the community benefits include improved health, improved livelihoods and employment creation across the value chain.

Benefits for the country include improved economy, reduced import bill, increased exports and economic growth. Benefits outlined for industry include employment creation and

economic growth.

In a SWOT analysis highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the adoption of bio-fortified crops in Zimbabwe, Madzura said that strengths which existed in the country include supportive policy frameworks, a conducive political environment, availability of seed houses and robust extension services.

The weaknesses identified include segmented efforts by stakeholders, inadequate information dissemination on the benefits of bio-fortification and exclusion of bio-fortification initiatives from government programmes.

The opportunities identified include health security drive, provision of good genetics, climate change mitigation through drought tolerant varieties and favourable government programmes such as the Presidential Inputs Programme and the Command Agriculture Programme.

Threats identified include Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) fears by consumers, fear of



The first thing, take note farmers, seed choice is what enable us to have good yields.

reduced yields on bio-fortified crops, factors that reduce productivity (Lack of Government Approved Programmes) and association of some bio-fortified crops (orange maize) with yellow maize.

Madzura said that breeding efforts are needed to improve taste qualities of bio-fortified foods to enhance acceptability.

She also said that value addition is needed to diversify forms in which the foods can be taken.

She also said that there is a need for development of local and export markets to stimulate internal

production and consumption of private and public players in the bio-fortified crop value chain.

Madzura also emphasised the need for premium pricing of bio-fortified produce.

Initiatives she highlighted to promote bio-fortified crops on orange fleshed sweet potatoes include conducting awareness campaigns on the health benefits of the orange fleshed sweet potatoes on food and nutrition security and the setting up of demonstration plots to showcase orange fleshed sweet potatoes

production and yields.

On high iron beans she highlighted the need for introducing the new bean varieties at subsidized costs to penetrate the market, conducting awareness campaigns, outlining the benefits of bio-fortified crops and lobbying for the inclusion of bio-fortified crops in government programmes.

On bio-fortified maize, Madzura highlighted the need of setting up of demonstration plots to showcase the yields of the new varieties, distributing the seed through various networks across the country and lobbying for the uptake of bio-fortified maize in government programmes.

It is also reported that other bio-fortified crops include cassava, rice, pearl millet, wheat and other key nutrients include calcium.

Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank said, "Bio-fortified crops are going to be game-changers with dealing with the issue of malnutrition in our world today."

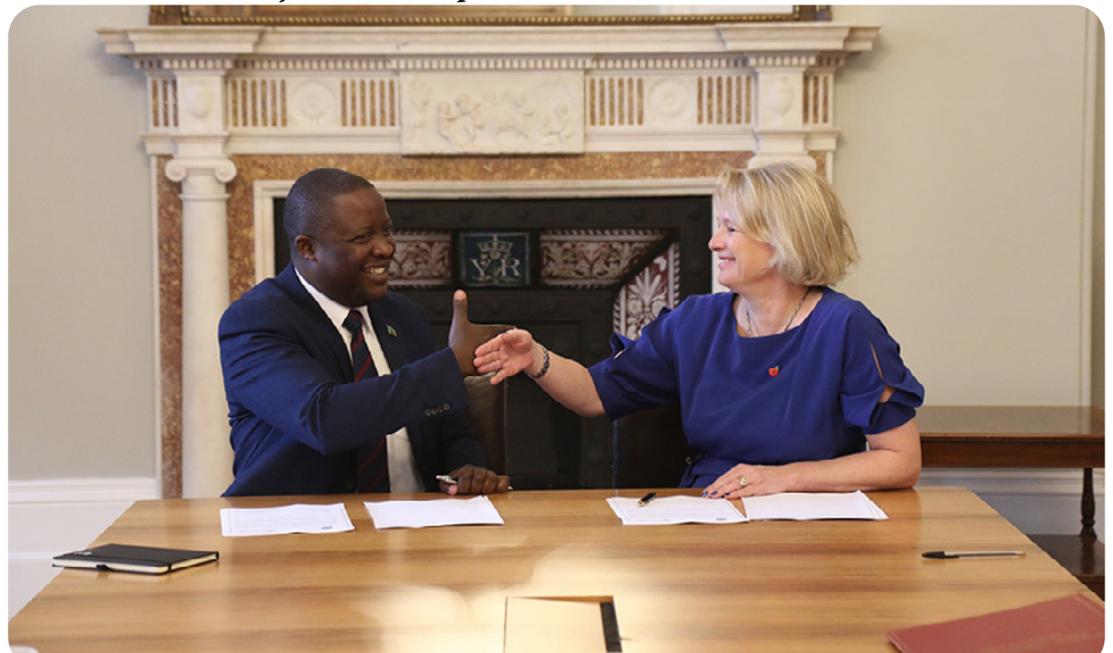
UK Wants to Strengthen Socio-Economic Ties with Africa in 2022: UK Minister for Africa

