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Beyond Africa's Tough Talk At The UNGA

By Ajong Mbapndah L

It was a familiar circus in very uncertain times for African leaders at the 77th United Nations General Assembly -UNGA which ended recently in New York. In a world going through challenging times, Africa did the best it could to make its voice heard. Tough demands, inconvenient truths, and even some chest thumping characterized the African participation with Macky Sall of Senegal, Buhari of Nigeria, and Mali's interim Prime Minister, Abdoulaye Idrissa Maïga as the standout performers

As current Chair of the African Union, President Macky Sall was saddled with responsibility sharing African positions on seminal global concerns and making some of the tough demands.

"I have come to say that Africa has suffered enough of the burden of history; that it does not want to be the breeding ground of a new Cold War, but rather a pole of stability and opportunity open to all its partners on a mutually beneficial basis," President Sall said.

For the AU Chair, the war between Russia and Ukraine was an opportunity to revisit the debate on equal representation at the highest decision-making levels of the United Nations.

"It is time for a fairer, more inclusive global governance that is more adapted to the realities of our time. It is time to overcome our reticence and deconstruct the narratives that persist in confining Africa to the margins of decision-making circles," Macky Sall said.

Apart from getting representation on the UN Security Council, President Sall said that Africa is also demanding a seat in the Group of 20 "so that Africa can finally be represented where decisions that affect 1.4 billion Africans are being taken."

For President Buhari of Nigeria, it was a legacy question as he addressed the UNGA for the last time.

"As President, I have set the goal that one of the enduring legacies I would like to leave is to entrench a process of free, fair and transparent and credible elections through which Nigerians elect leaders of their choice," President Buhari said.

On his way out after serving the

constitutional two terms provided for in the Nigerian constitution, President Buhari harped on the importance of respecting term limits and the role Nigeria has played in shoring up fragile democracies in some West African countries.

In an additional sign of a deeply fractured relationship, Mali's interim Prime Minister, Abdoulaye Idrissa Maïga, lashed out at its former colonial master France for questionable policies that have fueled anti French sentiments in his country and across Africa. "Your intimidations and subversive actions have only swelled the ranks of Africans concerned with preserving their dignity," Maïga charged.

"Move on from the colonial past and hear the anger, the frustration, the rejection that is coming up from the African cities and countryside, and understand that this movement is inexorable," the military appointed Prime Minister said.

The synopsis from Macky Sall, Buhari and Maïga sum up the hopes, the fears and the progress of Africa. Hope in that Africa is growing out of the shyness of articulating its positions in clearer terms in the face of global challenges. As real as the issues raised are, there many who get the impression that African countries are either not doing enough or fast enough to rise up to the challenges of the times.

In Nigeria, it is a very checkered legacy for Buhari. Even some of his most ardent supporters may find it hard to say the state of Nigeria is stronger today as he leaves office than when he met it. Yet, by respecting term limits, the man will be doing himself a huge favour. The importance of democracy cannot be overemphasized. For a continent where some leaders hold the record for longevity in power that President Buhari should stand tall and tell the world that next year a different leader will speak for Nigeria at the UNGA is a sign of progress that should not be ignored.

For Africa to earn the respect and esteem it craves on the world stage, the leaders need to do more in making sure their policies are in sync with the



Ajong Mbapndah L, Managing Editor

aspirations of their people. Here the example of Mali comes to mind where the chorus for a change in relations with a country like France have been loudest. It is a country where its military leader Assimi Goïta is building an aura that goes beyond the borders of his country. For all the puffs and huffs about democracy, that people should feel so comfortable about military rule should be a cause for concern. The trend that started in Mali moved to Guinea, and then Burkina Faso where within nine months, the country is experiencing a second military ruler after another coup that too place this week.

While the African Union has touted its strong stance against unconstitutional means of taking power, it is a known fact that many leaders with doubtful or dubious legitimacies are given a pass by the continental body. Where was the AU when constitutional norms were thrown the wind and a military forced on the people? Where is the AU when others used flawed elections to eternalize themselves in power? For the world to take Africa serious, Africa needs to take itself more seriously.

President Buhari may thump his chest for respecting constitutional term limits, but it will also be good to ensure that the next elections to pick his successor are free and fair. That the elections should be a true testament to the will of the Nigerian people. We have opined several times that for Africa to get it right, Nigeria as the continental leader has to get it right. If Nigeria cannot get it right, how will it show leadership for the continent? How will it be able to address issues like the coups

and counter coups taking place in Burkina Faso?

Getting more serious also means that the continent must be willing to take ownership of its problems and lead the charge in the quest for solutions. In neighboring Cameroon, the "Anglophone" crisis has been raging on for six years to devastating effect with Nigeria or the AU blinking. How then will the continent complain of interference when the UN or other foreign nations wade into the crisis in quest of solutions? Such abdication of responsibilities does Africa no favours. Conflict resolution remains one of the areas where the continent needs to show more backbone on.

Succor can be seen in the energy sector where Africa seems to finally be getting its groove. In a continent where more than 600 million people still go without electricity, the development priorities of the continent go hand in glove with its energy fortunes.

"It is legitimate, fair and equitable that Africa, the continent that pollutes the least and lags furthest behind in the industrialisation process... exploit its available resources to provide basic energy, improve the competitiveness of its economy and achieve universal access to electricity," President Macky Sall said at the UNGA.

Joining leaders in articulating the African priorities and choices on the energy sector is the African Energy Chamber. Made of seasoned experts, and under the dynamic leadership of NJ Ayuk, the Chamber is playing a crucial role in helping the continent set the right priorities with policies and engagements that are helping to make energy resources a blessing rather than a curse. This issue of PAV takes a look at the continent's premiere energy event -the African Energy Week powered by the chamber and taking place in Cape Town, South Africa. The issue also takes a look at the standoff between Uganda and the European Union over the East African Crude Oil Pipeline-EACOP project, Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan, the impact of sanctions in Zimbabwe, the "Anglophone" crisis in Cameroon and more. Happy Reading!!

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THE NEW SPIRIT OF AFRICA
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Nigeria: Parties of Babel

By Richard Mammah

Ahead of the forthcoming elections, the crisis in the two bigger parties in the country is taking a toll on Nigeria's political process.

In the main opposition Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, the revolt from Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike and his allies is not rolling over as the party's candidate, Atiku Abubakar and other leading lights of the party may have hoped. Indeed, rather than abate, things have gotten to the point where the Wike group has literally opted out of the Presidential Campaign Committee that the party had forcibly cobbled up even when sessions with the group were yet to be concluded.

In response to their announced decision, the presidential candidate of the party, Abubakar Atiku has stated that he has no power to grant the demand of the dissident group by compelling the National Chairman of the Party, Dr Iyorchia Ayu to resign, and would rather request the protesting member to reconsider their decision and fully return to the fold.

As things stand, the thinking of those in favour of the status quo remaining is that the dissent to the extant position of affairs in the party is only a minority stirring and that it should not affect the critical element that is in contention; namely, the demand that the current National Chairman, Dr Iyorchia Ayu, should step down from office.

And even when this is not very publicly discussed, there is also a sense in which this demand seemingly correlates with another quite inconvenient challenge for the party. This is the question of the continuing opposition by some to even the first fact of Abubakar Atiku's presence on the ballot which would mean that as a Fulani, a Muslim and Northerner; he would, if he wins, be taking the



Pundits think Wike could be the door to the success or failure of the PDP flagbearer Atiku Abubakar. Photo courtesy.

reins of power after eight years of the country being ruled by another Fulani Muslim Northerner, Muhammadu Buhari. In country where issues of geographical, religious and ethnic balance are thorny, this is indeed a continuing hard nut to crack.

On the side of the ruling All Progressives Congress, APC, the presidential candidate, Bola Ahmed Tinubu and the party continue to be buffeted by the decision to nominate former Borno State Governor, Shettima as running mate which has effectively coalesced into a Muslim

Muslim ticket in a country where religious strife and tension also persists.

There are also concerns being raised by some as to the state of Tinubu's health and Shettima's controversial remarks on the fact that upon election into office, he Shettima would be controlling the security infrastructure while his principal would be engaged with economic concerns. Shettima has also been known to have, in recent time, made some other unsettling remarks including one that suggests that his principal shares close style

affiliation with Nigeria's erstwhile maximum dictator, Sani Abacha.

What all this means is that it still leaves the victory doors quite wide open at this point. Says Emma Angulu:

'Opposition to the Muslim-Muslim ticket will not stop Nigerians from ethnic tribal lines especially the Yorubas so Tinubu will likely do well in the south west. He will however not win in the South East, even as the south south will likely vote in large numbers for the Labour Party candidate. Elsewhere, Atiku Abubakar and Ahmed Datti will divide the North. The more educated

northerners will vote Labour Party while the traditional voters will go with Atiku. It's going to be a tricky election and it is also very likely that PDP candidates in the south East and south south will lose big time.'

Another analyst, Solomon Ekop says that it is really a Catch-22 situation:

'Nigerian politics defies all normal political permutations. Reason being that issues of money, ethnicity, religion and godfatherism are freely called up into action. And you can also see apparent traces of wickedness and vindictiveness. We have candidates that know they have nothing to offer but who simply want to satisfy their ego. It is like the case of the character Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights.

On the Wike revolt, Ekop believes that it could have been avoided but even at that would hope for a conclusion of matters in one way or the other:

'Wike has made a strong statement. It's now wise for him to quit when the ovation is still very loud. His options are open: remain in the PDP or quit now. If he perishes, let him perish!'

Indeed, the days ahead will tell.



The religious card is being played by some on the APC all muslim ticket of Tinubu and Shettima. Photo courtesy

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Senegalese President Lays Out African Demands At UNGA

By Prince Kurupati

Senegalese President Macky Sall addressed the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 20, 2022. As he is currently the Chair of the African Union, President Sall was tasked not just with talking about the successes and needs of Senegal but those of Africa as a whole. Indeed, he did not disappoint as he stressed Africa's position in relation to various things happening on the global stage. He also took time to lay out the demands Africa has to the UN General Assembly.

President Macky Sall's first port of call was to inform and remind the world that Africa is and will not be used as a battleground for a proxy war between Russia and Ukraine as well as those that support each of these countries. He went on to state that the era of the Cold War is long gone, and Africa will not be drawn into fights in which it has no interest.

"I have come to say that Africa has suffered enough of the burden of history; that it does not want to be the breeding ground of a new Cold War, but rather a pole of stability and opportunity open to all its partners on a mutually beneficial basis," President Sall said.

Though not willing to be drawn into the Russia-Ukraine conflict, President Sall said it would be in everyone's interest for the conflict to end sooner rather than later stating "We call for a de-escalation and a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine as well as for a negotiated solution to avoid the catastrophic risk of a potentially global conflict."

Africa has thus far managed to successfully stay neutral. This is despite the efforts by both conflicting sides to paint each other with a bad brush. Both conflicting countries are huge exporters of foodstuffs chief among them grain. Russia in addition is well endowed with oil reserves. Both countries have since pointed hands at each other for deliberately using food as a weapon to cause market shortages



Africa does not want to be the breeding ground of a new Cold War, but rather a pole of stability and opportunity open to all its partners on a mutually beneficial basis, says Macky Sall.

as a gesture of seeking sympathy and possibly support. Africa has however remained steadfast in its mission to remain neutral as some 25 countries chose to either abstain or refused to vote at all on the U.N. resolution that condemned the Russia-Ukraine war.

The African Union Chair went on to state that the Russia-Ukraine war also shows why it's important for all continents to have equal representation at the highest decision-making body of the United Nations. He, therefore, demanded that Africa's call to be included in the UN Security Council be considered as a matter of urgency stating "It is time for a fairer, more inclusive global governance that is more adapted to the realities

of our time. It is time to overcome our reticence and deconstruct the narratives that persist in confining Africa to the margins of decision-making circles."

Apart from getting representation on the UN Security Council, President Sall said that Africa is also demanding a seat in the Group of 20 "so that Africa can finally be represented where decisions that affect 1.4 billion Africans are being taken."

The Chair went on to state that the injustices that the people at the bottom of the pyramid are facing in the Russia-Ukraine war are the same as those being faced by the ordinary citizens in Zimbabwe owing to the sanctions placed on the country.



The AU Chair says it is time for Africa to have a seat at the UN Security Council, and a seat on the Group of 20 for representation where decisions that affect 1.4 billion Africans are being taken

President Sall called for the lifting of the sanctions saying that the "harsh measures continue to fuel a sense of injustice against an entire people, and to aggravate suffering in these times of deep crisis."

On the issue of increasing terrorism incidents on the continent, the African Union Chair called on the international community to join Africa in fighting the extremists saying the issue isn't just an African matter. "Terrorism, which is gaining ground on the continent, is not just an African matter. It is a global threat that falls under the primary responsibility of the council as the guarantor of the collective security mechanism, under the Organisation's Charter."

Away from socio-political issues, President Macky Sall touched on economic and environmental issues. On the economic front, President Sall said the African continent is still unfairly rated by credit rating agencies. He highlighted the 2022 Report on Financing for Sustainable Development which was produced by some 60 multilateral institutions. He said that there is a need for the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance to engage in a constructive dialogue with Group of 20, IMF and the World Bank, on improving the rating agencies' working and assessment methods. In the same vein, he called for the partial reallocation of special drawing rights, much needed for developing countries, and the implementation of the Group of 20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative.

On the environmental issues front, the African Union Chair urged African countries with oil and gas reserves to exploit them. He called upon the international community to respect this decision saying, "it is legitimate, fair and equitable that Africa, the continent that pollutes the least and lags furthest behind in the industrialisation process... exploit its available resources to provide basic energy, improve the competitiveness

of its economy and achieve universal access to electricity.”

President Sall reiterated Africa’s commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement but said exploiting the natural resources helps Africa to

provide light to “more than 600 million Africans... without electricity.”

Moving into the future, the Senegalese President called upon the international community to fund Africa’s mission to transition

to cleaner sources of energy. He however said the funding should not be regarded as aid but rather, “as a contribution by industrialised countries to a global partnership of solidarity, in return for efforts by

developing countries to avoid the polluting patterns that have plunged the planet into the current climate emergency.”

Cameroon: Violence Skyrockets as Anglophone Crisis Clock Six

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

It started like a joke, Anglophone lawyers feeling disenfranchised, took to the streets protesting against the appointment of Francophone judges in the Anglophone region. They saw this as threatening the common law system in the Anglophone regions as well as part of the general marginalization of Anglophones.

Anglophone teachers followed suit with their demands of getting the Anglo-Saxon system of education to be given pride of place. What quickly ensued will be something which the lawyers and teachers did not anticipate and up to this date, many Cameroonians still blame both parties for leading the North West and the South West to this bloody war that in September reached the six-year mark.

Thousands of people have been killed in the war, and more than half a million have been forced to flee their homes. Although 2019 saw the first known instance of dialogue between Cameroon and the separatists, as well as a state-organized national dialogue and the granting of special status to the Anglophone regions, the war continued to intensify in late 2019. The 2022 Cameroon parliamentary elections brought further escalation, as the separatists became more assertive while Cameroon deployed additional forces. While the COVID-19 pandemic saw one armed group declare a unilateral ceasefire to combat the spread of the virus, other groups and the Cameroonian government ignored calls to follow suit and kept on fighting.

Over the past six years, the English-speaking regions of Cameroon have



Cameroon’s President Paul Biya has consistently noted that the form of the state is non-negotiable

rapidly morphed into a war zone. Lives have been lost, properties have been destroyed, and the humanitarian crisis continues to intensify. In its latest report, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) highlighted the impact on education: «Since the beginning of the crisis in 2016, education has been highly affected. Many schools have closed to avoid frequent attacks against education facilities. Teachers and students have been attacked, kidnapped, threatened, and killed. In 2021, more than 700,000 children are deprived of education in the north-west and south-west regions.»

Felix Agbor Nkongho, a human rights lawyer who was a leading member of now-outlawed Cameroon Anglophone Civil Society Consortium

(CACSC), has been disheartened by the ongoing crisis. He told DW back in 2021 «The current state of affairs in the Anglophone regions is very sad... It is very deplorable. It is frustrating.»

Though CACSC led the first wave of peaceful protests against the federal government’s marginalization of Cameroon’s Anglophone regions in 2016, Agbor Nkongho, founder and president of the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa, CHRDA, said the violence was never part of the group’s agenda. «Nobody had a crystal ball that could see the future,» he said. «By and large we didn’t foresee violence.»

Lockdowns, the new normal in NW/SW

The initial measures to pressure the government — such as lockdowns

and school boycotts — were only meant to last for a short while, said Barrister Felix Nkongho. A measure that is to last just for a short while has, however, continued with no end in sight and causing untold suffering to the local inhabitants.

The weekly calendar for the South West and North West Regions has completely been changed with Monday almost going out as a working day for inhabitants as the day has been reserved as a «ghost town» day by separatist fighters. Moving along the streets of Buea and other towns in the South West, shops, business premises, and banks are all closed or some will be partially opened.

«[The measures] were just to draw attention to the international community to what we were going through as a people,» Barrister

Felix Nkongho said. «We were even planning to call off the school boycott before the consortium was outlawed.»

In the lead-up to the country's Unification Day on October 1, the situation in Cameroon's two English-speaking regions remains uncertain. News flying around signalled a one-week «ghost town» that ran from September 26 to October 2, one day after the separatist celebrated their «independence» from French Cameroon, though that independence has not been officially recognized by other countries, and the UN.

For Cameroonians directly affected by the conflict, the need for the present conflict to be resolved is ever so important. «The government and separatists are playing with the lives of the local population they claim to protect,» Nfor Nkfu, an Anglophone taxi driver, told DW. «These parties involved in the ongoing crisis are protecting their interests. They are not protecting anyone.

Nelson Tum, a history teacher, said the fighting between the separatists and the government had left him and many others distrustful of both sides. «To say that I feel protected by both parties is completely out of



Separatist fighters and government forces have been accused of carrying out attacks on civilians in the NW-SWRs.

place because you do not know who can hurt you at any given moment,» he said.

Cameroon's Anglophone crisis needs international mediation

Every conflict across the African continent and the world has always been resolved through warring parties sitting at the dialogue table and agreeing on a consensus. And

the Anglophone crisis will not be different as many have called for the international community to step up and increase their willingness to find a long-lasting solution to the present impasse in the Regions.

Dr Christopher Fomunyoh, Senior Associate and Regional Director of Central and West Africa at the National Democratic Institute (NDI)

based in Washington, USA, on numerous outings has called for the international community to do more in resolving the ongoing catastrophe in the North West and South West Regions. And taking a dichotomy of other crises on the continent, Dr Fomunyoh said they have always been resolved by a third party.

He said: «The best way to solve a crisis where people have already taken up arms is to find a neutral spot; an accepted mediator who can bring all the parties around the table. That needs to happen and if it does, we will be able to sort out the grievances on which ones can be resolved and which cannot and how to implement them.»

«... People talk today about Kagame and Rwanda, and they forget that Kagame grew up in a refugee camp because he escaped a massacre in his own country. This fight is not going to end by force. We have to sit around the table and put into the minds of people that we can live together again,» Dr Fomunyoh added. «If we don't do that, we may think that we have patched one conflict, but we should be preparing ourselves for the next conflict because people will not forget what happened to them.»