By Prince Kurupati

Looking ahead to the year 2022, the UK Minister for Africa Vicky Ford said that the UK is looking to widen and strengthen its socio-economic ties with Africa. Minister Ford said the remarks while delivering her end-of-year speech at Chatham House.

Minister Ford started her speech acknowledging the increasing influence of Africa in global affairs adding also how this influence is set to increase in the coming decades. Looking at the demographics, the minister said that "By 2050, it is predicted that 1 in 4 people on this planet will live in the continent of Africa – so Africa really matters." Owing to this, the minister said its imperative for the UK strengthen its ties with Africa during these times.

As the UK moves into the future,



UK Minister for Africa, Vicky Ford and Zambian Minister of Overseas Affairs, Stanley Ok Kakubo.

Minister Ford said that its imperative not just to strengthen the ties with African governments but to widen the UK's involvement in Africa by partnering and collaborating with "citizens, businesses and civil society – and all those who share our goals and values".

In light of the current trying times that the world finds itself in, there is need for close cooperation to ensure that the Covid pandemic is dealt with once and for all. When it comes to the Covid pandemic, Minister Ford said that, "we know that we are not safe until everyone is safe." As such, to ensure that the pandemic is fought from all corners, the UK will continue playing the same role it has been playing to help Africa fight and combat the pandemic. The Minister said that the UK "has been playing a key role to get more vaccinations into arms across Africa. We are one of the largest donors to Covax, having committed 548million pounds, and that is helping to deliver more than 214 million doses to 44 African countries".

She went on to state that when it comes to the Covid pandemic, its important that nations do not just wait to receive donations from other countries but they should take proactive steps in manufacturing their own vaccines. Its because of this that the UK government has taken the decision to help three African nations set up vaccine manufacturing plants to ensure that Africa produces its vaccines. The Minister said she had the privilege to visit Senegal, one of the countries looking to manufacture Covid vaccines on the African continent. In conjunction with the private sector, the UK is helping Senegal, Morocco and South Africa set up Covid vaccination plants.

Though the issue of vaccines is of paramount importance at the present moment, the UK Minister for Africa Vicky Ford said that there is more needed to ensure that the continent recovers from the effects of the Covid pandemic. Owing to the Covid pandemic, "the continent (Africa) experienced its largest recession on record last year. It pushed around



UK Minister for Africa Vicky Ford meeting with South African government official Alvin Botes. Photo credit twitter.

32 million more people into extreme poverty. Over 11 million girls may not go back to school because of the disruption caused by school closures," Minister Ford said. To address all of these problems, the Minister said that "greater economic support" is needed. The UK together with other G7 countries according to the Minister has already started honouring its promise to offer greater economic support to Africa by pledging "\$60 billion of finance for Africa over five years to help unlock investment in fragile economies and support economic recovery from COVID".

For Africa to become a master of its destiny, there is need for the continent to produce its own fruits. This according to the Minister can be done through the transformative power of trade. The Minister said that she is aware that economic growth is only possible through investment – "investment in business, investment in infrastructure and investment in people – particularly in education

and health". Owing to this, the UK wants to be "the honest and reliable investment partner that African countries want." To achieve this, Minister Ford said that the UK "recently launched British International Investment, to establish values-driven, high standard finance for clean, green infrastructure, and aims to leverage our world class asset in the City of London as we support democratic countries to grow."

Apart from offering economic support, the UK is also looking to "strengthen freedom and democracy" in Africa because it knows that "free, democratic countries are more peaceful and they are more prosperous". Through partnerships with the African Union, the UK wants to shore up democracy and good governance in Africa. Among other things, that will be achieved through "encouraging the development of inclusive political institutions, a free media and an active civil society".

2021 did showcase to the whole world that Africa is capable of

flourishing when it comes to peaceful democratic transition of power according to Minister Ford. The Minister was taking a leaf from the peaceful power transitions that happened in Zambia, Cape Verde and Niger. While praising the peaceful power transitions in these countries, she also stated that the situation in Sudan exposes "how bumpy the road to liberty can be." As such, the UK as it moves into 2022 wants to continue pushing for democracy in all African nations. She went on to state that there are some key elections that will take place on the continent including those in Kenya, Lesotho and South Sudan which will provide a litmus test for Africa's democracy.

On the social scene, Minister Ford said she wants to promote empowerment of women and girls. "We (the UK) want to see girls receiving 12 years of quality education, all over the world, because when you open the door to education you open up doorways to opportunity," Minister Ford said.

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Q & A With Enoch Eyong On Becoming A Successful Professional Footballer

By Ajong Mbapndah L

From modest beginnings in his native Cameroon, hard work, talent, discipline, and guts propelled Enoch Eyong Tarkang to the summits of global football. With stints in Ajax Cape Town, Ajax Amsterdam in Holland, Fulham in England, Standard Liege in Belgium, two world cups etc., Enoch Eyong has had the kind of career that many young footballers dream of.

Unlike most footballers who are coy about sharing their experiences or tips for success, Enoch is out with a new book to guide young footballers. Titled "How to Become A Successful Professional Footballer," the book shares vital tips that aspiring young footballers will find useful

in finding success on and off the pitch. In the following Q & A, Eyong sheds discusses the book and other football related developments in Cameroon and Africa.

You are out with a book "How to Become A Successful Professional Footballer", what motivated you to come up with this at this time?

While thinking of what's next for me once I make the transition from active professional football to other things, I asked myself the question «what would you say to your younger self if you were to advise him». While discussing with my wife and reflecting on my career journey, she encouraged



When it comes to football at African and International level, Enoch says Eto'o has achieved it all and touched the highest pinnacle of the game.



Enoch Eyong shares vital tips that aspiring young footballers will find useful in finding success on and off the pitch in his new book.

me to write this book, most of the credit goes to her.

What is your definition of a successful professional footballer and what are some of the tips needed to be successful?

My definition of success is from a balanced perspective. A successful professional footballer is one that has understood his «WHY», developed his talent to achieve top performance, invested his money to have sustainable cash flow, and worked on his personality to become a better version of himself. You can get more tips by reading my book.

Using your own personal experience how challenging is it in the present-day context to be a successful professional footballer?

I would say it's quite difficult because most people define success by the contracts signed and performance on the field, for me this is just part of it, there are other aspect that must go along without which it will just be success from a distant and not in reality.

The preface of the book is written by Samuel Eto'o, why him of all the footballers you played with?

When it comes to football at African and International level, he is someone who has achieved it all and touched the highest pinnacle of the game. To have played with him at close range and know him personally made it even more exciting to have him write the book preface.

Eto'o is now President of

Foreword by Samuel Eto'o Fils

HOW TO BECOME A SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER

THE 4P'S TO A SUCCESSFUL CAREER



EYONG ENOH

Fecafoot and you were one of those who endorsed his candidature, what are some of the urgent steps he needs to take to revive the game in Cameroon?

The steps he needs to take are

already clearly spelled out on his vision manifesto which is what made me endorse him in the first place. The urgent thing is to have the right people with the same commitment, honesty and competence to achieve his deliverables.

The AFCON is taking place in Cameroon, what is your take on that and all the drama that has surrounded the hosting, from infrastructure to tense relations with CAF?

The hosting of AFCON in Cameroon has dragged for over 2 years, irrespective of all the drama, we are ready to host the biggest African Football event and that's what matters, and I believe CAF is standing with us to have a successful one.

Professional Footballers of African descent have been forced into a loyalty test of sorts between club and country, did you face these in your playing days, and how best should current footballers address this?

I think every African footballer playing in European clubs faces this, especially when the player is a key player for his club. I don't think it's for players to address this, it's more of the football governing bodies and federations to make sure European clubs respect these internationally approved tournaments which are already on the sporting calendar, whether be it the EURO's, Copa America or AFCON, there shouldn't be any difference.

How affordable is your book and for those who want to get it where can they procure copies?

You can get my book on Kindle for 9,99\$ (e-book) and order the paper back for 24,99\$ from Amazon.

Besides the book we have out, how has your post football career shaped out like, what have you been up to and what else should we expect from Enoch Eyong in the future?