Barrister Felix Agbor Nkongho, the leader of the outlawed Cameroon Anglophone Civil Society Consortium.

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Democracy is My Legacy - Buhari Says as He Bows Out

By Prince Kurupati

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari addressed the United Nations General Assembly 77th Session just a few days back. In his address, President Buhari said that was his last time appearing on the podium as he won't be Nigerian President by the time the next General Assembly will be convened in 2023. In his farewell address, The Nigerian President said he is

"Indeed, we are now preparing for general elections in Nigeria next February. At the 78th UNGA, there will be a new face at this podium speaking for Nigeria," President Buhari said. Buhari is in his second term as the president and according to the country's Constitution, this is his last one. Determined to adhere to the tenets of the Constitution, the President said he will gracefully step down once the time comes.

He went on to state that his determination to adhere to the tenets of the Constitution in stepping down after his presidential term limits is a clear testament to how he spearheaded and entrenched good democratic principles during his reign. Buhari said, "As President, I have set the goal that one of the enduring legacies I would like to leave is to entrench a process of free, fair and transparent and credible elections through which Nigerians elect leaders of their choice."

It is because of this desire to entrench good democratic practices and principles that Nigeria under his leadership supported The Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Chad to return to democratic rule after political impasse. In the West African region, Nigeria has acted as a beacon of hope on the democracy front through its efforts to intervene in cases where the will of the people was on the verge of subversion.

President Buhari went on to state that Nigeria in the past has seen the 'corrosive impact' of disregarding the will of the people hence the reason it wants to avoid the same to happen to



I am happy to leave behind a trail of good democratic processes, principles and institutions, President Buhari said in his farewell address.

other countries. He said "We believe in the sanctity of constitutional term limits, and we have steadfastly adhered to it in Nigeria. We have seen the corrosive impact on values when leaders elsewhere seek to change the rules to stay on in power."

The President did however acknowledge that at times, the fruits of democracy may not be quickly realised and at times, the powerful may use their influence to curtail the smooth flow of democratic processes. He urged all political actors to remain steadfast in the pursuit of democracy and good governance practices even when there are forces bent on disrupting the democratic processes. He said adopting and embracing democratic practices and principles will always reign supreme and legitimise all their actions and rule.

"Democracy is an idea that crosses time and borders. Certainly, democracy does have its limitations. The wheels of democracy turn slowly. It can demand compromises that dilute decisions. Sometimes, it bends too much to special interests that exercise influence, not always

for the general good, in a manner disproportionate to their numbers... But it has been my experience that a democratic culture provides a government with the legitimacy it needs to deliver positive change," President Buhari said.

As he bows out, President Buhari said he is fully aware of the successes he has recorded on the democracy front but is cognisant of the challenges that still linger around. "As I approach the end of my second and final four-year term, I am reminded of how much has changed in Nigeria, in Africa, and in the world, and yet, how some challenges remain." On this front, the President touched on several issues which include climate change, debt service suspension, malignant use of technology as well as the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War.

On the climate change front, President Buhari said Africa is hit hard even though it contributes significantly less greenhouse gas emissions as compared to the more industrialised countries. As a solution, the President called upon the development financial institutions to

prioritise "de-risking energy projects to improve access of renewable projects to credit facilities."

Speaking on countries that are reeling under huge external debts, President Buhari called upon international financial institutions to cancel debt outright for all developing countries facing the most severe fiscal and liquidity challenges. He said that such countries are finding it hard if not impossible to manoeuvre their way out of the debt hole. Rather, the hole keeps sinking deeper and deeper. There is thus a need to 'liberate' these countries by cancelling debt and letting them start on a clean slate.

While technology has brought about many positives, President Buhari said some technological innovations such as social media have fallen prey to actors with bad intentions. He said the scourge of misinformation and the spread of divisive and hate speech have seen social media become a dark place and a driver of evil acts. He, therefore, said efforts should be taken to "balance rights with responsibilities to keep the most vulnerable from harm and help strengthen and enrich

communities.”

On the same issue of technology, President Buhari said there has been a power shift globally which at times may usher in some negatives. He said while back in the day, gatherings like the UN General Assembly were the most important as that’s where the world’s leaders gathered to discuss global issues, today, a “Tweet or Instagram post by an influencer on social or environmental issues may have a greater impact.”

President Buhari speaking on the Ukraine and Russia war said that the conflict just shows why yearly UNGA discussions on nuclear disarmament are important. He said the conflict should be an impetus for world leaders to quickly implement the calls for a nuclear-free world. “Indeed, the ongoing war in Ukraine is making it more difficult to tackle the perennial issues that feature each year in the deliberations of this Assembly, such



Tinubu, Atiku, Obi, and Kwankwaso are in a four man race to replace President Buhari. Picture credit Daily Post.

as nuclear disarmament, the right Palestinians’ legitimate aspirations nations.”
of the Rohingya refugees to return for statehood and reduction of _____
to their homes in Myanmar, and the inequalities within and amongst



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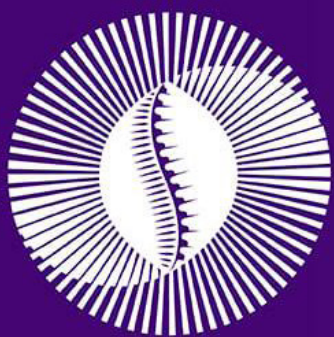
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A Revolution On Course For The African Energy Week

By Ajong Mbatndah L

At a time marked by high stakes in the energy sector, Africa is sending strong signals that the continent is ready and determined to become a player rather than its typical traditional spectator role.

While there are many signs of this trend, the advent of African Energy Week has given the African voice the critical jolt needed to amplify this new dawn.

An appendage of the African Energy Chamber and only in its second year, the African Energy week that will take place in Cape Town, South Africa, from 18-21 October, is one of the most sought-after energy events in the continent. With the ringing endorsement and strong participation of power players across the continent, and the teeming presence of key actors from all corners of the globe, the African Energy Week is one of the most appropriate barometers to measure the changing dynamics of the energy sector in Africa.

No Longer Business As Usual

When the African Oil Week-AOW fled from Cape Town to Dubai for its 2021 edition, citing COVID-19 restrictions, the backlash was not only so strong but precipitated the emergence of the African energy week.

"Delivering the event to the high standard to which our audience is accustomed and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our attendees has always been our top priority. We believe that hosting the 2021 edition in Dubai will enable us to ensure that the event experience is both safe and premium for our customers," the AOW said in a statement posted on their website in justification of the move.

Reactions did not take long to come, with the African Energy Chamber led by NJ Ayuk leading the charge in calling for a stronger commitment to



Through AEW 2021, we demonstrated that Africa is ready and capable to hold a continent-wide energy event in Africa, says AEC Executive Chairman NJ Ayuk.

conferences of African nature being held on African terrain.

Mothballing a conference in South Africa, an African nation that has handled the Covid-19 pandemic remarkably well, is a clear sign of opportunism and detachment from the pledge to support African venues and our continent, the Chamber lashed out.

"While Dubai is a fabulous venue in its own right, we do believe that events of African nature should show a strong commitment to African communities, cities, and the local workforce. An event of the magnitude of Africa Oil Week is a big local employer. Reneging on its long-standing partner, the African people and the continent, is a truly unfortunate sign of disinterest in African values of trust, loyalty, and companionship, and is, in fact, very unscrupulous in nature," said NJ Ayuk, Executive Chair of the African Energy Chamber.

"Keeping to Covid-19 travel restrictions and how they have particularly placed a strenuous burden on the conferencing industry, there are smart ways to hold hybrid conferences of both online and offline nature. Further, vaccination rates are increasing rapidly across the Northern hemisphere, which would allow business travelers to visit South Africa safely by November," Ayuk added.

The discontent from the African Energy Chamber on the AOW decision resonated with many Africans who used diverse platforms to call for the prioritization of African venues for African events.

The event's move from Cape Town to Dubai was wrong, short-term in its thinking, and sent a negative message about Africa, said Florival Mucave, President of Mozambican Oil and Gas Chamber (CPGM).

"The move underestimates our preparedness to host events that

define our future economic and energy sector success. Imagine the Africa Cup of Nations football tournament being hosted in Dubai because one company says Africa is not the right place anymore because of the COVID-19 pandemic," Mucave said in condemnation of the relocation.

The excuses and final decision to move the event were both unacceptable and wrong and sent a message that when things are hard because of COVID-19, Africa should be abandoned for other locations irrespective of the loyalty and the sponsorship Africa had shown for more than two decades, Mucave charged.

"As a former Patron of the African Institute of Petroleum, I concur that a move of AOW from an African location to any other continent is not just disrespectful to Africans whose resources are being talked about, but considerably delusional," fumed Robin Vela, Chairman, Lonsa Group

Limited, Mauritius.

«I thought I was the only one who saw something very wrong with this decision. Africa is the least affected by COVID in the world; we have lesser death rates, and we came up with several initiatives and innovations to tackle the scourge. In my opinion, Africa handled the pandemic even better than the rest of the world, so why should the continent be counted out on the grounds of the global pandemic,» Margaret Nongo -Okojoku, a 2017 Mandela Washington Fellow and social entrepreneur from Nigeria, questioned.

To the CEO of Turaco Aviation Group, Abdul Bigirumwami from Rwanda, African events should stay in Africa. Rwanda handled the COVID-19 pandemic well and could support such events.

For Senior Tax and Legal Counsel for Senegal Abdoulaye DIA, «we cannot make Africa without Africans and out of Africa.»

«This is so sad for our struggling South African Event/Expo Industry. It's all about money and bugger everyone else. «Africa» Oil Week... Dubai has never been or will ever be in Africa. Change the event's name,» Simon Aubrey Onsite, Project / Site Manager for Overlay of Exhibitions / Sports Events, opined.

Beyond the criticisms on moving the AOC to Dubai, the controversial decision has prompted the Africa Energy Chamber to start exploring

other avenues on what it perceives as injustice, its chairman said in a statement.

«As a first step, the Chamber will encourage, advocate and provide support for an energy event in October or November this year with African ministries, entrepreneurs, NOCs, IOCs, Civil society, and possibly four African heads of States. The Chamber will continue to be the voice of the sector and work towards building bridges that bring together governments and companies in the African energy industry to find a common ground,» the AEC said in a statement that metamorphosed into the announcement of the maiden edition of the African Energy Week in Cape Town from 9-12 November 2021.

A Winning Start

For the AEC, the event was meant to unite African and Global energy stakeholders, drive industry growth, and promote Africa as the destination for Africa-focused events. That the event actually took place was a strong motive of satisfaction for the Chamber, a restoration of wounded African pride, and a palpable message that the continent meant business about taking ownership of its energy fortunes.

«Cape Town, South Africa, has always been the welcoming home of the African energy industry. They said it was not possible, and it could not be done in Africa, that it was not



The way forward is for Africa to make the most of its existing and applicable resources, said South Africa's Gwede Mantashe.

the right time to meet and talk about the issues we face as Africans. At the end of the day, it is about people, and this is why we are hosting the event in Cape Town. We are going to have an energy transition. There is no question about that, but it has to be just, and we will not apologize for that. While some people believe we should give up our natural resources, at this time, Africa is going to be the voice of humanity. As we hold various dialogues in Cape Town, it is time for us to stand together. We have to take some responsibility to do better and drive better,» said NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the AEC, in flagging off the event.

Defying the challenging regime imposed by the COVID -19 pandemic, other speakers' remarks vindicated the AEC on its doggedness in organizing the AEW.

«We at APPO believe Africa's position in fossil fuels should be respected. As early as the 1900s, we knew that emissions from fossil fuels were affecting the climate, but concerns were ignored and suppressed by industrialized nations that needed fossil fuels. A century later, when these countries succeeded in developing, people suddenly remembered that these fossil fuels were bad. While not denying the changing climate and Africa's contribution, why must we abandon fossil fuel resources and fail to make use of these resources like the developed nations already have? Since the world seems to be united

in tackling the menace of climate change, it is only fair that the world works

with the African continent, especially oil and gas, to enhance fossil fuels in a practical manner to make fossil fuels environmentally friendly,» said Dr. Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General, African Petroleum Producers Association (APPO).

Welcoming Delegates to Cape Town, Gwede Mantashe, Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, did not mince words in articulating the position of the South African government.

«Africa and the world were confronted by a global pandemic, and the challenges are untold for developing nations. Our view is that natural gas will be part of the transition, and yet we are told that all fossil fuels are bad. Africa must position its oil and gas at the forefront of global energy. When we commit to net zero, we do so with the reality that energy can guarantee economic growth and industrialization. The way forward is for Africa to make the most of its existing and applicable resources. The African continent must develop new technology and strategies to ensure it continues to develop its resources,» he said.

With the presence of high-profile continental power players like Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, Minister of Hydrocarbons, Republic of the Congo; Gabriel Mbaga Obiang Lima, Minister of Mines and Hydrocarbons,



The world should work with the African continent to enhance fossil fuels in a practical manner to make fossil fuels environmentally friendly, said Dr Omar Farouk

Equatorial Guinea; Tom Alweendo, Minister of Mines and Energy, Namibia. Mahamane Sani Mahamadou, Minister of Petroleum, Energy and Renewable Energies, Niger. Ernesto Max Elias Tonela, Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy, Mozambique; Diamantino Azevedo, Minister of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas, Angola. Puot Kang Chol, Minister of Petroleum, South Sudan; Mohamed Oun, Minister of Oil and Gas, Libya; and Dr. Mohammed Amin Adam, Deputy Minister of Energy, Ghana; Mallam Mele Kolo Kyari, Group Managing Director & CEO, Nigerian

National Petroleum Corporation, Nigeria, the African Energy Chamber scored a home run with the maiden edition of the African Energy Week.

For these leaders, it was not a safari trip to Cape Town as each of them came with a message to the world on the African take on the energy debate.

“It is so important to discuss issues faced in Africa on the African continent. AEW 2021 comes at a time when drastic action is required to accelerate energy developments and electrify Africa. Representing Africa’s first and only Africa-focused energy event in 2021, AEW 2021 will serve as a catalyst that will help transform the African energy space, making energy poverty alleviation a reality by 2030. With national electricity plans being implemented across the continent and the widespread redirecting towards renewable power generation alternatives, significant developments have emerged within the solar, wind, and hydroelectric industries,” said Tom Alweendo, Minister of Mines and Energy, Namibia.

None of us is against renewable energy. But we are all saying, and continue to repeat ourselves, that it must be inclusive, equitable, and we must all sit at the table



Equatorial Guinea’s Minister of Mines and Hydrocarbons Gabriel Mbaga Obiang Lima put the world on notice that Africa is the least polluter.

and agree, said Puot Kang Chol, Petroleum Minister of South Sudan.

«South Sudan’s budget depends on oil by 98%. Yes, we need to transition and are committed to it. But if the basic reason is that it affects human life, those who cannot produce what we have will suffer, making it even more important that it is a process and inclusive. For the first time ever, South Sudan will hold its first oil license block featuring five open blocks in June 2021, inviting investors to present and explore. And yes, I am promoting it and inviting people to bid. Of the two blocks that we have offered, they have been offered to

Africans,» Minister Chol affirmed.

We are here because we care and can represent our countries in discussing important matters, said Equatorial Guinea’s Minister of Mines and Hydrocarbons Gabriel Mbaga Obiang Lima. Our countries have unfinished business with development, and it is unfathomable that I will go to Houston or Dubai to discuss problems about electricity in Africa because they will not understand, he went on. Minister Gabriel Mbaga Obiang Lima also made a point of highlighting that Africa is the least polluter.

The robust discussion at AEW 2021 was spiced with important side

events, networking sessions, and deals to foster Africa’s energy growth and enhanced partnerships and domestic capacity by proxy. In light of the lucrative opportunities in Africa, international delegations from Germany, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway and Canada, and more attended AEW 2021.

Here To Stay

If the African Energy Chamber thought the AEW would be a one-time thing, its tremendous success led to a change of plans. Before leaving Cape Town, the Chamber reassured participants that

another edition of the African Energy Week will be in 2022. With preparations in high gear for the 18-22 October 2022 edition, there has been a surge in the number of confirmed participants and partners.

«In 2021, they said it could not be done in Cape Town, and we all must go to Dubai. With massive support from the City of Cape Town, the government of South Africa IOC’s and NOC’s and alternative energy companies, we demonstrated that Africa is ready and capable of holding a continent-wide energy event in Africa, and we held the largest event on the continent. Even amid the pandemic, AEW took place, ushering in a new era of safe, accessible, and industry-focused events. This year will be huge for the African energy industry. We expect a range of investments to be made and developments to take off that will drive the continent’s economic advancement,» says NJ Ayuk.

«During this year’s edition of AEW, an emphasis will be placed on finance, natural gas, electrification, hydrogen, upstream, and a just transition as we believe these sectors have a specific role to play in Africa. By developing our gas resources, Africa can



NJ Ayuk and a delegation of the AEC with President Felipe Nyusi. The President of Mozambique is expected to address the AEW 2022.



Some African National Oil Companies participants at AEW 2021. We expect a range of investments to be made and developments that will drive the continent's economic advancement, says NJ Ayuk.

meet the growing demand for energy while reducing emissions. From AEW 2022, we will be going to COP27 to meet with global leaders and discuss African energy – from Cape to Cairo,» Ayuk says.

With energy representing a catalyst for sustainable economic progress, AEW 2022 aims to drive the continent into a new era of enhanced industry growth by providing the best platform for deals to be signed and relationships formed that will improve investment and development.

The African Energy Chamber believes that as the continent continues to deal with reduced funding for hydrocarbon projects, AEW 2022 will offer new insights into how Africa's oil and gas projects can raise capital in a post-COVID-19 energy transition context. In pursuit of these lofty ideals, panel discussions and investor forums will focus on finance, enabling environments,

and African Energy Banks' role in financing the industry's future. By introducing African stakeholders to innovative capital raising, AEW 2022 is committed to the growth of African oil and gas.

«Regarding gas, Africa is not only rich with resources but opportunities. Markets such as Nigeria, Mozambique, Mauritania, Senegal, Tanzania, Equatorial Guinea, the Republic of the Congo, and Ghana have significant untapped resources. Already, there has been an influx in investment and development within the gas sector, and yet a range of opportunities remain, particularly within the gas-to-power and Liquefied Natural Gas space. AEW 2022 has placed a strong emphasis on the role that gas will play in electrifying Africa, driving socio-economic growth and industrialization for years to come.

By introducing project profiles, highlighting key discoveries, and

emphasizing how gas will drive a just transition in Africa, AEW 2022 has placed gas at the center of its program agenda,» the AEC said in a statement touting the merits of AEW 2022.

Over the years and in between events, the African Energy Chamber has been one of the most vocal and credible voices in articulating African-themed energy issues, stakes, and perspectives. It has spared no efforts in defending African interests, marketing opportunities, representing the continent on challenging turfs, facilitating dialogue with key stakeholders, sourcing for new investments, and more. Connoisseurs of the energy industry see it noble that the premier energy event in the continent today should have the imprimatur of the Chamber.

Meanwhile, as preparations enter the fever pitch for the 18-22 October 2022 edition of the AEW, the African Energy Chamber has already inked

a date for AEW 2023. Billed for October 16-20, Chairman NJ Ayuk is already promising that the 2023 event will be even bigger and better than before and will highlight major achievements, developments, deals, and discoveries made throughout the African continent.