My book is just one of the tools I have in mind to help in mentoring the next generation of professional footballers. My goal is to also offer managerial services so that most players can get the best out of their playing time. My desire is to give them the help I never got as a player. So, expect Educational and Managerial projects from me, in the field of football but also other professional career settings.

AFCON: It is Time for Africa to Rebel against European Football Clubs, FIFA

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

Every two years, there is the reigniting of a battle between European clubs and African countries concerning the Africa Cup of Nations – with the former looking for every means possible to prevent players leaving for the African continental showpiece.

This year has not been different like the other years with the European Club Association, ECA, which represents European clubs has been urging FIFA to get the competition cancelled as most of the clubs will be without some key players in their squad from January 9 – with some going into February.

The 33rd edition of the Africa Cup of Nations, AFCON, was to be played in January 2021 but was postponed to January 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was not new as other federations like UEFA also postponed the Euros due to the health pandemic while the Olympic Games was equally postponed.

The beauty about it all is that these are star players who have helped their clubs be where they are in the standings. Where will Liverpool be without Mohamed Salah and Sadio Mane – both of whom leads the scoring chart in the Premier League? Egypt and Senegal will be relying on these two players if they are to win the trophy and for Senegal, with it for the very first time.

England has the majority or so of African players who will be participating at the AFCON finals. This is followed by players in the French Ligue 1, Serie A, Bundesliga and LaLiga. Naby Keita, Chelsea goalkeeper Edouard Mendy, Arsenal's Thomas Partey, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Nicolas Pepe, Crystal Palace's Jeffrey Schlupp, Chheikhou Kouyate and Jordan Ayew are just a handful of players to leave for the AFCON.

The question now is why these African stars who are highly regarded in their country will and who sacrifice to make sure their clubs



CAF President Motsepe took a strong stance on AFCON commencing on January 9.

achieve success cannot be allowed to participate at the African continental showpiece – AFCON? Must European Clubs always bring up one issue or another regarding the participation of African players? And can they call for the cancellation of the Euros if called for by African clubs?

CAF takes a strong stance

Africans may still have not forgiven CAF president Dr Patrice Motsepe on his stance on a two-year FIFA World Cup and favouring the introduction of the Super Cup (after clubs in Europe shutdown theirs), the CAF boss has been very vocal, however, on the organization of the AFCON on the date adopted – January 9.

“I will be in Cameroon on January 7 with my wife and kids to witness this incredible competition, CAF President Motsepe said in an interview with Cameroonian journalists on his visit to the country in December 2021.

“You can see that there is a huge commitment and a focus to make sure that there is good progress. We are going to host with the people of Cameroon an exceptional tournament. We are ready to show the world the best of African football and African hospitality.”

Dr Patrice Motsepe added: “This tournament is important for the

people of Africa – and I am so proud and so excited with the work done (on hosting the competition).”

Former and current players express their disgust at ECA tactics

All-time leading goalscorer for the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon and now President of his country's FA, Samuel Eto'o has been one of the ex-players who have been very vocal about the beauty of the Africa Cup of Nations and why African players in Europe should be allowed to participate.

“If the Euros took place in the middle of the pandemic, with full stadiums in several cities in Europe and there was no problem, why wouldn't AFCON be played in Cameroon?” the former FC Barcelona and Inter striker told Canal+ in an interview.

“Or are you trying to say that like we have always been treated, we Africans are not worth anything so we have to put up with it? I do not see why AFCON would not take place. The Cameroon FA that I represent will defend hosting this competition to the end.”

“The Cameroon Football Federation assures players and supporters of the 24 qualified countries and those amateur footballers who wish to

visit Cameroon, that all sanitary and safety measures have been taken by the government to guarantee the competition goes ahead successfully,” Samuel Eto'o added.

“There is no coach in the world that can prevent me from playing the AFCON,” the former Arsenal player Emmanuel Adebayor said. “It is disgusting that some persons are trying to prevent the African players from playing at the AFCON.”

One of the only sensible coaches in this whole issue about the AFCON has been Crystal Palace Coach Patrick Vieira, who has said that the AFCON has to be treated the same as the European championship and that he will never prevent his players from participating in it.

Patrick Vieira said: “I respect and understand the passion and importance of those players to go and represent their country. I will never stop any player from going to the Africa Cup of Nations. I believe that the competition has to be respected because this competition is as important as the European Championship.”

“With Senegal, I do not think people understand Mane or Kouyate not representing their nation. If there was more coverage people will

understand how important it is for the African continent.”

CAF president Motsepe and the Cameroonian authorities may be happy about the consensus that has been reached (European clubs have until January 3, 2022, for the release of players) for now, but the whole issue will certainly brew up again not long from now – the next edition of the competition to be hosted in Ivory Coast in 2023.

If that competition is to go ahead with all the African stars presently (and not like the smear campaign that was used against the competition in Cameroon), CAF and the Ivorian authorities too will need to take a tough stance and the players themselves will need to be more vocal about their participation in a competition which to them is like the Euros, Copa America to their European and South America colleagues.



The AFCON trophy is what many footballers and fans look up to in the continent.

Cameroon: Daunting challenges await new FECAFOOT President Samuel Eto'o

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The Cameroon Football Federation better known in its French acronym FECAFOOT now has a new president in the person of four-time African footballer of the year and two-time AFCON winner Samuel Eto'o. The all-time leading goal scorer of the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon defeated incumbent Seidou Mbombo Njoya 41 votes to 31 in the election that took place on December 11, 2021.

Samuel Eto'o ran his campaign on fighting corruption and the promotion of women and youth football amongst others. In his election campaign, he said «it is time to rebuild our football and give the game the grandeur, it deserves”. Samuel Eto'o equally promised to give him a salary to the building of amateur football.

There are certainly tough days ahead for the new president and now Pan African Visions takes a look at some of the challenges that await Samuel Eto'o from the smooth organization of the 33rd edition



of the AFCON to the construction of the Bamenda Stadium and the rebranding of Cameroon football.

Organizing AFCON 2021

This is the immediate preoccupation of the Samuel Eto'o-led FECAFOOT Executive Committee as continuing efforts to put up a beautiful AFCON void of polemics. Samuel Eto'o has been one of the ex-players who have been very vocal about the beauty of the Africa Cup of Nations and why African players in Europe should be allowed to participate.

“If the Euros took place in the middle of the pandemic, with full stadiums in several cities in Europe and there was no problem, why wouldn't AFCON be played in Cameroon?” the former FC Barcelona and Inter striker told Canal+ in an interview.

“Or are you trying to say that like we have always been treated, we Africans are not worth anything so we have to put up with it? I do not see why AFCON would not take place.

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“The Cameroon Football Federation assures players and supporters of the 24 qualified countries and those amateur footballers who wish to visit Cameroon, that all sanitary and safety measures have been taken by the government to guarantee the competition goes ahead successfully,” Samuel Eto’o added.

Cameroon will begin their quest for a sixth AFCON against Burkina Faso and Samuel Eto’o will be front and centre of activities. He will certainly wish that the first victory for his mandate comes with the national team picking up the trophy.

Construction of the Bamenda Stadium

Bamenda, the chief town of North West Region has seen presidents come and gone and all of them keep promising the construction of a modern-day pitch in the region with no result achieved. Bamenda boasts two Elite 1 teams (YOSA and PWD Bamenda) and one Elite 2 team (Rangers Bafut) and a female team in the top flight (Vision Sport Bamenda), yet the region is barren with a modern football pitch.

The Bamenda stadium before it was closed for maintenance was noted to be amongst the highest in terms of gate takings and when PWD faces YOSA, it is a dwell that attracts scores of people to the pitch. Now, the game can barely boast of a hundred persons because the region has just the YOSA training ground and coupled with the security situation, many fans don’t go again to watch games there.

If Samuel Eto’o wants to edge his name forever in the minds and hearts of the people of the North West, the construction of the Bamenda Stadium will certainly do that job.

What will happen to the 2021 Cup of Cameroon final?

This is another question that Samuel Eto’o will have to contend with and the competition looks likely not to go ahead, something which will be a blow for the two teams that have been preparing for ages.

PWD Bamenda and Les Astres of

Douala are the two teams that have been waiting for the day to play the final.

The Cup of Cameroon is tied to the Presidency and it is the president who decides when the competition can be played – something that has made the two teams train endlessly without any way forward.

“This is our time,” PWD President Pascal Abunde famously said back in July and with how everything is going, it will be unfortunately not the time of PWD Bamenda.

There is, however, still hope for the final to be played after the AFCON finals – in February. It is a slim chance but still possible as the championship in Cameroon is scheduled to begin after the AFCON. So, all hope is not lost for Samuel Eto’o to get the presidency involved for the Cup of Cameroon final to be played.