«AEW 2023 will be the place for investors to be introduced to African opportunities, driving the continent's energy transformation and associated socio-economic growth. Next year's event will further highlight enabling environments' role in attracting investment and make a strong case for ease of doing business in Africa's energy sector. AEW 2023 will continue to be the beacon and platform where discussions and actions about making energy poverty history by 2030 will take place,» says NJ Ayuk.

Uganda: Museveni Answers EU On EACOP-“Expect Oil In 2025.”

By Prosper Makene

Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni has told off the European Parliament that construction of the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) will go ahead as planned.

The adamant Museveni rejected the European Parliament's resolution calling for the project to be suspended, saying the megaproject will proceed as stipulated in the contract with TotalEnergies and China's CNOOC.

«I saw in the papers that the EU parliament passed a resolution directing TOTAL not to proceed with the East African Crude Oil Pipeline.

Please, don't waste your time thinking about that. We have a contract with TOTAL written very well. The oil will come out in 2025, the first batch. The Oil project will go on, and no one can stop it,» said President Museveni.

Museveni warned TotalEnergies against listening to the EU Parliament, noting that Uganda will award the contract to another company if it pays attention to EU's resolutions.

“Total Energies convinced me about the Pipeline idea; if they choose to listen to the EU Parliament, we shall find someone else to work with... So, the people of Uganda should not worry,» added Museveni.

The European Parliament, on September 15, criticized the \$3.8 billion project that runs from the Lake Albert basin in Uganda to the Indian Ocean coast in Tanzania, raising environmental concerns.

It also said the mega project poses human rights violations, citing “arrests, intimidation and judicial harassment of human rights defenders and non-governmental organizations”. It is estimated that over 100,000 people are likely to be



Total Energies convinced me about the Pipeline idea; if they choose to listen to the EU Parliament, we shall find someone else to work with, says President Museveni.

displaced along the pipeline route.

Furthermore, the parliament asked TotalEnergies to delay the start of work on the pipeline by a year to study the feasibility of an alternative route to protect better sensitive ecosystems and the water resources of Uganda and Tanzania.

The EU parliament further urged its member states not to provide diplomatic, financial, or other support to Uganda's oil and gas projects.

A section of leaders from the two nations has also dismissed the resolution, accusing the EU parliament of imperialism and neo-colonialism. The Deputy Speaker of the Ugandan House of Representatives Thomas Tayebwa called the decision economic sabotage of a sovereign nation's right to benefit from its own oil and gas sector.

Tayebwa called out the EU for its excessive reliance on fossil fuels compared with Uganda and other African nations.

«It is imprudent to say that Uganda's oil projects will exacerbate climate change, yet it is a fact that the EU bloc, with only 10 percent of the

world's population, is responsible for 25 percent of global emissions, and Africa, with 20 percent of the world's population, is responsible for three percent of emissions. The EU and other western countries are historically responsible for climate change. Who then should stop or slow down on development of natural resources? Certainly not Africa or Uganda,» said Tayebwa.

Tanzanian Energy Minister January Makamba also echoed the Ugandan commitment to move forward with the EACOP plan.

Makamba pointed out that the pipeline route has been designed to minimize environmental and social impacts.

He revealed that the project will access no land until compensation has been made and notice to vacate given.

He noted that once the pipeline is commissioned, it will be monitored by a state-of-the-art fiber optic cable to detect both temperature changes and vibration and that it is being carried out in an exemplary manner in terms of transparency, shared

prosperity, and sustainable development, including the environment and respect for human rights.

According to Ugandan National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the EACOP project will be carried out in accordance with the laws of Uganda and in full consideration of and with due regard to all the agreements that Uganda is a party to, including the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to the Sustainable Development Goals; UN Paris Climate Agreement; the International Energy Agency Global Energy Review 2021;

the Cotonou Agreement.»

It went on to say that the process was carried out in consultation with the relevant lead agencies and other stakeholders, including holding public hearings. The process provided ample opportunity for all stakeholders to contribute to the process, including developing resettlement action plans.

“Like all other projects, development of oil and gas project requires a level of land take for effective implementation. The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process being mindful of this, endeavors to minimize land taken from communities and sensitive/protected areas as much as possible,» said NEMA in a statement.

Regarding the EU Parliament's claim that the project would traverse protected areas in Uganda and Tanzania, NEMA noted that several sensitive ecosystems were avoided. It stated that an avoidance approach was used to determine the route for the pipeline.

It said that only 0.05 per cent of the 3000km2 of the Murchison Falls National Park will be utilized by oil

and gas activities. However, adequate mitigation measures have been implemented, including biodiversity offset mechanisms.

The project will use centralized power generation to minimize diesel generators during construction, offset net residual emissions through tree planting projects, provision of cheap LPG to transition the economy from the use of biomass energy, said NEMA.

The agency also announced that the pipeline will be buried and coated to prevent rust and have built-in automatic leak detection mechanisms.

In the unlikely event of an oil spill, the government has already developed and implemented a national oil spill contingency plan. In addition, all oil companies are required by law to have oil spill contingency plans in place.

«The authority wishes to assure Ugandans, our stakeholders, and the Global community that the environment and social impacts of oil and gas projects in Uganda were comprehensively assessed and adequate mitigation measures put in place. The Authority continues to closely monitor the operations of the oil and gas companies to ensure compliance,” said NEMA.

A section of economists, experts, and academicians across the East African Community (EAC) have sided with Uganda and Tanzania by condemning the resolution.



The circa \$10 billion project is significantly tied to the economic and development fortunes of Uganda and Tanzania. Photo credit Total.

“The EU parliament aimed to hinder progress in our countries; they always want to see us live in poverty. The Environment and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) has approved the project’s implementation; ESIA said the ecosystems will not be affected by the project. It is baffling that people are trying to confuse us so close to the start of the project,” Tanzanian environmental expert John Joseph told PAV Magazine, calling on the

African Union to stand together with the two East African nations, a view echoed by Migani Mugabe, a political analyst from Tanzania.

Humphrey Muze, Managing Director of Zoe International PTE Ltd, also shared his view on the project.

He said, “It’s absolutely true that there could be some environmental issues due to such a magnanimous project in our continent. But those environmental concerns could totally be allayed by modern technological methods or careful study on the execution part of the project. Furthermore, those concerns will not outweigh the need or the economic benefits to the communities involved.»

Muze called on Africa to take major steps and be willing to change, strengthen its position internationally, and be known collectively as one with a huge voice.

“I would expect an uproar from other players in Africa

to defend our course and answer EU,” added Muze.

On the other hand, George Katyega, an academician living in Tanga, Tanzania, said, “What EU parliament wants is to see their imperialist oil companies exploiting our resources...”

“We need to transform the oil into income to develop our social, health, and economic sectors. EU parliament is now stopping us implementing the project on what they said as environment degradation while their countries are the culprits of global warming,” added Mr. Katyega.

The heated debate over the EACOP project also caught the attention of Nairobi-based academic Fred Okoth.

“The EU countries wanted to see African nations continue begging for loans and aids from their countries. That’s why they don’t want this economic project to move on. They know Tanzania and Uganda will become more capable economically after the commencement of the project,” said Okoth.



The pipeline route has been designed to minimize environmental and social impacts, says Tanzanian Energy Minister January Makamba. Photo credit PURA.

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EACOP Will Be A Model Project On All Counts- Cheick-Omar Diallo, TotalEnergies Spokesperson

By Ajong Mbapndah L

In Uganda and Tanzania, where more than 20% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day (\$55 a month), the Tilenga and EACOP projects will have a very significant impact on economic development, says Cheick-Omar Diallo, TotalEnergies spokesperson for Tilenga and EACOP.

Speaking in an interview with PAV, Cheick-Omar Diallo says TotalEnergies is fully aware of what the project represents for both countries. At TotalEnergies, we are doing everything we can to make it an exemplary project in terms of transparency, shared prosperity, economic and social progress, sustainable development, environmental accountability, and respect for human rights, says Cheick -Omar Diallo.

"We are fully aware of the sensitive environment in which we are operating and the challenges that it represents. TotalEnergies has pledged, with the local communities and under the monitoring of independent organizations, to implement action plans that will produce a net positive impact on biodiversity as part of the Tilenga project. The Avoid - Reduce - Compensate principle is being strictly applied throughout the project, the spokesperson said.

This is Uganda's first oil development project, and it could not be entrusted to any company. Uganda and Tanzania called on TotalEnergies for this purpose, a Company which implements the strictest social and environmental standard to harness their resources, Cheick-Omar Diallo said.

Thanks for accepting to grant this interview on for those who do not understand, could we start with insight into the EACOP project and its importance?



Cheick-Omar Diallo says the project will be a model for transparency, shared prosperity, economic and social progress, sustainable development, and environmental accountability.

Uganda and Tanzania are sovereign states that have made the strategic choice to tap their natural resources. The first project developed is based on the production of oil in Uganda. Two main fields will be developed: Tilenga operated by TotalEnergies (190 000 barrels of oil per day) and KingFisher, operated by a Chinese company, CNOOC, (40 000 barrels of oil per day). The capex that will be invested for Tilenga is about 4,5B\$. TotalEnergies owns 57% of Tilenga project, COOC, 28% and UNOC (Uganda National Oil Company), 15%. Because Uganda is landlocked, the oil produced by Tilenga will be shipped via pipeline to the Tanzanian port of Tanga. This is the EACOP project. The entire pipeline (1,443-kilometers) will be buried. Besides, let me insist on the fact that the pipeline will not be visible since 80% of the surface area will return to its natural state. In this project, TotalEnergies owns a 62% interest, CNOOC 8%, UNOC 15% and

TPDC 15%. The amount of the capex invested in is around 4B\$.

May we know the importance of this project to Uganda and Tanzania, how could the development fortunes of both countries be impacted with the successful implementation of the project?

The Lake Albert resources development projects, including Kingfisher project, will represent a total investment of approximately \$10 billion. With almost \$2 billion in investment attributed to local firms, the Tilenga and EACOP projects will create close to 80,000 direct and indirect jobs. Unleashing these resources will have a very significant impact on economic development in Uganda and Tanzania, where more than 20% of the population lives on less than \$2 a day (\$55 a month). For example, the GDP of Uganda may increase of 3% per year for about 20

years.

What guarantees are there that the lofty potentials been projected will be met and what measures were taken to ensure protection of the interests of the local population?

Tilenga and EACOP will significantly improve the living conditions of the inhabitants and have already begun to do so with the compensation system that has been set up for example. The compensation policies have allowed some people to buy land or homes of better quality. In addition to these payments, there are training policies, a livelihood restoration program and measures to promote employment, education and respect for women's rights. Locally you can already see the benefits of the Lake Albert resources development projects, regarding the infrastructures such

as the roads, that have been built for example. Regarding the countries, the leases obtained by TotalEnergies are governed by contracts with the two states that comply with international regulations. The royalties due from TotalEnergies will be paid to the Ugandan and Tanzanian governments. In the current international environment, we have no doubt that they will be vigilant about how these new revenues are used and that the funds will enable the countries' economic and social development. If I may add, supported by TotalEnergies, Uganda was also admitted to the EITI in August 2020 as a Candidate country and published its first report in May 2022. This is an important commitment. By promoting transparency in government-company relations, the EITI aims to strengthen government and company systems, inform public opinion and thereby increase confidence in the probity of activities

in the oil, gas and mineral sectors.

From the conception to the implementation, may we know the timeline or the estimated timeframe TotalEnergies and its partners had in mind for the full benefits of the project to be felt in Uganda and Tanzania?

As mentioned previously, during the construction phase, the personnel requirements will be very high, around 80,000. This phase will end around the year 2025. On average, over 94% of the Company's employees, contractors and subcontractors are nationals and we continue to mobilize more staff to support our operations. However, during the production phase, 1,200 direct jobs and 3,000 indirect jobs will still be needed to ensure the smooth running of the projects. Many Ugandans and Tanzanians trained by TotalEnergies will then be able to participate in other construction or drilling projects. For example, Uganda will continue its economic development and will need skilled and trained workers and managers. The country wants to develop the oil business and will be able to draw on a pool of trained and qualified personnel.

Could you tell us what measures were taken into consideration to protect or address environmental concerns raised by activists?

We are fully aware of the sensitive environment in which we are operating and the challenges that it represents. TotalEnergies has pledged, with the local communities and under the monitoring of independent organizations, to implement action plans that will produce a net positive impact on biodiversity as part of the Tilenga project. The Avoid - Reduce - Compensate principle is being strictly applied throughout the project. TotalEnergies isn't stopping there: the Company has chosen to develop additional measures to promote biodiversity, such as restoring forest continuity to preserve the chimpanzee habitat in the Hoima region (around



L-R Total CEO Patrick Pouyanné, Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni-Photo courtesy.

1,000 hectares of restored forest, allowing the chimpanzees to move freely, 10,000 hectares of preserved forest and 63,000 hectares in protected forested areas), and developing a program to reintroduce the black rhinoceros. As for EACOP, the pipeline route was defined to minimize its environmental impact and avoid sensitive areas as much as possible. The full length of the pipeline will be buried and replanted after installation. The pipeline does not cross either of the two lakes that are vital water resources at any point. Similarly, it does not run through any IUCN protected areas (categories I through IV) or Ramsar sites. In addition, TotalEnergies is deploying innovations to enhance the pipeline's safety and integrity. TotalEnergies will ensure surveillance beforehand and continuously during operation, notably with an optical fiber system installed along the pipeline.

Activists and some concerned groups have painted a very bleak picture of environmental consequences if the project was

allowed to move forward, from the perspective of TotalEnergies and its partners, are these concerns real or more of fiction?

As mentioned previously, the development of Lake Albert resources is a major project for Uganda and Tanzania, and our ambition is to make it an exemplary project in terms of shared prosperity and sustainable development. We are fully aware of the important social and environmental challenges it represents. The Tilenga project and EACOP underwent an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) in accordance with Ugandan and Tanzanian laws and international best practices (The World Bank's 2012 Performance Standards -IFC). This assessment identified the potential environmental and social impacts of the project and proposed mitigation measures. For example, 426 wells will be drilled but they will be grouped together at a limited number of locations. They are designed to be as compact as possible to reduce their footprint and minimize their visual impact. This is a far cry from 20th century oil field clichés.

Techniques have evolved greatly. The wells in the portion located in Murchison Falls National Park will be virtually invisible to tourists. Their footprint represents less than 0.03% of the park's total surface area. This represents 1.2 km² out of 3900 km². As for EACOP, the risk of water pollution from the EACOP has been taken into consideration and also seismic issues. The pipeline will be buried and about 80% of the surface area will return to its natural state. It won't be visible. Here too, the reality is far removed from the images some have given of landscape-disfiguring infrastructure.

What is your reaction to the decision of the European parliament to recognize the disastrous consequences for both human rights and the climate due to the construction of Total East African Crude Oil Pipeline?

How does this decision impact the resolve or the desire of TotalEnergies and its partners to move forward with the project? TotalEnergies

reiterates that this project is major for Uganda and Tanzania and that we are doing everything we can to make it an exemplary project in terms of transparency, shared prosperity, economic and social progress, sustainable development, environmental accountability, and respect for human rights.

Some two hundred and sixty community groups from Uganda, Tanzania and other African countries, along with international organizations, are pushing #StopEACOP – a global campaign to halt the project, what is the strategy from TotalEnergies to counter their narrative?

During the latest General Assembly of our Company, Patrick Pouyanné, our CEO, invited those who want to go and see what really happens on the ground in Uganda. That's what we have done since June, showing the reality of the field, go and meet the local populations. We have noticed that some people did not have the complete picture of the situation. So, it is a transparency exercise we are committed to in order to show the world how we manage our operations.

As we wrap up this interview any last word to those who may be skeptical about TotalEnergies living up to expectations on the project and its potential to be a game changer for Uganda and Tanzania?



Uganda and Tanzania are sovereign states that have made the strategic choice to tap their natural resources. This is Uganda's first oil development project, and it could not be entrusted to any company. Uganda and Tanzania called on TotalEnergies for this purpose, a Company which implements the strictest social and environmental standard to harness their resources.

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Mozambique: Speed Bumps For Gas Exploration

Oil giants reject the call by Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi to resume work on oil and gas exploration in Mozambique. Nyusi says that there are already security conditions created for the purpose, but the oil companies understand otherwise and say they are still monitoring the situation of terrorist attacks in the gas-rich province of Cabo Delgado, northern Mozambique.

By Jorge Joaquim



Discoveries of vast offshore gas reserves over the past decade promised to transform the Mozambican economy of one of the world's poorest nations. But the LNG development has been overshadowed by the rise of the insurgent threat since 2017, especially attacks in the past year that have left President Filipe Nyusi's security forces on the back foot.

In March 2021, dozens of civilians were killed in the Islamic State-linked attacks in the coastal Mozambique town of Palma, near gas projects that are worth \$60 billion and are to turn the country into a major LNG producer to rival Australia, Qatar, Russia and the United States.

Following the insurgent attacks, French energy group Total declared force majeure on its \$20 billion liquefied natural gas (LNG) project in Mozambique and confirmed it had withdrawn all staff from the construction site.

All field activities related to the construction of the infrastructure of the gas projects are temporarily suspended.

From July to November 2021, the Mozambique Defence Armed Forces and Rwanda Defence Force, and belligerents and the Southern African Development Community Mission in Mozambique (SAMIM), conducted offensives against the terrorists.

The first offensive succeeded in retaking the important town of Mocimboa da Praia which had previously fallen to rebels. Some roads have been reopened, and a semblance of calm has returned in key locations for liquefied natural gas projects, such as Palma. However, there are still attacks across the Cabo

Delgado province

Filipe Nyusi calls energy companies to return

Amid the situation, the country's president Filipe Nyusi has called on oil giants to resume work, assuring them security situation had improved in the conflict-torn region.

Speaking at the Mozambique Gas and Energy Summit in Maputo in September, Nyusi said security in Palma is now better than it was before the March 2021 attack.

He said locals were returning to the town of Palma and other areas they

had abandoned because of terrorist attacks.

In addition to the resumption of the Total projects, Filipe Nyusi expects the project onshore led by US petrochemical company ExxonMobil, to make their Final Investment Decision.

The SAMIM deployment, following the Rwandan police and military deployment in July 2021, introduced a dramatic change in the security picture in northern Mozambique. However, it did not reverse the course of the conflict, but instead altered its trajectory.



Progress still had to be made before work could restart, says TOTAL

Total's Stéphane Le Galles, who heads up Mozambique LNG, said immediately that it will resume activities in Mozambique when security in the north of the country is restored.

"Total is very committed to maintaining its project in Mozambique" he said. «As soon as security conditions have been restored in Cabo Delgado, we will be back».

The activities should be resumed as soon as the security situation is restored. Total's suspension of operations is intended to ensure the physical integrity and safety of the workers as well as the protection of the infrastructure.

"There is still some progress to be made in order to have sustained security. We want to see the population and villages return to their normal lives", he highlighted.

With the temporary interruption of operations, Total will not be able, during this period, to meet its contractual obligations and may also suspend or terminate further contracts with other goods and/or services providers depending on how long the interruption may last.

Total had been reported to have been reviewing agreements with contractors on the project in light of the escalation of violence in the country and its suspension of work.

The Total LNG "Mozambique LNG", will be implemented from an onshore platform, at an investment of \$20bn, to enable the exploration of 13.12 MTPA of recoverable natural gas, over a period of 25 years, and generate direct profits of \$60.8bn of which about \$30.9bn to the State during 25 years.

The Project also foresees the provision of \$2.5bn to cover expenses



related to the contracting of goods and services to be supplied by Mozambican companies to the LNG project, during the construction phase of the plant, in addition to employment and training opportunities for national citizens.

The Final Investment Decision for the Project was announced on June 18, 2019, and the expectation was to come into production in 2024. However, with the force majeure declaration, this timeline could be in doubt.

Total is the operator, with a 26.5% participating interest, in partnership

with ENH (15%), Mitsui (20%), ONGC Videsh (10%), Beas (10%), BPRL Ventures (10%) and PTTEP (8.5%).

FID after improved security coverages – EXXONMOBIL

The same position was presented by the American ExxonMobil. Jos Evens, the company's general manager, said that the security situation has improved since March 2021, "but to enable more than capital intensive LNG investments we need to ensure a sustainable security environment for

the communities and for the project execution."

Exxon has yet to give final approval for its nearby Rovuma LNG project. The U.S. oil major delayed its final investment decision last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing price shock in oil and gas markets as demand slumped. Now they added the situation of attacks in Cabo Delgado.

The ExxonMobil project is operated by Mozambique Rovuma Venture S.p.A. (MRV), an incorporated joint venture owned by Eni, ExxonMobil and CNPC, which holds a 70 percent interest in the Area 4 exploration and production concession contract. In addition to MRV, Galp, KOGAS and ENH each hold a 10 percent interest in Area 4.

ExxonMobil is leading the construction and operation of natural gas liquefaction and related facilities on behalf of MRV, and Eni is leading the construction and operation of upstream facilities.

Both Total and Exxon have not not abandoned the Projects, and remain as Concessionaires and Operators, with all the rights, duties and obligations resulting from the Concessions Contracts for Exploration and Production, signed with the Mozambican Government.





South Sudan: A Charm Offensive To Investors

By Deng Machol, Juba, South Sudan

Despite being a landlocked and restive country, South Sudan remains a gateway to East Africa's development due to its pregnant energy sectors. As a conducive environment re-ignited following the country's five years of civil war that has ruined the economy and the oil facilities, the country is now dating on regional and international companies to invest in an attempt to rejuvenate the independence – dream development progress.

Insecurity and political instability in the country since 2013, however, have discouraged several investors from tapping into immense investment opportunities in the country. But the 2018 revitalized peace deal has held a major confrontation though there are still pockets of battle across the country. This makes a country a fishing pod for both regional and international investors.

South Sudan says it prioritized energy partnerships to enhance exploration and production in 2022. Countries such as South Africa and China, present in South Sudan for several years, are looking to increase their footprints in the high potential market. But the recent Oil and Power

conference has created a very good platform to exchange ideas with international companies, even attracting foreign companies to come and invest in the oil industry.

According to the Minister of Petroleum, Puot Kang Chol, South Sudan is safe as the government has created a conducive environment for foreign investors. "South Sudan is peaceful, is stable, and therefore, the environment is conducive for investment," Chol said at the fifth Oil & Power conference and exhibition in Juba in September.

It was also ricocheted by Vice President Riek Machar, who said the country is open because it wants to be an economic hub in the world. «We have the vision to become the economic hub of this part of the world, particularly east and central Africa. This is a land of abundance," said Dr Machar, while beseeching the foreign investors.



South Sudan's First Vice President Riek Machar says the country is open because it wants to be an economic hub in the world.

Gateway

With untapped natural resources, it places South Sudan in a vital entryway to doing business and driving development across the East African region due to its immense investment opportunities.

"We have better opportunities like anywhere else, you all know we are the youngest nation in the world and 90 per cent in every sector remains untapped, we didn't touch anything," said Minister Chol. "Coming to South Sudan to do business is the right place to be because you will get your expectation in a very short period.»

The oil and mining industries are important investment opportunities available for foreign companies, according to the oil minister. "We have opportunities in the oil sector, we have blocks that are available for anybody interested and we also have existing blocks for those who want to enhance oil recovery and improve oil recovery," said Chol. "South Sudan is the place to be and the place to do business."

The oil ministry has recently done a licensing round for 14 blocks, and those blocks are available for foreign investors in a bid to increase production to pre-war levels of 350,000 barrels a day.

South Sudan has 3.5 billion barrels of proven oil reserves

«We have 14 oil blocks that are not been taken, and we invite international companies that are here to seize the opportunity to apply for these blocks," said Chol Deng Thon Abel, Managing Director of South Sudan's state-owned oil consortium, the Nile Petroleum Corporation Limited (Nilepet).

Nilepet is among 15 entities sanctioned in 2018 by the U.S. State Department on allegations of funding the conflict that broke out in December 2013. Nilepet plans to take over blocks 3 and 7 by 2027.

Oil Minister Chol further stated: "We are the biggest producer in the region and we are pioneers in the region. We have what it takes to advise, not only to people in our region but beyond. South Sudan is the place to be. I believe we are now more stable than ever before. We now have the opportunity to invite investors to South Sudan. The number of blocks we have in South Sudan, no one else has them in the region."

"Any foreign business tycoon [s] should not think of another country rather than South Sudan to urgently utilize business prospects. We have



Minister of Petroleum Puot Kang Chol says his ministry has launched a competitive tender for the commencement of environmental audits across the industry.



South Sudan's oil and gas sector has been crippled by years of sanctions that are hindering its capacity to develop and harness its huge potential.

such opportunities [energy sector] and we want investors to take this opportunity because it doesn't exist elsewhere," said Minister Chol.

South Sudan is currently producing 175,000 barrels a day in blocks 1, 2 and 4 and blocks 3 and 7, and block 5A in Unity state. «We have a lot of countries now saying that we need to increase production because there is a huge need for crude because you have the sanctions on Iran, Venezuela and of recent Russia and this is where South Sudan is positioning itself to do production enhancement,» said Thon.

South Sudan - Djibouti deal

To open up a new opportunity route, South Sudan opted for Djibouti to construct the harbour or a facility that will handle its import and export

goods in its latest effort to find an alternative to the port of Mombasa which is stiff competition from Dar-es-salam.

South Sudan signed a deal with Djibouti on the first day of the fifth South Sudan Oil and Power conference (SSOP) in Juba, including buying land to facilitate and stock goods destined for South Sudan and operation in the oilfields from Djibouti.

Port Sudan and Mombasa have been the main route for all consignments destined for the landlocked country with South Sudan importing nearly all of its cargo through the Kenya port. South Sudan is the second country in terms of cargo throughput volumes at the Mombasa port after Uganda.

«We have been using Port Mombasa and Port Sudan - We also have felt it's

important for us to use Port Djibouti because our biggest production is bordering Ethiopia,» said Chol.

«We have Block B2 coming up, it will be important for us to open up Djibouti Port so that when we have goods that are needed for operation in the oilfields, we can easily get them from Djibouti,» Minister added

Oil sanctions foil investors

South Sudan's oil and gas sector has been crippled by years of sanctions that are hindering its capacity to develop and harness its huge potential. The sanctions were imposed on South Sudan following the outbreak of conflict in 2013, two years after the country's independence from its foe Sudan.

Both NJ Ayuk and Oil Minister Chol decried that the sanctions imposed

are curtailing efforts to fully develop and exploit the vast oil and gas sector. NJ Ayuk, Executive chairman African Energy Chamber, said sanctions are hindering foreign investment in South Sudan oil and gas projects.

Ayuk added that it also prevents the country from harnessing its natural resources on behalf of its people. «The sanctions are making it needlessly difficult for South Sudan to use oil and gas to foster economic growth, create jobs and business opportunities, build capacity and particularly important develop gas-to-power programs capable of minimizing the country's extensive energy poverty,» Ayuk said.

Minister Chol said the future of this country does not belong to them [leaders] but to the children and their future cannot be punished because of their [leaders] own mistakes. «I have been telling those who sanction us over and over again that when you continue to sanction us and you are not helping us on how to solve our internal crisis you will not be helping the situation,» said Chol.

The country's oil revenue is financing 98 per cent of the government activities, while other minerals remain unexploited. South Sudan's mineral sector is rich enough to potentially export not just within Africa but the whole world, according to officials.

«We are more oriented to increase production so that from the revenue we [can] build our infrastructural base and also provide the necessary delivering services such as health, education and clean water,» said Dr Machar



African Petroleum Producers' Organization

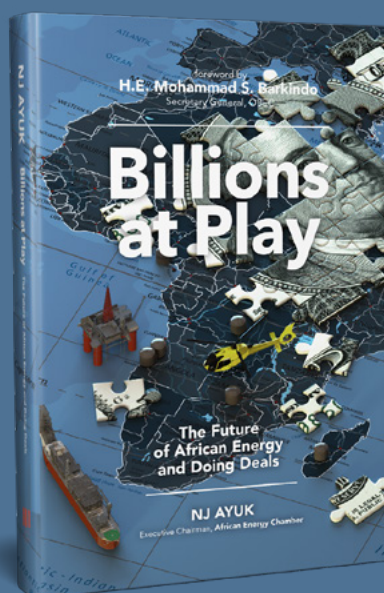
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Kenya: Fuel Crisis Dampen Ruto's Honey

By Samuel Ouma



The prices increased after the new government scrapped a subsidy meant to cushion consumers from the global hike in fuel prices. Photo courtesy.

Kenyans are bracing for the tough economic times in the next few months as they hope things will drastically change for better under the new regime led by President William Ruto.

The newly elected President resumed office on September 13, 2022, inheriting the dying economy exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war. The novel pandemic and conflict have hiked the cost of living and affected supply chain disruption, making life more unbearable to most Kenyans already living in poverty.

After a record fuel price hike on September 14, a whopping percentage of people have no option but to tighten their belts to cope with the financial hardship. The prices increased after the new government scrapped a subsidy meant to cushion consumers from the global hike in fuel prices.

In the new changes announced by the Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority (EPRA), a litre of super petrol jumped by Ksh20.18, diesel by Ksh25, and kerosene by Ksh20,

respectively. Following the review, a litre of petrol retails at a record high of Ksh179.30 (\$1.5), a litre of diesel goes for Ksh165 (\$1.37), while a litre of kerosene sells at Ksh147.94 (\$1.23) in Nairobi.

In Nakuru, the price for a litre of petrol is sold at Ksh178.62 (\$1.48), a litre of Diesel retails at Ksh164.83 (\$1.37), and Kerosene at Ksh147.79 (\$1.23). In Mombasa, a litre of petrol, diesel, and kerosene goes for Ksh176.98 (\$1.47), Ksh162.76 (\$1.35), and Ksh145.69 (\$1.21), respectively. In the remaining areas, prices range between Ksh180 (\$1.49) and Ksh192 (\$1.59).

«Taking into account the weighted average cost of imported refined petroleum products and in line with the government policy to progressively remove subsidy on petroleum fuels, the changes in the maximum allowed petroleum prices in Nairobi are as follows: Super petrol, diesel, and kerosene increase by Ksh20.18 per litre, Ksh25 per litre and Ksh20 per litre respectively,» said EPRA, noting that subsidies on

diesel and kerosene were reduced.

The prices are inclusive of the 8 per cent Value Added tax in line with the Finance Act 2018, the Tax Laws (Amendment) Act 2020, and the revised rates for excise duty for inflation as per Legal Notice No.194 of 2020.

Fuel subsidy was removed after the newly sworn-in President raised concerns about it. During his inauguration speech, Ruto termed the subsidy as a burden to the exchequer and always caused fuel shortages, as witnessed in April, May, and June. He also noted it was unsustainable and prone to abuse by a few individuals.

«On fuel subsidy alone, taxpayers have spent Sh144 billion (\$1.19 billion), including Sh60 billion (\$497.5 million) in the last four months alone. If the subsidy continues to the end of the financial year, it will cost taxpayers Sh280 billion (\$2.32 billion), equivalent to the entire national government development budget,» President Ruto.

The new hikes are expected to push inflation even higher from a five-

year high of 8.5 percent in August. Statistics show that inflation rose to 8.5 percent from 8.3 percent in July, a change caused by a rise in food costs.

August's inflation figure was the highest rate the country has ever experienced in the last five years, hitting outside the government's targeted band of 2.5 per cent -7.5 per cent.

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures the percentage change in the price of a basket of goods and services consumed by households, rose 0.4 percent from an index of 125.05 in July to 125.58 in August.

The Food and Non-Alcoholic Drinks Index rose 0.5 percent month on month between July and August. Compared to July 2022, prices of cornmeal, sugar, and mangoes increased by 4.7, 4.6, and 4.1 per cent in August.

During the same period, carrot and onion prices fell by 6.4 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively. The index for alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and narcotics also increased by 0.7 percent.

The Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas and Other Fuels Index further rose by 0.3 percent, partly due to an increase in prices for renting apartments – single rooms. Furnishing, household equipment, and routine household maintenance index increased by 0.5 per cent as prices of laundry soap/bar soap and detergents rose by 1.5 per cent and 0.7 per cent, respectively.

«The rise in inflation was mainly due to increase in prices of commodities under food and non-alcoholic beverages (15.3 per cent); transport (7.6 per cent) and housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels (5.6 per cent) between August 2021 and August 2022,» said KNBS.

Prices for basic products will rise further as a result of an increase in the cost of production, said the former acting CEO of Kenya Association

of Manufacturers (KAM), Tobias Alando.

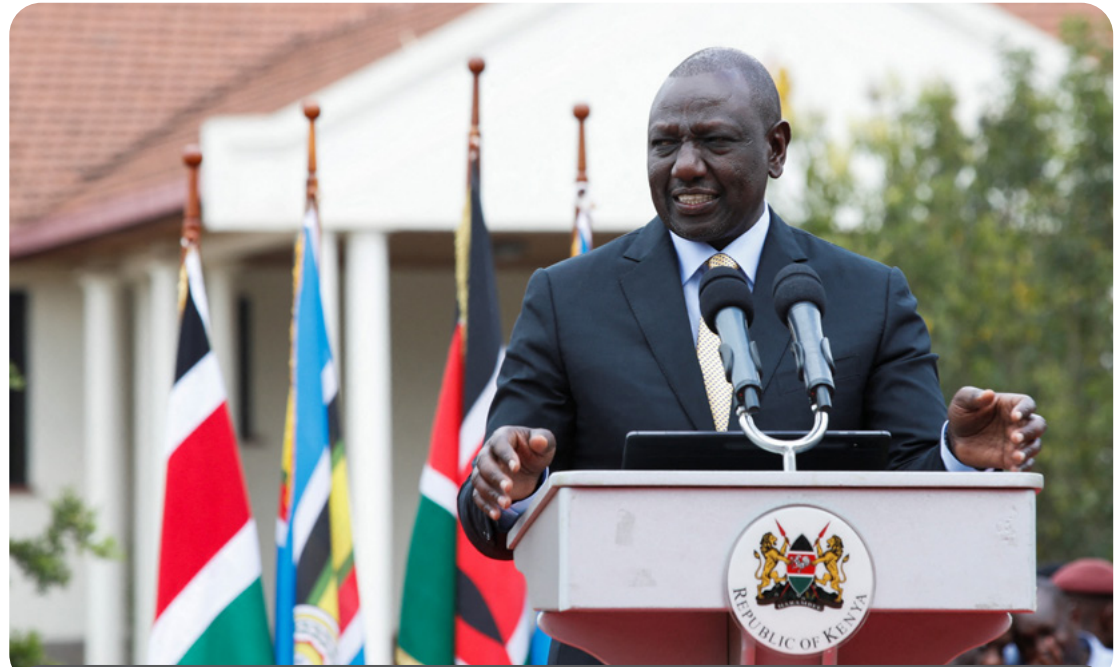
«The high fuel cost is expected to increase the cost of production for manufacturers, resulting in more pain for consumers who are already struggling to make ends meet. This is because the price of fuel cascades across the value chain—production, distribution, and retail,» Mr. Tobias Alando said.

To rub salt into the wound, Public Service Vehicles have hiked bus fares by 30 per cent owing to the increased prices. Operators have complained that the rise in fuel prices has had a disastrous effect on their operations, leaving them with no choice but to shift the burden onto commuters.

«We agree Kenyans are pressed, but we can no longer operate on losses. We have therefore unanimously agreed to increase the fare by a small margin of 30 percent,» said Micah Kariuki, Mount Kenya Matatu Owners Association chairperson.

In the wake of the hiked fuel prices, EPRA has also increased electricity prices by 15.7 per cent. The regulator has also hiked pass-through costs, including fuel, forex, and inflation adjustments.

EPRA raised the fuel cost charge (FCC) from Ksh6.7 (\$0.056) to an



If the subsidy continues to the end of the financial year, it will cost taxpayers Sh280 billion (\$2.32 billion), equivalent to the entire national government development budget, says President Ruto

all-time high of Ksh4.6 ((\$0.038) last month, which is equivalent to a 43 per cent rise subjecting consumers to the highest electricity bills since December 2021.

Fuel Cost Charge (FCC) is the additional cost to consumers due to fluctuations in world oil prices and fluctuations in the amount of oil used to generate electricity.

It has also nearly doubled the forex fee from Ksh 0.7 to Ksh 1.3, reflecting the impact of the shilling's fall on electricity bills.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua has called on Kenyans to tighten their belt as the government increases its efforts to arrest the high cost of living.

«We have inherited a dilapidated economy. We have found empty

coffers. This country has barely any money, and we are starting from scratch. I have asked the people of Kenya to be patient with us because we have a plan, but it cannot be immediate because we have found a bad situation in terms of the economy,» said Gachagua in an interview with a local television on September 19, 2022.

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Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan seeks USD 410 billion

*** World Bank, US commit over \$3 billion**

*** APWEN tasks FG on Professionalism not politics to achieve plan**

By Ajayi Olayinka

Nigeria's Vice President, Yemi Osinbajo has said Africa's increasing energy gaps require collaboration to take ownership of the continent's transition pathways and the action should be decisive and urgent. Osinbajo who stated this during the launch of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan, a roadmap to tackle the dual crises of energy poverty and climate change.

According to the Vice President "for Africa, the problem of energy poverty is as important as our climate ambitions. Energy use is crucial for almost every conceivable aspect of development. Wealth, health, nutrition, water, infrastructure, education, and life expectancy are significantly related to the consumption of energy per capita."

Osinbajo who highlighted the scale of resources required to attain both development and climate ambitions, said Nigeria would need to spend USD 410 billion above business-as-usual spending to deliver our Transition Plan by 2060, which translates to about USD 10 billion per year.

"The average USD 3 billion per year investments in renewable energy recorded for the whole of Africa between 2000 and 2020 will certainly not suffice," he added.

Additionally, the Vice President noted that "we have an inter-ministerial Energy Transition Implementation Working Group, which I chair. We are currently engaging with partners to secure an initial USD 10 billion support package ahead of COP27 along the lines of the South African Just Energy Transition Partnership announced at COP26 in Glasgow.