Rebuilding Cameroon football

When he announced his candidacy for the FECAFOOT top job, Samuel Eto’o said «it is time to rebuild our football and give the game the grandeur, it deserves». He ran his campaign on fighting corruption and the promotion of women’s football. Mismanagement and infighting have plagued FECAFOOT for the past years and many of the activities have been going on in offices (courts cases) than on the football pitch. The football season last year was constantly being interrupted with various courts cases and also the fighting between the now cancelled LFPC and FECAFOOT.

With all this fighting, the people who have been suffering are the players, coaches and those who run these various clubs, a situation that needs to change drastically. This has made Cameroon football constantly miss in sending their representative for the CAF inter-club competitions and also affected the performances of the representatives who mostly go into the game without playing competitive football.



Samuel Eto’o is the AFCON all-time leading goalscorer.

The tides seem to be changing as shortly after taking office, the new FECAFOOT president met with the former head of the LFPC (Gen Pierre Semengue) with many having the feeling that the mandate of the LFPC may be brought back. Abdouraman Hamadou Babba, one of the individuals who has constantly been taking FECAFOOT to court on illegalities has cut a slight undertone with signs he may work with the new bureau despite him having sent a document to FIFA against the December 11 election.

Given some regions befitting stadiums

Samuel Eto’o in his manifesto promised to build some ten stadia across the country, a move that has been received with great optimism especially in some regions that cannot even boast of a befitting football pitch. And visiting the South Region shortly after he was elected president, Samuel Eto’o promised the construction of two stadia in the region.

Like many footballers who hope to one day make it big on the global stage, the pitches where these youngsters play their trade is not something to write home about. It is just recently that some regions have been blessed with the construction of modern-day pitches due to the organization of the Women’s AFCON and now the 33rd edition of the AFCON.

“This type of stadium encourages me a lot and I believe that if we had such a stadium in my village (Nkambe), we would have been very far today and we would have had good players like Samuel Eto’o and Roger Miller but we could not make it due to the nature of the fields,” Rientes Njie Tanyu, who left his village for Baffoussam said in an interview while talking about the beauty of the Baffoussam Omnisport Stadium.

«As a good footballer, this type of stadium encourages us to play. When you find yourself in such a stadium, you just find yourself playing without being told to.»

The all-time leading goal scorer has a lot on his plate and to him, he cannot achieve all that he has for the Cameroonian football family without the collaboration of all – even those who were against him during the election exercise. But as he did with his glittering football career, the challenge of running the federation will not be above him.

«I won’t say I have a dream-like Martin Luther King... My greatest wish is you hear every Cameroonian say the dream has come true at the end of our mandate,» Samuel Eto’o told his executive committee members during their first Ordinary Session.

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TotalEnergies AFCON 2021: Cameroon Puts Up a Show for the Ages

A brace from Vincent Aboubakar sealed a 2-1 victory for Cameroon against Burkina Faso in the opening game

By Boris Esono Nwenfor



A very colorful display graced the opening ceremony.

Cameroon's cultural display and diversity were on display as the 33rd edition of the Africa Cup of Nations got underway this Sunday, January 9, fifty years since the country last hosted the competition – the last time being in 1972 when present generations were not even born.

“We are here to show the best of football from Cameroon and Africa,” CAF President Dr Patrice Motsepe said in his opening remarks. “Let us send a message; we want to work with Europe and develop African football.”

«CAF is deeply committed to cooperating and working together

with European Football Confederation and the football clubs in Europe and all other Confederations in the world for the development and growth of global football and the benefit of all the football stakeholders worldwide.»

The Confederation of African Football boss added: “At CAF, we set high standards for ourselves and that is why we said that we want this TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations to be the best because the people of Africa deserve the best. We also want the success of this competition to motivate, inspire all the people of Africa and believe in themselves and their ability to work together and

succeed in building a bright future for all the people of Africa and to make Africa the best place to live in.”

The tournament began with a magnificent victory for Cameroon saw Aboubakar Vincent scoring the two goals for the Indomitable Lions in a 2-10 victory. This result was a sweet one for the football-mad country of Cameroon as it was the first time that the country is hosted the tournament in fifty (50) years.

That huddle of hosting the AFCON would have been broken back in 2019 but that had to be stripped from the country after delays to the infrastructure and issues with COVID.