At the virtual event, Mr. Shubham Chaudhuri, Nigeria Country Director for World Bank said the bank plans "to commit over USD 1.5 billion towards the Energy Transition Plan



VP Osinbajo says Nigeria would need to spend USD 410 billion above business-as-usual spending to deliver our Transition Plan by 2060, which translates to about USD 10 billion per year.

on renewable energy, on power sector reforms, on clean cooking, and wherever opportunities arise."

In a similar vein, Mr. Adam Cortese, CEO, Sun Africa stated that "the launch of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan has further accelerated our efforts, proving Nigeria to be fertile grounds for investments in the sector". The company looks forward to seeking a USD 1.5 billion financing package from a US-based financial institution in support of Nigeria's energy transition.

Speaking on the effects of Climate Change in Africa, Prof Osinbajo explained that "climate change threatens crop productivity in regions that are already food insecure, and since agriculture provides the largest number of jobs, reduced crop productivity will worsen unemployment.

"It is certainly time for decisive action, and we just cannot afford to delay. African nations are rising to the challenge. All African countries

have signed the Paris Agreement and some countries, South Africa, Sudan, Angola, and Nigeria have also announced net-zero targets."

Giving more details on energy poverty in Africa, the VP noted that "the current lack of power hurts livelihoods and destroys the dreams of hundreds of millions of young people. " And although Africa's current unmet energy needs are huge, future demand will be even greater due to expanding populations, urbanization, and movement into the middle class.

"It is clear that the continent must address its energy constraints and would require external support and policy flexibility to deliver this. Unfortunately, in the wider responses to the climate crisis, we are not seeing careful consideration and acknowledgement of Africa's aspirations."

Underscoring the importance of collaboration, the Vice President then noted that "we developed our Energy Transition Plan to engage

with the rest of the world in a serious, thorough and data-backed manner."

Prof. Osinbajo explained that "there is a clear need for African nations to engage more critically and vocally in conversations on our global climate future.

"More importantly, we need to take ownership of our transition pathways and design climate-sensitive strategies that address our growth objectives. This is what Nigeria has done with our Energy Transition Plan."

Making reference to the Nigeria Energy Transition Plan, the Vice President said "the plan was designed to tackle climate change and deliver SDG7 by 2030 and net-zero by 2060, while centering the provision of energy for development, industrialization and economic growth."

According to him, "we anchored the plan on key objectives including lifting 100 million people out of poverty in a decade, driving economic growth, bringing modern energy

services to the full population and managing the expected long-term job losses in the oil sector due to global decarbonization.

"Given those objectives, the plan recognizes the role natural gas must play in the short term to facilitate the establishment of baseload energy capacity and address the nation's clean cooking deficit in the form of LPG.

"The plan envisions vibrant industries powered by low-carbon technologies; streets lined with electric vehicles and livelihoods enabled by sufficient and clean energy."

On other aspirations of the roadmap, Prof. Osinbajo explained that "the plan has the potential to create about 340,000 jobs by 2030, and 840,000 by 2060. It also presents a unique opportunity to deliver a true low-carbon and rapid development model in Africa's largest economy."

"We are currently implementing power sector initiatives and reforms focused on expanding our grid, increasing generation capacity, and deploying renewable energy to rural and underserved populations."

World Bank, US commit over \$3 billion

Meanwhile, the World Bank and the US Export-Import Bank (EximBank) has said they will commit over \$3 billion to the implementation of Nigeria's energy transition plan.

The international organisations made the commitment at the official launch of the Energy Transition Plan by Yemi Osinbajo, vice-president.

Nigeria country director, World Bank, Shubham Chaudhuri said the international bank aims at committing over \$1.5 billion towards the country's energy transition plan.

"We plan to commit over \$1.5 billion towards the Energy Transition Plan on renewable energy, on power sector reforms, and potentially hydropower, on clean cooking, and wherever opportunities arise," he said.



APWEN president, Engineer Elizabeth Eterigho says Transition Plan would only work with professionalism not politicking.

"The policy and institutional reforms that will be necessary are also part of the agenda and we hope to be able to provide support for the fundamentally imperative of energy access but in a way that is consistent with the energy transition, what I think of as the NEAT imperative.

"The Nigerian Energy Access and Transition (NEAT) imperative is what we here at the World Bank are absolutely committed to supporting."

On his part, chief executive officer, Sun Africa, a renewable energy solutions company, Adam Cortese said it was in the final stage of talks with the US EXIM Bank on a \$1.5 billion financing package.

The launch of Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan has further accelerated our efforts, proving Nigeria to be fertile grounds for investments in the sector. We are in the final stages of discussion with US EXIM Bank on a USD 1.5 billion financing package," Adam said.

"We are truly excited about the future and we are looking forward to helping Nigeria lead by way of example in Africa."

Speaking at the official unveiling of the transition plan, Osinbajo said Nigeria's energy transition requires a significant scale of resources which includes spending \$410 billion by 2060.

He added that Nigeria has set up an inter-ministerial energy transition implementation working group and is "currently engaging with partners to secure an initial \$10 billion support package ahead of COP27".

At COP26 in Glasgow last year, President Muhammadu Buhari announced Nigeria's ambition to achieve net-zero by 2060 drawing on insights from the country's Energy Transition Plan which was developed through the Energy Transition Commission to chart out Nigeria's unique energy transition pathway.

The plan supports the country's objectives of achieving universal access to energy by 2030 and a carbon-neutral energy system by 2060, while also providing enough energy to power the industry and other productive uses.

The plan is supported by Sustainable Energy for All and the COP26 Energy Transition Council (ETC).

Transition Plan <II only work with professionalism, not politicking - APWEN

Reacting to the development, the Association of Professional Women Engineers of Nigeria (APWEN) insisted that the Transition Plan would only work with professionalism and not politicking.

The Nigeria Energy Transition Plan aspires to provide universal access to electricity, and transition to cleaner energy sources. The plan focuses on five critical energy sectors, which include power, cooking, oil and gas, transport and industry.

The association, in a communiqué issued at the end of its National Conference and Annual General Meeting held in Abuja, noted that the Nigeria Energy Transition Plan should be an enabler to addressing energy sufficiency.

The APWEN president, Engineer Elizabeth Eterigho, who read the communiqué, said the conference recommended the creation of over 18 million jobs to achieve the energy transition of the government.



World Bank Country Director Shubham Chaudhuri says the body aims at committing over \$1.5 billion towards the country's energy transition plan. Photo courtesy.

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All Transactions	My Transactions	Amendments
1.1k +12.2%	248 +1.5%	65 +24.9%

Transactions Today

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	ACTIVITY	STARTING	COUNT	ON-HAND	
fate 60 mg TAB 25	Dispensed	630	-100	530	***
ugh PATCH	Dispensed	20	-20	40	***
Today, 14:09 Anastasia S.	Fentanyl 87.5 ug/h PATCH 0378-9127-98	Received	30	30	60 ***
Today, 13:45 Jeff M.	Oxycodone HCL and APAP 2.5/300 mg TAB 72245-193-03	Lost/Stolen	15	-15	0 ***

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Opportunity Through Uncertainty in Africa

By Samuel Ouma

Risk consultancy Control Risks and its economics consulting partner Oxford Economics Africa, on September 20, 2022, launched the seventh edition of their Africa Risk-Reward Index.

The report entitled “Opportunity through uncertainty” describes developments in the investment landscape in key African markets and provides an in-depth, longer-term outlook on the key trends shaping investment in these economies.

It outlined three major themes: shaping Africa’s role in the global energy transition, solving Africa’s food security problem, and Cash-strapped governments navigating a wave of discontent.

The report said food insecurity in parts of Africa is long-standing amid changing climate patterns, the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Two major problems have hampered the continent’s quest for food security.

First, small farmers dominate agricultural production on the continent. According to the report, governments and multilateral institutions have significantly improved smallholder productivity, including through increased mechanization and access to improved seeds and fertilizers.

Still, while they play an important role, small farmers will likely be unable to meet the rising demand for food and will find it difficult to compete with large importers of staple foods.

Second, countries are focusing on high-value, low-calorie crops like tea, coffee, shea, and cocoa rather than staple foods. The focus on growing these crops has come at the expense of native crops like sorghum, teff, cassava, and yam, which the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization says are often more nutritious than imported grains.

“These high-value crops are important sources of foreign exchange in many countries such as Côte

d’Ivoire, Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya, resulting in some of the most agriculturally productive areas in these countries being oriented towards external markets,” read part of the report.

This means that the supply chains are also export-oriented and not focused on meeting domestic demand. It is easier and cheaper to produce food for export than to reach remote areas within the same country, let alone neighboring countries.

However, the 2022 Africa Risk-Reward Index finds that there is increasing political will and international financial momentum to prioritize agriculture and regional supply chains on the continent.

Trade has been identified as one of the major drivers of change in agricultural production in African countries. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will be a key facilitator in this, as it is heavily focused on dismantling or eliminating non-tariff and tariff barriers to trade and enabling smooth trade.

However, given ongoing

protectionist tendencies in some African countries, AfCFTA has yet to be fully implemented. Some compete with each other to serve the same external markets, while internal tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade persist, including arbitrary taxation and other regulatory interference, and corruption at border crossings, despite pledges to reduce them. Other countries are also suspicious of foreign market participants competing with inefficient local producers.

Other opportunities are also emerging, such as efforts to manufacture food locally, which will expand manufacturing capabilities on the continent. The demand for warehousing and cool storage is also growing.

In addition, agritech companies are striving to fill gaps in the market, for example, by increasing farmers’ access to finance for machinery, inputs, and seeds through mobile money or even by connecting farmers directly to food retailers in urban areas, often eliminating extortionate intermediaries as well as reducing

sales post-harvest losses.

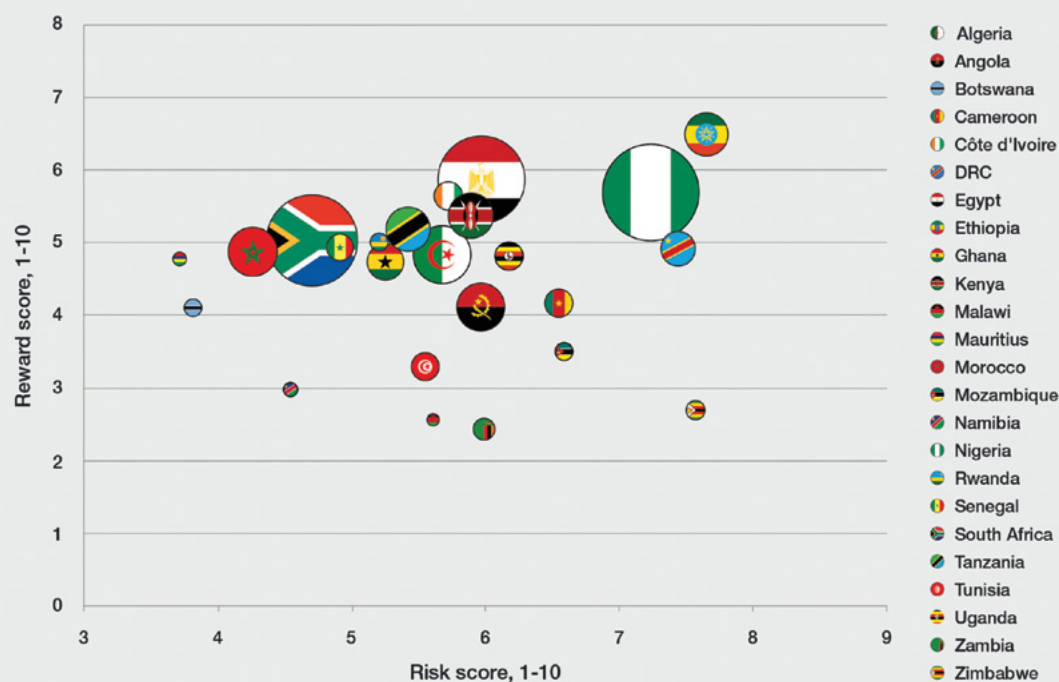
Further investment in basic infrastructure will be key to realizing Africa’s potential to become food independent and a global exporter. New trade corridors are being developed and existing ones modernized. For example, since 2007, the AfDB has spent \$8 billion to build 8,125 miles (13,000 km) of regional highways along 17 road corridors and 26 single-stop border post facilities.

Lack of reliable power, land pollicization, rising incidents of intercommunal conflict, and banditry will likely scare away investors.

Meanwhile, the global disruption in energy markets has put the African continent, long on the fringes of the energy transition debate, at the center of renewed interest. In search of energy alternatives, multinationals, particularly European companies, have turned their attention to Africa’s gas reserves to meet their energy needs.

For example, a long-stalled liquefied natural gas (LNG) project near the Tanzania-Mozambique

Fig.1 ▶ Africa Risk-Reward Index: The position of each country is defined by its risk and reward score. The size of its bubble represents the size of the country’s GDP. The individual scores for each country for risk and reward are shown in the table opposite. Further details on the methodology for calculating each country’s scores are provided in detail in the annex.



border has sparked renewed investor interest. Similarly, international investors are showing renewed interest in countering the threat posed by Mozambique's Islamist militant group al-Sunnah to revive an LNG project in Cabo Delgado that has been halted amid rising security concerns.

Higher global demand for new gas sources has further encouraged regional and international cooperation on major projects and somewhat bridged the divide between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. The Senegal-Mauritania joint oil and gas project is set to reach production in 2023, with the prospect of supplying European markets providing the additional impetus. Meanwhile, in July 2022, Niger, Nigeria, and Algeria governments signed a memorandum of understanding to build the 2,485-mile (4,000 km) Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP) that will bring gas to southern Europe.

The prospect of future revenue has prompted African governments to reach out to their neighbors across the Sahara in a way not seen in several years. Meanwhile, Angola and Congo (Brazzaville), with their more advanced LNG production capacities, have found a new influence on the global stage, given their potential to supply European markets with LNG.

Africa's oil reserves are also

attracting renewed attention, much to the delight of many African governments. In early 2022, Namibia took the spotlight after discovering viable oil reserves off its coast, while Côte d'Ivoire hopes to benefit from higher oil prices and the discovery of deep-sea oil in 2021, the first such discovery in the country in more than two decades.

"This renewed international interest in oil and gas projects has expanded the role of domestic private and state oil and gas companies. Such companies initially emerged as joint venture partners for their multinational counterparts, but in recent years, they increasingly filled gaps in exploration and production

owing to a downturn in global investment in new oil exploration projects and widespread pressure to decarbonize," said the report.

Moreover, African countries are already sourcing much of their power from renewable sources, especially hydrogen.

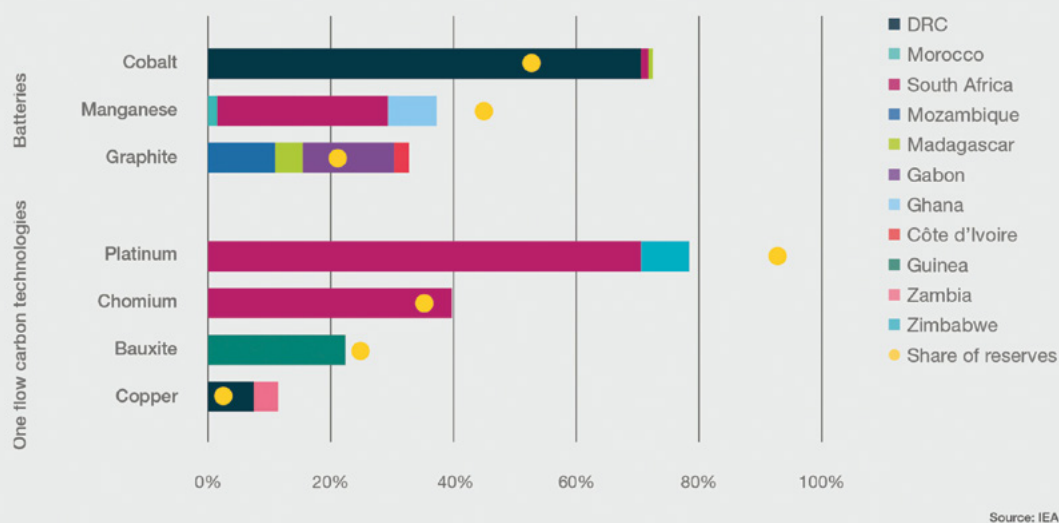
On the rising cost of living, the report stated that the wave of discontentment against the already cash-strapped governments is expected to sweep across the continent.

Governments are unlikely to be able to quell public outrage over rising living costs, and conditions are expected to deteriorate before they improve, particularly as expensive

international borrowing matures. People in African countries are taking to the streets in droves to demand political change, angry at their government's failure to prepare for and respond to impending crises adequately. This makes for a difficult working environment for investors.

"Since the beginning of 2022, food and fuel price increases have prompted spontaneous anti-government protests across the continent, with large-scale protests reported in Guinea, Uganda, Malawi, and Sierra Leone between June and August. Nonetheless, further unrest is likely in the year ahead, as socio-economic conditions will remain challenging," stated the report.

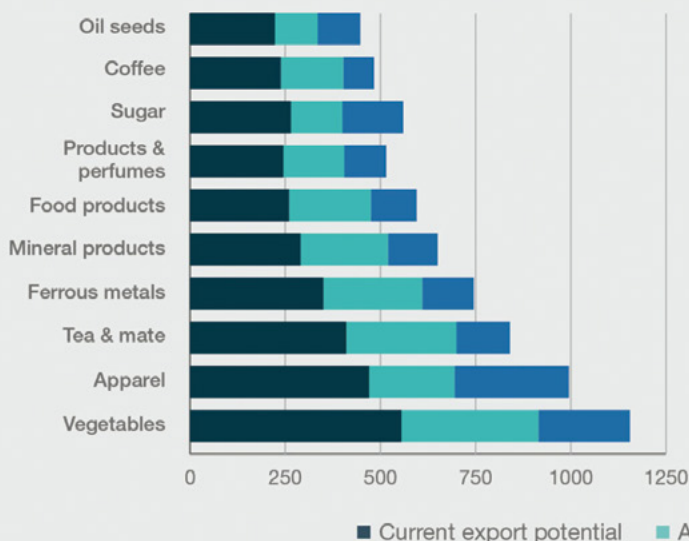
Fig.3 ▶ Share of Africa in global production of selected minerals, 2020



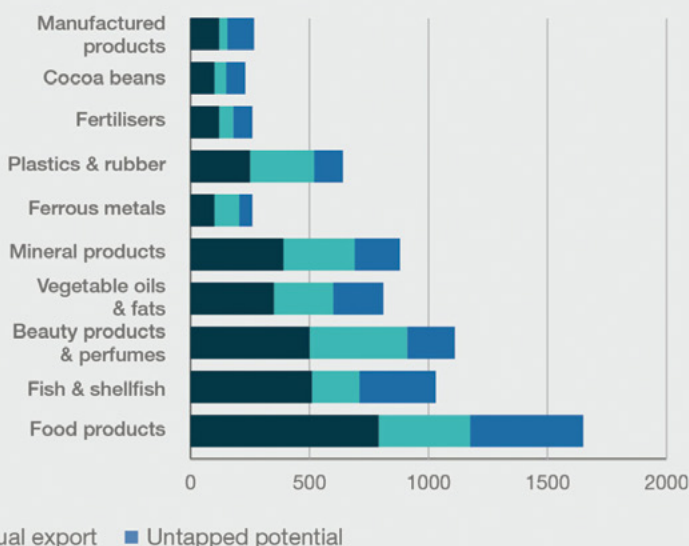
Source: IEA

Fig.4 ▶ Intra-Africa trade potential, East and West Africa

East Africa (US\$ million)



West Africa (US\$ million)



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Today, 14:12 by Jeff M.

76045-010-10

Hydromophone Hydrochloride 2 mg/mL INJ SOL

Amended: 50 Dispensed: 500

Starting Count	After Dispensing (Amended)
5,000	4,550
Original Count	Amended Count
500	50
Rx Number	Patient
1568537-09710	Caleb Montrose
Reason	Alibi
Recorded incorrect quantity	Jeff M.
Yesterday, 11:53 by Anastasia S.	Yesterday, 11:53

Recent Activity

for Hydromophone Hydrochloride 2 mg/mL INJ SOL

RECORDED	ACTIVITY	STARTING	COUNT
Today, 15:53 Anastasia S.	Dispensed	630	100
Today, 14:12 Jeff M.	Dispensed	20	20
Tues, 14:09 Anastasia S.	Received	30	30
Jun 2, 13:45 Jeff M.	Lost/Stolen	15	15
May 27, 11:01 Jeff M.	Amended	15	15

[View All](#)

Jude Kearney Is New EXIM Bank Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee Chair

By Ajong Mbapndah L

The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) has appointed Jude Kearney as Chair of the Sub-Saharan Africa Advisory Committee.

Mr. Kearney, the Managing Partner at ASAFO & Co. law firm, was chosen during the bank's board meeting held on September 1, 2022.

The committee members' task is to advise EXIM on developing and implementing policies and programs designed to support EXIM's engagement in sub-Saharan Africa and boost U.S. exports and American jobs.

"The recommendations and insights from the Sub-Saharan Africa Committee members will be critical as EXIM works to increase American exports across the continent," said EXIM President and Chair Reta Jo Lewis a statement announcing the appointment of Mr. Kearney and others.

"I look forward to working with Jude Kearney and the committee as we continue to support key EXIM and Biden-Harris Administration priorities to fulfill our mission of supporting American jobs through exports," she added.

The committee comprises 11 members with representation from various fields, including trade, commerce, banking, finance, and small business.

The committee meets semi-annually and is mandated by Congress under EXIM's charter. The chair and members are appointed to one-year terms.

As a lawyer, Mr. Kearney has been a pioneer in developing Africa-specific practices in U.S. firms and



As a lawyer, Mr. Kearney has been a pioneer in developing Africa-specific practices in U.S. firms.

has previously chaired the African practices of major international firms.

He is well-known in Africa for his extensive experience in oil and gas, project finance, mergers and acquisitions, and privatizations.

Apart from being recognized by the leading international legal directories as one of the best international projects lawyers in the African market, he also served in the Clinton Administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Service Industries and Trade Finance, where he was chief advisor on African policies.

He has participated in several trade and bilateral negotiations, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and market access negotiations with

Japan and China.

Mr. Kearney earned his Juris Doctor from the Stanford School of Law, where he was a Stanford International Law Journal member. He earned his Applied Baccalaureate from Harvard University in 1980.

His many roles include serving as Managing Partner of ASAFO & CO. U.S., a firm that is affiliated with the Global Corporate and Legal Advisory Firm ASAFO & CO Int'l. The U.S., African and European Offices of the Firm primarily focus on complex projects and transactions on the African Continent and offer expert advice and project consultancy in regard to Infrastructure Development, the various productive and trading aspects of the Extractive Industries, the development and management

of Power Plants, M&A, Project Finance and International Dispute Resolution, among other services.

The former United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Services Industries and Trade Finance was recently announced as a high-profile guest of the upcoming African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa. At the event, Kearney is expected to make a strong case for United States of America (US)-Africa collaboration on energy investments.

Jude Kearney is committed to making energy poverty history in Africa and will be coming to African Energy Week to promote US energy investments, improved US-Africa partnerships and driving socioeconomic growth on the back of oil and gas, a statement from the African Energy Chamber read.

"The chamber is proud to have Jude Kearney confirm his attendance and participation at AEW 2022 – the biggest energy event taking place in Africa in 2022. As a lawyer with a commitment to making energy poverty history in Africa, insight from Kearney will be key for unlocking new investment, strengthening U.S.-Africa partnerships and laying the foundation for accelerated oil and gas developments in Africa. We look forward to the discussions that will be led by Kearney during AEW 2022 and urge current and potential delegates to seize this opportunity to network with an industry pioneer such as Kearney," states NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber,

Sierra Leone : 90% pass rate in Mathematics, 63% in English Language: Interrogating David Sengeh's Education Data

By Joel Abdulai Kallon*

When Sierra Leone started rolling out a Free Quality School Education (FQSE) program in 2018, I had very little doubts about the formidable social and economic implications of such a major national undertaking. It was not very clear to me how the country could be able to mobilize the massive resources required to pay tuition and composite fees for pupils at all levels of basic and senior secondary schooling without significantly leaving a dent in the delivery of other needed social services.

But whatever doubts I had about the feasibility of successfully delivering a free education program were matched in almost equal measure by a sense of satisfaction that, at the very least, we were turning the spotlight again on education. I told a colleague then that even though I was not entirely confident that we had the capacity and resources to provide universal quality education, much less for free, it was quite reassuring that education was once again receiving the mainstream attention that it had thoroughly been starved of.

This note of optimism was perhaps driven by instinctive necessity, considering that my concerns and pessimism with the FQSE would be impossible to prove and might forever be—at least for the five-or-ten-year tenure of the Bio administration. It seemed highly improbable to me that a government that had relentlessly campaigned on the promise of a free education program would ever come out to admit that the program was not proving to be either succeeding or sustainable even if that was the case. Such a declaration, many would say, might well amount to an act of political suicide. And who would blame them? That is one of the more obvious consequences of blatantly politicizing development in a politically toxic environment.

But this incessant and non-negotiable proclivity to prove that things work can certainly get too far.



Joel Abdulai Kallon is an engineer, data management consultant, activist, and entrepreneur.

Last week, Sierra Leone's minister in charge of the free education program announced the release of the 2022 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) results. A four-page analysis of the results, which interestingly included two pages of praise for President Bio and the successes of the FQSE, accompanied that announcement. "The document has more resemblance to a political party manifesto than the statistical report that it was supposed to be", a colleague mentioned to me privately. "The MIT-trained engineer and Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education, Moinina David Sengeh, has truly mastered the art of politicking, the Sierra Leonean way, where loyalty to, and public praise for the president, was as important, if not even more, as delivering on performance objectives. He doesn't seem to be bothered, it appears to me, that he, David Sengeh, was losing his professional appeal in the process",

he concluded.

But let's not digress. Let's look at the Ministry's analyses of the 2022 WASSCE results. Shall we? Not before we offer our thanks to the minister, however, for his commendable strides in making his work and the Ministry more accessible to the people. Data on education are now generally more widely available and accessible. The minister spends a lot of time engaging the public on his policies and is not too busy to directly have fiery social media exchanges on some of his policies. While I think a lot more could be done, especially in terms of improving data governance and sharing practices or in encouraging more independent, third-party analysis of Sierra Leone's education data, I am convinced that some gratitude and appreciation for his hard work, openness, and dedication are in order.

The major highlights of this year's results were that two candidates,

Skaikay Nasma and Kallon Khadijah, from relatively unknown schools in Kenema, respectively, took the first and second positions. While at first glance, there is an alluring temptation to get carried away and simply applaud the meteoric leaps in learning outcomes, it is equally almost impossible to ignore the unmistakable political correctness framing and delusions about the return of quality education because of the FQSE that characterise this year's announcement and indeed many similar education data releases by the minister. It is not unreasonable at all, from looking at the WASSCE highlights, to suspect that considerable efforts go into ensuring that Sengeh's data on education portray a carefully scripted narrative. For instance, there appear to be some deliberate and repeated efforts to 'genderize' education data or irrefutably prove the immediate impact of the FQSE.

Nothing against girls excelling, but the information that more girls than boys took the WASSCE exam, that the top candidates are girls, that girls outperformed boys in Mathematics, or that more females obtained university requirements offer limited data value or utility other than, perhaps, meeting some donor funding benchmarks. Why should it be newsworthy or okay that girls now outperform boys?

Another noteworthy metric in this year's announcement is the number of students who obtained university admission requirements. The release mentioned that "the number of candidates achieving direct university degree programme entry requirements by obtaining five credits including in English Language and/or Mathematics in a single sitting has increased by an amazing 1,781% since 2018." As if that's not intriguing enough, the report further noted that in 2022 more than 108,000 students, or 58% of candidates, obtained university requirements. It added that this figure was higher than the combined number of candidates who had obtained requirements in the previous five years. To add the icing to this year's examination miracle cake, 63% of candidates passed English Language while 90% passed Mathematics according to the release.

Truly remarkable highlights, right? Everyone should celebrate the accomplishments of these kids and commend the impact of the Free Quality Education Programme. It appears that was precisely what Minister Sengh expected and has been left sorely despondent that some citizens have expressed concerns that these results seem too good to be true! He has taken to social media to question the love and patriotism of Sierra Leoneans who raise objections about the credibility of these results and says he does not understand that people can be 'mad' that kids are performing better now.

This reaction by the minister is quite characteristic of many of our leaders and reveals a noteworthy leadership flaw among Sierra Leone's political elite—an inability or unwillingness to tolerate critical comments and

mould consensus. I like the Canadian psychologist and former University of Toronto professor, Jordan Peterson, a lot. One of my favourites of his twelve rules for life is Rule 9: "Assume that the Person You Are Listening to Might Know Something You Don't." It is also this law that many of our leaders appear to have the least difficulty violating or only adhering to when the person they are listening to is saying what they wish to hear.

Instead of questioning the patriotism of the critic, I think a more useful approach would be to inquire: why are some people so vehemently critical of the latest WASSCE results? Well, first and foremost, I think the biggest reason is that these numbers and the improvements in learning outcomes that they purport to reflect within three years of the FQSE program are staggering, surprising, magical, and unbelievable! Worse, these results are incongruous with contextual realities and the lived experiences of many Sierra Leoneans.

It is also very difficult to attribute these changes to specific policy changes, performance trends, or direct technical and/or financial inputs into the education sector. Granted, the free education program has ramped up investments in education overall, but there is no evidence to suggest that average education spending per child has increased substantially given the accompanying massive rise in enrolments; or indeed that the increase in government spending has led to an increase in the quality of teaching and learning in senior secondary schools. It also does not seem probable that these dramatic changes could happen in under three years. On the contrary, there is, in fact, sufficient evidence for doubting the credibility and validity of these results, as articulated below.

At the outset, it is worth mentioning that when this cohort of WASSCE candidates attempted the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in 2019, only about 46% obtained the requirements for admission into Senior Secondary School. Overall, this cohort's BECE performance was worse than the 2018 cohort before it and, indeed, the 2020

batch that will be taking the WASSCE next year. While the argument can be made that this cohort's WASSCE performance is the fruit of three years of FQSE investments, that argument still fails to justify the massive spike in overall performances or the nearly dramatic improvement in pass rates in subjects like English and Mathematics. How does one explain that a cohort that averaged a 31.3 % pass rate in Mathematics in the 2019 BECE obtained a 90% pass rate in this year's WASSCE? How do 9 out of 10 pupils get a pass in a standardized public examination like WASSCE? How did more pupils pass English (63%) and Mathematics (90%) than, say Commerce (11%), for example? Surely, IQ levels do not change substantially in under three years.

How also do these high pass rates—possibly the highest in the country's WASSCE history—not conflict with the fact that the absence of qualified teachers is highest at the Senior Secondary School level in Sierra Leone? The 2021 National School Census, which the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education recently launched, revealed that nearly 60% of teachers in Senior Secondary Schools are not qualified to teach at that level. This is the highest prevalence of unqualified teachers across all levels. By comparison, only about 34% of the teaching workforce at the Junior Secondary School level are said to be without the right qualifications.

In consideration of these anomalies and the fact that corruption and widespread examination malpractices have become a recurring feature of Sierra Leone's education system in the last two decades or so, the conclusion or, more precisely, the suspicion by some Sierra Leonean that these WASSCE numbers defy logic, make meaningful statistical interpretation challenging and are inconsistent with our national realities seems perfectly reasonable. I am certain that getting disappointed at those who express doubts about the veracity of these results does not constitute the best approach to better understanding these issues. While it is tempting and perhaps even justifiable to believe

that the criticisms are a function of politically motivated malice or envy; and while it may be indeed likely that many of the fiercest critics may not be very politically sympathetic to the current government, I think it will be a miscalculation to dismiss the critical concerns raised solely on those grounds. Now, more than ever, politicians like David Sengh, who enjoy enormous presidential backing, and considerable public support, and who, all things being equal, project an attitude of genuine concern about effective service delivery, must seek to transcend political inclinations and considerations in their engagements with the public.

They must genuinely make attempts to listen to their most avowed critics and assume that there is an off chance that those who firmly articulate critical views might just know something that those in governance do not. In no other endeavour is this necessity for accommodating alternative opinions more imperative than in efforts to address the chronic and systemic integrity issues plaguing Sierra Leone's education sector. Combatting academic fraud lies at the very core of the fight for the future and soul of this nation. It is one of our most guaranteed options for changing the fortunes of Sierra Leone. Demanding the highest levels of integrity by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), examiners, pupils, and parents is central to ensuring that the teachers, nurses, doctors, technicians, software engineers, judges, journalists, entrepreneurs, civil servants, and politicians of the new Sierra Leone are competent, trustworthy, productive, and globally competitive.

The window of opportunity to make this change is narrowing. We cannot afford to sacrifice this charge on the altar of political expediency. The time is high!

*Joel Abdulai Kallon is an engineer, data management consultant, activist, and entrepreneur. He is the Co-founder and CEO of Meraki Analytics, a research and analytics consulting firm based in Sierra Leone.



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Crisis In Nigeria's Public Universities System Persists Despite Court Ruling

By Richard Mammah

What began as one more trade dispute that many thought would be addressed in a matter of days has now snowballed into a lingering dispute that is leading to more and more disruptions in the entire system.

Originally, Nigerian lecturers had merely asked for a revalidation, renegotiation and implementation of a 2009 agreement entered into with them by government.

But rather than deal with this frontally, between the Nigerian Presidency, the supervising Ministry of Education and the mediating Ministry of Labour and Employment, it has been seven months of shifting the ball to the present situation where the government has now secured what is looking as a Pyrrhic victory: a court judgement compelling the lecturers to call off the strike that many are at a loss as to how it would implement it.

With the lecturers pressing to return to the courts to seek a stay of execution of the judgement, restive students increasing their pressure overall on the system through protest matches and blockades and government reportedly continuing with efforts to break the ranks of the striking lecturers, it is clear that this crisis is not going away any day soon.

Indeed, things are also not even being helped at the moment by the continuing attempts to obscure the issues. For one, Labour Minister, Senator Chris Ngige, is insisting that the Federal Government did not take the Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU, to court in a bid to thwart the strike action and also that the striking Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU does not even understand the import of the Collective Bargain Agreement, CBA negotiation.

According to Ngige, it was rather the protracted failure to reach a common ground that pushed him as Minister of Labour and Employment to refer the matter to the National



Labour Minister, Senator Chris Ngige,

Industrial Court of Nigeria (NICN).

Speaking in Abuja at the public presentation of the NLC at 40 publication, titled, "Contemporary History of Working Class Struggles," the minister accused

the union of not following time-tested labour principles in prosecuting their demands.

"We have to counsel our brothers on negotiation. No negotiation is forced. You cannot say it is either you give me 200 per cent or I will continue my strike. There are laws guiding strikes. There are ILO principles on the right to strike. Nobody can take it away.

"But, there are things that follow it when you embark on strike as a worker and they are enshrined in the laws of our land. It is written in Trade Dispute Act. The ILO principles of strike talks about the right of a worker to withdraw services. There is also the right to picket. These are things that are done.

"Nigeria is respected in ILO. Some people said Federal Government took ASUU to court. No. I referred the matter after seven months of protracted discussions and negotiations that failed."

"Some people are saying 2009 agreement. The 2009 agreement has been renegotiated in 2013/2014

with the administration of former President Goodluck Jonathan. It is an anathema to use 2009 agreement.

"What is left is the renegotiation of their conditions of service, which is their right. It should be done but they are negotiating it under the principle of offer and acceptance and it broke down irretrievably there at the Federal Ministry of Education.

"That Kick-started Section 17 of the Trade Dispute Act whereby the Minister of Labour and Employment, whoever it is, if you don't transmit according to the dictates of Section 17, TDA, 2004, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, you would have failed in your function. Therefore, I had to transmit."

"The pro-chancellors said they want to do a counteroffer. I told them to do it as quickly as possible. Those are ingredients of labour relations. It is not enough if you misinform your membership. That should be a disservice. We should read through things as it is and interpret same way. If I leave them in education, they will stay there two years."

However, both the students and members of the public are not finding the situation funny anymore.

For the students, they have now resorted to staging open rallies on the

streets, highways and byways.

Says the public affairs commentator, Tony Kamalu:

"The fact that this strike has lingered for this long is most unfortunate. The government has to be reasonable and humane. Merely saying that it has no resources to keep to the terms of the agreement does not address the issues at stake. There should be a more honest and more frontal approach to resolving the dispute in the overall interest of the nation and the students."

Kamalu also believes that part of the challenge is the attitude and disposition of the two primary representatives of the Federal Government in the management of this crisis, namely the Minister of Education, Adamu Adamu and the Minister of Labour, Dr Chris Ngige.

Clearly distressed over its inability to make a headway as regards the dispute, the Federal Government has requested the National Industrial Court to intervene and make a ruling on the status of the strike with a view to getting the lecturers to be ordered to return to work by the courts.

Before now, the government had stressed that it was determined to enforce the 'no work, no pay' provision which would result in the lecturers being denied the prospect of receiving the backlog of their salaries that had been withheld since the commencement of the strike action.

While the government is premising its line of reasoning in this respect on the fact that the lecturers have not been teaching students in the classrooms for the period of the strike, ASUU is however arguing that its members have even within the period been engaged in the research and community service components of their work and that in addition, they would also be bending over backwards to teach the classes that had been affected by the strike after the close of the industrial dispute.

Kamalu is upset that rather than

addressing the core issues at stake, the administration is rather focusing on running rings around them:

This is very devastating! Once in my life as a Nigerian, I am witnessing the devastating consequences of a President who stands idly by with every Tom, Dick and Harry taking undue advantage of him and the Nigerian people. It is sickening.'

On the efforts of the students to pile pressure on the system with a view to getting the schools re-opened, Kamalu generally welcomes it but

doubts if it could get the job done, giving the internal state of affairs at the moment within the umbrella National Association of Nigerian Students, NANS itself:

'NANS lacks the capacity to get government to do the right thing. In the days before now, NANS was very effective because there was no division within their ranks. That cannot be said of the present NANS where many of those behind it went into office solely for pecuniary benefits other than to serve.