The AFCON 2019 was given to Egypt while Cameroon was awarded the 2021 edition. But, that again had to be pushed to January 2022 due to an issue related to COVID-19.

The Indomitable Lions, however, did not start all-guns-blazing as Burkina Faso sat back in the opening minutes and had to rely on their counter-offensive which rattled Cameroon for a few minutes. Cameroon had the majority of the ball possessions (61%) as opposed to Burkina Faso (39%) but the side could not make goal-scoring chances from the intense pressure.

And lack of coordination and an

error from goalkeeper Andre Onana saw Burkina Faso taking the lead at the 24mins through Gustavo Fabrice Sangare. This was the first goal from Sangare for his national team in two appearances. It was also a bitter one from Andre Onana who conceded his first goal after returning to the national side after his long ban from football. In the two previous encounters against Malawi and Ivory Coast (FIFA 2022 World Cup Qualifiers), Onana kept two clean sheets.

Al Nassr striker Vincent Aaboubakar had another idea in the encounter as he succeeded in founding the back of the net on two occasions, and in the process bettered his record he had back at the 2917 Africa Cup of Nations. The Indomitable Lions striker found the back of the net at the 40th minute after VAR had to be called to award a penalty. Aaboubakar stepped up and scored his first of the tournament and for his country.

29-year-old Aaboubakar was not finished from there as he scored his second few minutes to the end of the first half, again through the penalty spot. His first spot-kick was slotted at the right side of goalkeeper Koffi and



We are here to show the best of football from Cameroon and Africa, CAF President Dr Patrice Motsepe said in his opening remarks.

for his second goal went to the left side of the goalkeeper.

The former Coton Sport of Garoua striker would, however, be prohibited from getting his hat-trick after he was judged to have been offside in the process of him scoring. VAR again had to be called and after a long wait,

the goal was disallowed. But sides kept mounting pressure on the other; for Burkina Faso to equalize while Cameroon was looking at extending its goal tally, but the game will end two goals to one after full time.

VAR shows how things are done rightly

The Confederation of African Football, CAF, before the tournament commenced had indicated that the Video Assistant referee will be used from the group stages of the competition, a move away from the last tournament that had the VAR only from the knockout phases at the 2019 AFCON.

There were two major instances that VAR had to intervene in the opening match; one for awarded a penalty to Cameroon and the other for denying a goal for Cameroon. Cameroonians may have had a lukewarm attitude towards the use of VAR in the tournament particularly looking at the issues that have followed the use of the instrument. But, in the two instances, the intervention of VAR shows why it had to be brought for the group stages at this AFCON.

With the VAR getting off to the right footing, CAF and the other officials will be hoping that there is no bad call being made from VAR which will send a strong message to the European Associations and even FIFA on how the VAR should be used. This will be a major outcome to African football and African referees who are not frequently selected by FIFA for World Cup matches.



A magnificent victory for Cameroon saw Aaboubakar Vincent scoring the two goals for the Indomitable Lions in a 2-1 victory.



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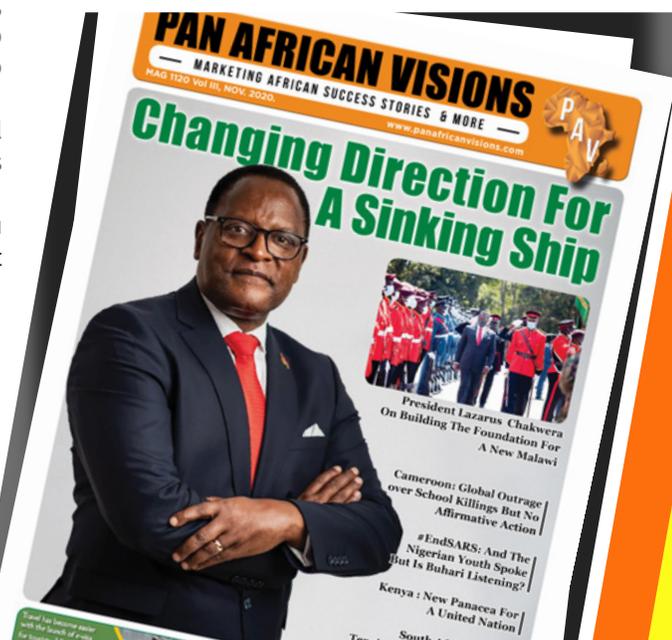
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