Internal challenges notwithstanding, another analyst, Sylvester Ojoto says he does not fault the protest actions being carried out by the students:

'I endorse without reservation the NANS protest over the poor management of the lingering ASUU strike. It's high time the Federal Government took them serious. By blocking the airport road you will see how much faster the negotiations will go now. I pray that the students are not driven further into the trenches

otherwise things could escalate. I am particularly also disappointed by the handling of affairs by the President and the ministers of Education and Labour. Buhari, Adamu and Ngige have mismanaged the entire jaw jaw.'

Meanwhile, the status quo remains. The schools remain without the desired academic activities. And the parties continue to 'study the judgement and await further directives.'

Tanzania: Great Lakes To Reap Big From JP Magufuli Bridge

By Prosper Makene



Mwanza's Great Lake region is set to benefit from the construction project of the JP Magufuli Bridge, popularly known as the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge.

The bridge, set to be completed in February 2024, will link the Mwanza region with neighboring countries

of Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda, making the region the most influential business hub.

"The 180-tonne capacity bridge will allow thousands of vehicles to pass at a time and will result in Mwanza becoming a major commercial hub in the Lake Zone," said Tanroads

manager for Mwanza, Mr. Pascal Ambrose.

The 3.2km bridge financed by the Government of Tanzania, is expected to attract the business community from Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo DRC, and Ethiopia.

It is carried out by the China Civil

Engineering Construction Group (CCECG) and the 15th Bureau of China Railway.

Several companies are involved in the project as subcontractors, namely C-Labs (T) Ltd, Grinda Builders and Supplies Ltd, Hamis A. Kazika Co. Ltd and C&C Engineering and Planners

Ltd, and Pro Consults (T) Ltd.

The project route consists of two main components: bridge works and road works.

The Bridge work consists of the construction of extra- dosed bridge (520m) with a total length of 3km (including the approach section) crossing Lake Victoria.

On the other hand, the road construction consists of widening 1.66 km of the existing road from 2 to 4 lanes and construction of 1.16 km on the Kigongo side and 0.5 on the Busisi side.

It is anticipated that the cutting-edge bridge will take the place of the ferry services between Kigongo and Busisi, reducing travel time from roughly three hours to four minutes and enabling an increase in the number of vehicles crossing each day from 1,600 to 10,200.

It is estimated to be the sixth-longest in Africa and the longest in East Africa.

Once completed, the US\$295 million bridge will make it easier to



transit people, products, and services from Mwanza to neighbouring countries such as Uganda and Burundi.

According to Pascal Ambrose, the project has created 776 jobs so far, of which 720 jobs have been given to Tanzanians at 92.8 percent and 56

jobs to foreigners at 7.2 percent.

Ambrose had reported in July 2022 that the project was halfway done. He said engineers were working day and night to ensure the project met its completion goal.

«The construction is now at 47.3 percent, and upon completion, the project will be a catalyst for reducing poverty and spur economic growth in the larger area,» he stated.

The project's execution is part of the CCM election manifesto, which states that the party will oversee the completion of seven bridges: the Salender and Gerezani in Dar es Salaam; the Wami in Pwani; the Kigongo-Busisi in Mwanza; the Kitengule in Kagera; the Msingi in Singida; and the Malagarasi along the Kabingo-Kasulu-Manyovu road.

It is also part of efforts to strengthen maritime transport in rivers, lakes, and oceans through road infrastructure.





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Burundi: Ndayishimiye's Purity Test

By Maniraguha Ferdinand

Rwandans and Burundians have a saying “you kick out a wife who chews bones and you bring in the one who swallows them.” It seems to be exactly what happened in Burundi in early September when President Evariste Ndayishimiye replaced his former Prime Minister, Allain Guillaume Bunyoni with Gervais Ndirakobuca who had been heading the Ministry of Interior.

On September 7, Burundi's president, Évariste Ndayishimiye, removed Bunyoni and made quick changes to his presidential aides as well as the country's security leadership. The fallout between Ndayishimiye and Bunyoni, the most feared man in Burundi came after days of a possible coup.

Three days before the replacement, Ndayishimiye had warned Bunyoni that if he tries to overthrow the regime, he would bear the consequences. «Let those who dare fight [me] slow down because they will never achieve that. Who dares threaten a general with a coup? Who is that?» he questioned.

Some saw the nomination of Gervais Ndirakobuca as another slowdown for the tiny central African nation. Both Ndirakobuca and Bunyoni have been sanctioned by US and EU over their inhumane



Bunyoni (left) is accused by President Ndayishimiye (right) of planning to overthrow the regime.

treatment of the protesters during the 2015 elections violence.

“His replacement, Gervais Ndirakobuca, is likely a step back in terms of safeguarding fundamental rights in Burundi,” Human Rights Watch stated. The human right group said that the nomination of Ndirakobuca who is also known as Ndakugaruka (I will kill you) “shows President Ndayishimiye may prefer

an enforcer over someone committed to meaningful human rights reform.”

Burundi is one of the world's poorest countries with a GDP per capita below 300 US dollars per year. Corruption has stagnated in most government institutions although president Ndayishimiye has vowed to eradicate it.

«We don't expect anything from the reshuffle because even the new Prime Minister has nothing new to bring. They may change government officials but the system will remain the same,» said a Burundian citizen who spoke on conditions of anonymity.

He said that the ruling CNDD-FDD system must be revamped so that people live without fear. «What we want is to stop torture and killings of those who oppose the government. We want the respect of human rights as well as fight against corruption», he added.

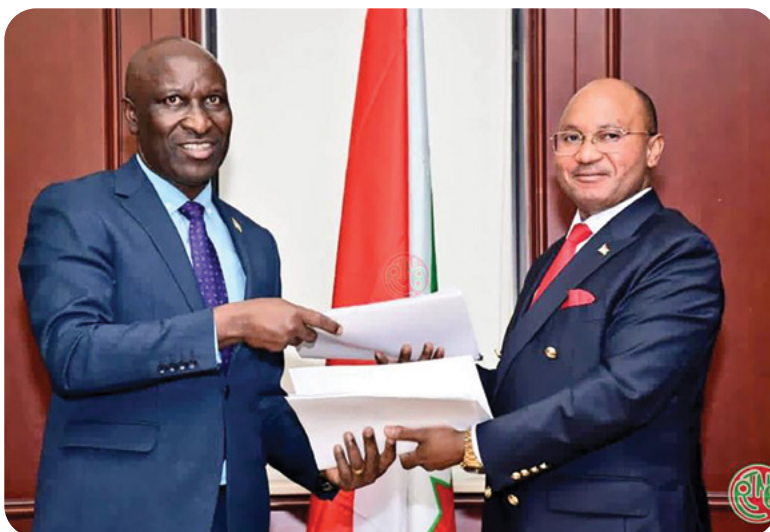
The whereabouts of Bunyoni are still unknown. He was last seen a day after being kicked

out of office when he handed over to Ndirakobuca, the new Prime Minister.

Gatabazi, a political expert in Great Lakes Region said that it is unlikely for President to arrest Bunyoni. “President may opt to let him free and control him inside the country. He can also arrest him just to weaken him and avoid that he may use his wealth to overthrow the government,» he said.

“If he ever arrests him, it will be difficult to convince the public about the charges. We know that corruption or treason charges require solid evidence, so it will be hard to get for a man who did everything in his capacity as Prime Minister,» Gatabazi added.

Since its Independence from Belgium on July 1, 1962, Burundi has experienced at least four coups d'état and the assassinations of three heads of state. The unsuccessful recent one occurred in May 2015 after elections where the late president Pierre Nkurunziza was seeking a third controversial term.



Ndirakobuca (left) replaced Bunyoni (right) as the new Prime Minister of Burundi.



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Zimbabwe: Redefining the Real Cost of Sanctions

By Prince Kurupati



Zimbabweans protesting against sanctions .Photo credit Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi, AP.

In 2001, the United States government enacted the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA). Over the years, the Act has been revised numerous times. When it was enacted, ZIDERA made it impossible for select individuals, most notably the top brass in ZANU PF from doing business with the West. Also, targeted by ZIDERA were top security officials from the intelligence, police and military as well as select companies with links to the affected individuals.

Soon after the passing of the ZIDERA Act, the European Union and other governments including Australia also passed their own Acts which basically curtailed the Zimbabwean elite and their companies from doing business with companies operating in those territories. Combined, all these economic embargoes on the Zimbabwean elite became what we term today, targeted sanctions.

When ZIDERA was passed, its Statement of Policy stated that the Act aims to “support the people of Zimbabwe in their struggle to effect peaceful democratic change, achieve broad-based and equitable economic growth and restore the rule of law”.

At the time when ZIDERA was

enacted, Zimbabwe was in a pretty precarious position owing to the violent fast-track land reform which was in full swing. The political scene was also very tense owing to the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) which had just given ZANU PF its first ‘electoral’ loss during the 2000 referendum. Owing to the prevailing volatile social and political atmosphere, the news that the international community spearheaded by the U.S. had passed legislation aimed at bringing back sanity and democratic norms to the country was largely welcomed by many.

Academics, industrialists, and economists among other professionals including the general public were convinced that the targeted sanctions would cripple the wings of the elite and in the process, usher in either a regime change or just a change in the way the ruling party was governing. The hope for a better tomorrow was evident.

However, fast forward a few years later, Zimbabwe from 2007 onwards experienced one of the worst economic meltdowns. All basic goods disappeared from shops. Fuel became a luxury for the affluent only. Schools

closed. Hospitals ran out of basic painkillers. The country’s currency became worthless. Things economic-wise basically came to a standstill. It was only after the emergence of the government of national unity in 2013 that things started to turn positive. However, up to this day, things haven’t gone the way many thought they would soon after the passing of the ZIDERA Act.

The mere fact that Zimbabwe is still reeling under economic and political challenges has led many to question the efficacy of the targeted sanctions. The mere fact that the ordinary man on the street is feeling the economic heat while the elite are still enjoying a life of luxury has made many think that the sanctions were ‘targeted’ not for the elite but the poor and vulnerable. This view has found many takers including renowned journalist Faustine Ngila.

Having listened to various African leaders deliver their speeches at the just ended 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Faustine Ngila observed that many concurred when it came to the issue of Zimbabwean ‘targeted’ sanctions. They all agreed that the sanctions have to go as they are causing

distress to the vulnerable citizens. In analysing the nature of the sanctions, Ngila noted that the mere fact that the sanctions inhibit Zimbabwe from accessing lines of credit is not a disservice to the elite but actually the poor as it is the poor who are the recipients of the financial aid and grants.

“Since sanctions came into effect against Zimbabwe in 2001, the country has lost access to more than \$100 billion in bilateral donor support, grants, and loans from the IMF, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank. At the height of the sanctions, Zimbabwe’s GDP contracted from \$6.78 billion in 2001 to \$4.42 billion in 2008. Foreign direct investment as a percentage of GDP in Zimbabwe has fallen from 6.9% in 1998 to 0.8% in 2020. The restrictions are adding to Zimbabwe’s existential economic woes, with inflation soaring to 285% in August forcing the central bank to introduce gold coins to curb further inflation,” Ngila concluded.

Apart from destabilising Zimbabwe’s economic standing and future prospects, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said that the sanctions also have a negative



President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe and President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa. Ramaphosa says the sanctions have a ripple effect across the Southern African Region.

ripple effect on the southern African region. In his bilateral meeting with

U.S. President Joe Biden, President Ramaphosa called upon the U.S. to scrap the sanctions as the entire region is feeling the brunt of the measures.

Speaking after the meeting Ramaphosa said, "We also raised an issue of sanctions on Zimbabwe and argued that sanctions that are imposed on Zimbabwe have a collateral damage on us South Africa in the sense that they implement those sanctions against Zimbabwe, it weakens the Zimbabwean economy resulting in Zimbabweans leaving Zimbabwe in droves going to neighbouring countries South Africa, Botswana and Namibia."

Some of the African leaders who called upon the U.S. to remove the 'targeted' sanctions include the current African Union Chair President Macky Sall of Senegal, newly inaugurated Kenyan President

William Ruto, and the Democratic Republic of Congo President Felix Tshisekedi. Standing in for South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, the country's Foreign Affairs minister Naledi Pandor also added her voice stating "South Africa calls for an end to the embargo against Cuba which continues to impede the right to development of her people... In the same vein, we call for an end to unilateral coercive measures against Zimbabwe, which have compounded the problems experienced by the people of Zimbabwe."

The AU Chair President Macky Sall said "The AU once again calls for the lifting of foreign sanctions against Zimbabwe... These harsh measures continue to inflict a sense of injustice against an entire people and aggravate their suffering in these times of deep crisis."

Awu, The Next Big Thing In The Cameroon Entertainment Industry

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

For Awu, the journey to the top echelon of the Cameroon music industry has been one that has come easily. He has had to work his shoes off, for the recognition that he is getting today from his peers and the international community. Being in a small or large bar in Cameroon, there is a chance you have heard of Sidomina, Sidomina remix featuring Stanley Enow, Tchak Me amongst others, all products from Awu.

His performance at an Urban Night is reported to have brought in over 1,500 people in a small hall. Deekayhouse Entertainment frontline artist Awu May this year released his new album «Sounds of Heritage», a 15-track album that received acclaim from Cameroonian critics and the general public. Sounds of Heritage boast artists like PhillBill and Orijana Mara for track 3 and 12 respectively.

In a sit-down with Pan African Visions, Awunganyi Etiendem Nkemasong popularly known as Awu and Awu Sing Song, a Cameroonian-born Makossa fusion singer &



Deekayhouse Entertainment frontline artiste AWU.

Songwriter, opens up on his journey to stardom.

First of all, could we start by knowing who Awu is ?

Awu: Awu is an artist, a songwriter and a musician. I was born in Bamenda and it is where I grew up. My real names are Awunganyi Etiendem

Nkemasong and I hail from the South West Region – my parents come from the South West precisely Lebalelem. I come from a family of ten with my mother being the second wife. I am not the first but from my mom and dad, I am the first. I have two junior sisters and one junior brother. They are the people who inspire me – they

are the people who introduced me to music by playing some old-school songs. I grew up being wired with some of those songs.

You mention that your family is into music and they play a lot of old songs. How was that back then?

Awu: My father played the flute and was a teacher. For my mom, she sings more of our traditional kind of music – when they go to their «country meetings» she will sing for our village people. My aunt happens to be that also. I grew up with her for about three years and I also tapped into freestyle in the dialect. I was surrounded by this kind of energy that influence the person that I became. I had the opportunity to be in the village for three years and I learnt a lot about my African roots, ancestral worshipping and how it works. I learnt how music is being used in traditional religion to uplift the African spirit, myself and if you ask me who I am I will tell you that is where I come from. My early

orientation was a blend of Christianity and tradition.

When you were growing up, what inspired you right from your educational standpoint?

Awu: In school, I was not the guy for music until I got into form 1. I sang for the first time and people loved my voice and I realized that I could hit some notes without stressing. My orientation has always been Bob Marley, Koto Bass, Manu Dibango, Wes Madiko, Makossa and others. What influenced me a lot in secondary school was makossa and reggae music and that is where I focus a lot of my energy. When I was in form 4, I formed a small choir group of three and we started marking some noise in school.

My first school competition was in upper sixth (2012); I ran for carton rouge and I took first at the regionals. In 2012 I recorded my first song Change the World and that was the first moment me being in a recording studio. Whenever you cross a milestone that becomes your moment, for the time being, I had those amazing moment recording in the studio for the first time and the production was good coupled with the fact that I did not study music. I



Awu released a 15 track album, Sounds of Heritage in May this year.

just love music so much; when I want to learn something I just go for it and I put all of my attention and energy to get it done.

In the 2014 FIFA Brazil World Cup, you came out with the song If I can. How was that experience?

Awu: As a teenager, I dreamt a lot and I always like to be on top of the world not like walking over people, but I want to feel like an astronaut in space. The world cup song was not even a world cup song, to begin with; I didn't write it for the world cup. When the song had been worked on visually, I didn't know how people are going to react to it as it was my first solo song. Two years of recording after school I didn't even have some basic things like a phone as when I was doing it back in 2014, I was not informed.

Talk to us about some of the other songs you have released

Awu: After 2014 I released Make some noise in 2015; in 2016 I released Our game; in 2017 I released Sidomina (the audio version) and in 2018 I released the video of Sidomina. Same here I released the remix of sidomina with Stanley Enow. I am always grateful he put me on as I didn't go to him, but he heard the song, loved it and called me that they will love to do a remix of the music. There was a business meeting at Kia Motors back in 2018 and Stanley was like a guest. He spoke about Sidomina and then said he would love to do the

remix which was a surprise to me seeing who was there. We performed the first version together and then he asked for the beat so he could send his voice and that was it.

Let's talk about the album Sounds of Heritage. What is the inspiration behind it?

Awu: Sounds of Heritage is another milestone in my personal development. The idea is tapping into makossa, identifying where I come from fully while expressing who I am. I had to go back to my roots and pick out what I had identified and fuse it with myself and what is out there. We came out with Kosa-fusion at the end of the day. Kosa-fusion is the expression of makossa with elements of afrobeat and other genres of music. We have fifteen tracks on the album and the only track on the album that had been released before then was yayayo. It is a fifteen-track album.

What is your advice to aspiring artists, those who dream of a music career in Cameroon?

Awu: Money is a very good servant but a very bad master. Do not do it for the money because when you do it for the money and at the end of the day don't see the money you will get frustrated. Do it for the love of it; if that is what makes you happy and gets you going.

If you were not an artist, what would you have loved to do?

Awu: I would have loved to study psychology and music too because it is what I love. I would have loved to study cosmology, but we don't have that here. Studying cosmology, you need to study quantum physics does not like I want to be a scientist. I love discovery and knowing how the world is and thinking beyond the planet. I love knowing what is in space and where we really originate from and just love asking questions.

Journalist: After Sounds of Heritage, what is the next project coming up?

Awu: More music and a lot of music is what the audience should expect from me.



More music and a lot of music is what the audience should expect from me, says the super talented Awu.



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A Chat with Trailblazing Zimbabwean Tech-Entrepreneur Shingirayi Kondongwe

By Prince Kurupati

Pan African Visions sat down with Shingirayi Kondongwe, a Zimbabwean tech-entrepreneur for an enlightening interview on how his Youth Opportunities Hub is conscientizing as well as linking African students and professionals with regional and global opportunities for furthering their academic endeavours and professional careers.

Shingirayi Kondongwe is a Tech-entrepreneur, innovator and policy-maker by profession. He is the founder of Youth Opportunities Hub, a digital platform that specializes in youth opportunities around the globe. He is a former key member of the United Nations Development Programme RBA, New York, where he focused on the Sahel region including Central Africa. Shingirayi is also a Tony Elumelu Fellow having been one of the winners in 2019. He is also a fellow of the United Nations Graduate Study Programme, Geneva, Switzerland (class of 2019).

Academically, Shingirayi holds a Master's Degree in Energy Policy from the African Union Commission (class of 2020). He also holds a First-Class Bachelor's Degree in Politics and Public Management (Honours). In addition, he is one of the Directors of Modern World Investments, a property consultancy firm based in Harare.

You are the founder of Youth Opportunities Hub; may you explain the core function of the platform?

Youth Opportunities Hub is the world's leading platform for global youth opportunities such as scholarships, grants, internships, and fellowships among others. The core function is to publicize information concerning these global



Shingirayi Kondongwe is a Tech-entrepreneur, innovator and policy-maker by profession.

opportunities and we do that via our online blog platform, www.youthopportunitieshub.com. As a result, the platform now attracts over three million monthly views.

Youth Opportunities Hub is more than just a platform to access opportunities, but we also venture into important partnerships that advance the welfare of the global youth. We are also creating partnerships with various Youth Organizations around the continent. The most notable partnership that we are working on at the moment is with SAYouth, the largest Youth organization in South Africa responsible for connecting employers to the youths that are in dire need of employment. In conjunction with SAYouth, we are developing a system of tracking progress and impact, for instance, which youths benefited from a training program or employment and how? This data will help us to understand the impact

of our programs in the context of developing youth skills.

Recently, we also partnered with the International University of Applied Sciences (IU) in Germany. IU is currently offering 80% scholarships to prospective students for all Bachelor, Master, or MBA degrees. The idea is to make education accessible to everyone who would like to grow on a personal and professional level. The nature of our partnership is to promote this offer through our platform/website.

What motivated you to launch the Youth Opportunities Hub platform and when did it first go live?

When I came back to Zimbabwe from the diaspora around March 2020, it just took me two months of my stay in the country to realize that not much was being done when it comes to the dissemination of

information regarding youth opportunities. I realized that the problem we have today is getting information to young people, and that's how Youth Opportunities Hub was born. Hence, the platform officially went live in June 2020.

It is also very important to note that the World Bank predicts that as many as 11 million young people will join an expanding labour market every year for the next decade. Thus, there is a need to strengthen skills development systems that improve employability, promote access to employment opportunities and increase incomes for inclusive growth. Against this background, I founded Youth Opportunities Hub in order to promote access to employment opportunities by linking the youths to their potential employers as well as filling the dearth of information when it comes to youth opportunities.

From the time you launched the platform up to now, are you recording successes in relation to the platform's intended objective/s?

Yes, we have managed to set up a team which specifically focus on recording the platform's successes. We have managed to set up channels for testimonials and success stories. As a result, thousands of young people give their success stories and testimonials, and this greatly helps us to understand the exact impact of our work from over 100 countries worldwide where we draw our membership from. Our objective is to assist the global youth to take opportunities that come their way. As Youth Opportunities Hub, believe that "Access to Information" is the passage to success and achievement.

Going into the future, are there any new developments that you are planning to add to the platform perhaps for the benefit and added convenience of all those who rely on the Youth Opportunities Hub for various global opportunities such as scholarships, internships and grants?

We are planning to introduce our Youth Opportunities Hub Scholarship Programme for the less privileged. This is something we have been planning for a long time and we intend to launch the Program by January 2023. For a start, the Scholarship Programme will mostly benefit the countries we receive most website views from and these include South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, Pakistan and the Philippines. A separate scholarship programme for local Zimbabwean students will be launched around June 2023.

We also want to put more effort into enhancing youth skills. We have done that before, but we want to create more youth programs that will give the youths relevant 21st-century skills. Previously, a good example is our Youth Opportunities Hub Country Representative Program (YOHCRP) in which we selected and connected youths from various African countries with the main purpose of giving them free leadership training. Upon successful completion of the program, each participant received Certificates in recognition of their participation.

To expand the opportunities available to African students, especially the disadvantaged, what do you think African governments and civil society should do? Are there any exemplary programs being done across the African continent which you think should spread to other countries?

Not much is being done to benefit African students and this is extremely disappointing. The responsibility is not only for the government and civil society but for the private sector as well. Now, when we are talking of opportunities being expanded to



At Youth Opportunities Hub, we believe that “Access to Information” is the passage to success and achievement, says Shingirayi Kondongwe

disadvantaged African students, we are referring to the availability of work and entrepreneurial opportunities.

It is important to note that the world of work as we used to know it may be in the 70s, 80s and 90s is completely different from the current settings. Without undermining the structural unemployment argument, from my own point of view, rather it is the global labour/economic opportunities that are shrinking coupled with population increase. It is a worrisome situation whereby the youth population is increasing yet the economic opportunities are shrinking and that according to me is the main reason why young people are struggling to get employment. If we go back to the 70s, 80s and 90s, if someone finishes a college degree or any form of training, they were guaranteed of securing employment. The world of work of today offers limited opportunities, it's a survival of the fittest scenario. Now, this is the situation that gave birth to what we call “structural unemployment” whereby those with more years of experience are preferred in comparison to those with little or no experience at all, because of limited economic opportunities.

If we look at Africa, international institutions are not set up for young people. Africa doesn't have financial institutions and markets to serve young people, yet we have a population of 455 million young people and the number is predicted to rise to 850 million by 2050. Today if a young person in Africa goes to a bank, for example, they would be probably asked, ‘How old are you? Oh, you are 21 years old... go and bring your tax history for the last 25 years’. What does that really mean? It means young people are excluded from business financing. How can the continent be ready for new ideas, technology and growth in such a scenario?

However, there are solutions and exemplary programs being implemented in Africa. A good example is the Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Competition, Ignite Africa, and YouthConnekt among others. Another good solution that can be adopted is to create new financial ecosystems around young people. Youth Entrepreneurship Investment Banks (YEIBs) must be created, and these will be new financial institutions that will create support and finance businesses of young people in a

large cycle model throughout, from technical assistance, and debt to equity financing.

On the global stage, do you think African students and professionals are afforded the same opportunities as those from other continents? Do you think Africans are doing enough to take advantage of the availed global opportunities?

Yes, the global arena is fair, and opportunities are being expanded to everyone regardless of their culture, beliefs, race or colour. There is overwhelming evidence! Africans are winning top jobs at international institutions, look at the late Kofi Annan, who ran the United Nations. There is Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, an Ethiopian, has steered the World Health Organization (WHO) through the Covid pandemic. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a Nigerian, heads the World Trade Organization (WTO). Makhtar Diop, a Senegalese, who is presiding over an investment portfolio worth about \$64bn at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) among other examples. We also have African students who are doing quite well in the global arena, breaking records, showcasing their talents, uniqueness and intelligence. However, I am not denying that until recently, the continent had been largely side-lined.

The biggest question is if we are doing enough as the African Continent to take advantage of the availed global opportunities? The answer is we are trying but more can be done. Africa can do more, but we need to rewrite our story as the African Continent in order to achieve our full potential. I think in terms of mindset and attitude, I think we still have a long way to go. Africa is not really marketing itself well in terms of the achievements that it is making and by this, I don't just mean those who are in power, but I am also talking about ordinary citizens who are doing a lot of transformative work. But the Continent's image remains backward, at the same time a lot of progress is being made. What does this mean? It

means that the continent's story is not being told in a positive way to the rest of the world. To take full advantage of the availed global opportunities, we need to tell our story well, we need to market our continent in a very exceptional way.

What do you think is the best route to ensure that all students and professionals who are awarded opportunities abroad return to their home countries upon completion of their studies and internships rather than utilizing their skills in foreign lands?

The best route is to make our continent more attractive in the context of making necessary opportunities available and also creating the right environment for

individual growth and prosperity. Currently, there are so many obstacles that may militate against Africa's potential for ideas, technology and growth thereby preventing African professionals to return home upon completion of their studies and internships. Rather, so many of these African professionals end up plying their trade in Europe, Asia and the Americas.

Bad policies, corruption and poor fiscal management are proving to be serious obstacles. In addition, conflicts in the context of terrorism and interstate wars are also serious obstacles. For instance, if we look at the current situation in DRC (Goma), Nigeria (Northern part), Mozambique (Cabo Delgado), CHAD just to name a few, the situations there are not ripe for employment, growth, new ideas

and growth. New ideas and growth in Africa will thrive where there is peace, good governance, transparency and accountability. The solution is to do away with bad leadership which I believe is the main reason why most of these African Professional prefer to utilize their skills in foreign lands.

Are there any African organizations, institutions and individuals that you want to single out for doing extraordinary work in availing opportunities (scholarships, grants, internships) to Africans?

I think Mr. Tony Elumelu through his foundation namely the TEF, is doing excellent work in availing opportunities for the African youth. Since 2010, the Tony Elumelu

Foundation (TEF) has helped empower African entrepreneurs from across the continent. To date, TEF has distributed more than \$85 million in grants for seed capital and supported more than 1.5 million entrepreneurs from all 54 African countries.

The African Union Commission through the Pan African University (PAU) is also doing well in availing opportunities for the African youth through its annual academic fully funded scholarships. To date, PAU has graduated more than 2000 students from all over the continent. Other notable organizations who are making a difference include UNDP through its youth wing, YouthConnekt, and the African Development Bank through its annual internship programme just to name a few.

Mikumi National Park: Tanzania's Ideal Safari Destination

By Prosper Makene, Dar es Salaam

Mikumi is Tanzania's fourth-largest national park. It's also the most accessible from Dar es Salaam. With almost guaranteed wildlife sightings, it makes an ideal safari destination for those without much time. Mikumi National Park (3,230 sq km - 1,250 sq miles) is part of a much larger ecosystem centred on the uniquely vast Mwalimu Nyerere National Park.

Since the completion of the paved road connecting the park gate with Dar es Salaam, Mikumi National Park has been slated to become a hotspot for tourism in Tanzania. Located between the Uluguru Mountains and the Lumango range, Mikumi is only a few hours drives from Tanzania's largest city.

Emmanuel Mwessa, a local tourist who visited Mikumi National Park said: "The National Park is an ideal Tanzania Safari destination. If you spend a day driving in the park you can see lions, elephants, giraffes, buffaloes, zebras, hippos, boars, wildebeests, impalas, and copious numbers of



Lions in Mikumi National Park.

birds."

He added: "When I entered the park, I asked the guards at the gate which areas are best for viewing that day and they showed me a place where I saw lions around."

«I enjoyed visiting the Mikumi

because it has a wide variety of wildlife that can be easily spotted and also well acclimatized to game viewing," Nicolas Gillirad a local journalist who visited the Mikumi National Park said.

"And good enough, its proximity to Dar es Salaam and the amount of

wildlife that lives within its borders makes Mikumi National Park a popular option for weekend visitors from Dar es Salaam like me, or for business visitors who don't have to spend a long time on an extended safari itinerary."

Gillirad added: "Most visitors who are coming to Mikumi National Park aiming to spot the 'Big Five' (cheetah, lion, elephant, buffalo, and rhino), and they are always not disappointed."

The Hippo pools at the Mikumi National Park provide close access to the mud-loving beasts, and bird-watching along the waterways is particularly rewarding. Mikumi National Park borders the Selous Game Reserve now known as Mwalimu Nyerere National Park and Udzungwa National Park, and the three locations make a varied and pleasant safari circuit.

Swirls of opaque mist hide the advancing dawn. The first shafts of sun decorate the fluffy grass heads rippling across the plain in a russet halo. A herd of zebras, confident in their camouflage at this predatory hour, pose like ballerinas, heads aligned and stripes merging in flowing motion.

Mikumi National Park abuts the northern border of Africa's biggest game reserve – the Selous – and is transected by the surfaced road between Dar es Salaam and Iringa. It is thus the most accessible part of a 75,000 square kilometre (47,000 square miles) tract of wilderness that stretches east almost as far as the Indian Ocean.

The open horizons and abundant wildlife of the Mkata Floodplain, the popular centrepiece of Mikumi, draw frequent comparisons to the more famous Serengeti Plains. Lions survey their grassy kingdom – and the zebra, wildebeest, impala and buffalo herds that migrate across it – from the flattened tops of termite mounds, or sometimes during the rains, from perches high in the trees. Giraffes forage in the isolated acacia stands that fringe the Mkata River, islets of shade favoured also by Mikumi's elephants.

Criss-crossed by a good circuit of game-viewing roads, the Mkata Floodplain is perhaps the most reliable place in Tanzania for sightings of the powerful eland, the world's largest antelope. The equally impressive greater kudu and sable antelope haunt the miombo-covered foothills of the mountains that rise from the park's borders.



More than 400 bird species have been recorded, with such colourful common residents as the lilac-breasted roller, yellow-throated long claw and bateleur eagle joined by a host of European migrants during the rainy season. Hippos are the star attraction of the pair of pools situated 5km north of the main entrance gate, supported by an ever-changing cast of water birds.



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A Lion versus Cock Battle for Cameroon

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

Barely two months to go to the FIFA World Cup images and leaks show the kits countries will be donning in Qatar. Ghana, Tunisia and Senegal, all have released their brand of jerseys but for one African country, Cameroon. With all the economic and socio-political issues in Cameroon today, football is seen as an avenue that takes people's minds of and there is no denying that when it comes to international relations, many countries know Cameroon through football.

Since early July, the country has been without an equipment manufacturer for the football teams, a situation that looks increasingly uncertain for the Indomitable Lions ahead of the Qatar expedition. The blackout of the equipment supplier for the country comes after Cameroon Football Federation, FECAFOOT, president Samuel Eto'o brought an end to the contract with French company Le Coq Sportif.

«The president of Fecafoot plans to explore new collaboration opportunities with an equipment manufacturer that respects its commitments and is proud to join its image with the label of the national football teams of Cameroon,” the statement reads.

Under former FA president Seidou Mbombo Njoya, French company Coq Sportif became the official kit supplier for the Indomitable Lions. This new partnership was not appreciated by Cameroonians who found the French designs boring and uncharacteristic of the extraordinary nature of the Indomitable Lions. Njoya, according to many Cameroonians, is an administrator with no head or even a foot in Cameroon's football culture.

“The error had already been done with the former regime of Seidou Mbombo Njoya who signed the contract and also the timeframe that the past administration signed the contract which was worrying,” Aka Ntui Ayamba, a journalist with Cam1TV in Limbe told Pan African Visions.



Cameroon Football Federation President Samuel Eto'o speaks during an extraordinary General Assembly.

«I don't know the dotted lines in which the contract was signed and I am sure he had legal advice from his team before severing the ties with le Coq Sportif. It seems Le Coq Sportif also had some clauses in the contract that puts FECAFOOT on a negative side.»

Going to the World Cup Eto'o says he does not want le Coq Sportif and Le Coq Sportif says there are the ones in charge and the problem continues to drag on if we will have a (World Cup) jersey or no,” He added.

The new FECAFOOT-Le Coq Sportif deal was signed on June 7, 2019, in Montpellier and was expected to last until 2023. But the collaboration has stalled since the signing and the Minister of Sports, Narcisse Mouelle Kombi, asked for explanations from FECAFOOT in October 2019. Narcisse Mouelle Kombi said he noted a real deficit in the quantity of equipment and sports kits made available to the national teams during some major international sports competitions, Sylvain Andzongo reported

With all the uncertainties, some

Cameroonians think that FECAFOOT and Le Coq Sportif will need to come to a consensus or we risked going to the World Cup and using “old jerseys”. And with the legal battle launched by Le Coq Sportif and FECAFOOT showing no signs of buckling, one would have assumed that Samuel Eto'o would have met with them to discuss how they could bring back the life that was once in the kits. Since he is no angel, maybe he's also just trying to work with his people, as some observers have said. Who knows?

Le Coq Sportif sues Cameroon

Despite getting a new equipment manufacturer for the national team, FECAFOOT is still embroiled in a legal battle with its former equipment manufacturer in Le Coq Sportif with the latter bent on seeing its contract to the end.

«We inform you that we are using the Cameroon Football Federation, to obtain the continuation of its contractual commitments until the natural expiry of our contract, that is December 31, 2023,» the France-

based company said in a statement.

The French sports equipment company is hoping to claim damage of 9 billion, 825 million FCFA. “We had not failed to draw the attention of the FECAFOOT as to the necessarily wrongful and abusive nature of such a termination, insofar as we have not failed to any of the contractual commitments that fell to us as equipment supplier of the Cameroon Federation for over three years,” wrote Marc-Henri Beausire boss of Coq Sportif.

The president of the French brand had already referred to the president of FECAFOOT on July 11 to invite him to reconsider his decision. “We have already mandated our usual counsel to initiate all legal proceedings to obtain compensation for the damage suffered, which unfortunately will have significant consequences for the FECAFOOT,” warned the president of the firm.

The move to take out Le Coq Sportif is a bad one. I have been supporting his actions but for this one, because a couple of months or years to go to the end of the contract and yet he

has terminated it and now we have another court case to grapple with,» Bambot Valentine, a sports journalist with CBS Radio in Buea said.

«It is confusing (the situation of who is dressing Cameroon ahead of the World Cup). It is a very bad situation we find ourselves in. Le Coq Sportif says they have already produced a jersey for Cameroon ahead of the world cup yet we have another company One All Sports that is coming in. who finally is the right person to produce the jersey, we are unaware.»

Jemea Teke, a sports journalist with Entersport24 says the saga between FECAFOOT and Le Coq Sportif is “a complex situation because we don’t know if there was a clause that gave either party to terminate the contract without any consensus.”

“What FECAFOOT should do is to call Le Coq Sportif on the round table and try to negotiate a settlement. Even as FECAFOOT is tabling their case that the jersey that the Lionesses had to wear for the AWCON was not available, FECAFOOT would have called a round table discussion and informed Le Coq Sportif that they have broken a clause in the contract and that we cannot continue the partnership but that was not made.”

One All Sports enters football



FECAFOOT and One All Sports have signed a contract that will run till 2025.

equipment manufacturing with Cameroon

After the ties were severed with the French equipment manufacturer, reports indicated that Puma was willing to step in but in the end, American company One All Sports won the rights to equip the five-time African champions. More than 10 companies had applied to become the country’s equipment manufacturer including Cameroonian brands according to reports. But One All Sports is said to have beaten the others after making an offer more

than the others did.

So, what are One All Sports offering Cameroon? To start with, the American company has offered a substantially high amount of money for the deal. “Given the confidentiality contractually required by its partner, FECAFOOT refrains from publishing the exact amount of the transaction. But it can ensure that it is the most lucrative equipment contract ever concluded by Cameroon” a statement from FECAFOOT noted

In addition to the provision of money, One All Sports will once

a year, supply equipment for the national teams and also a first-class bus for the senior men’s football team. They will equally make gadgets and uniforms available to fans at affordable prices.

While congratulating FECAFOOT president Samuel Eto’o for this huge deal, former Indomitable Lions player Enoch Eyong is hopeful that one day an African equipment manufacturer will be able to dress the national teams. He said: “This move is a temporal solution. I look forward to the day when Cameroon will be the first African country to launch its brand. Germany produces Adidas and is dressed by what they produce, the U.S.A is the centre for Nike, and the National team is dressed by Nike. I think it’s about time we Africans start valuing our brand and creativity, especially Cameroon.”

With the “Bafia» dance that is presently ensuing, fans have been left dumbfounded and are hoping this battle between FECAFOOT and Le Coq Sportif should be brought to end. Cameroon is noted for office fighting when it concerns football under the previous regime and since the new regime came in, they have looked to change that trajectory. But this legal battle between FECAFOOT and Le Coq Sportif is taking that trend backwards.

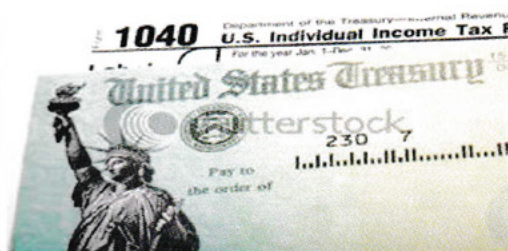


Uncertainty still persist as to which jersey Cameroon will wear at the Qatar World Cup



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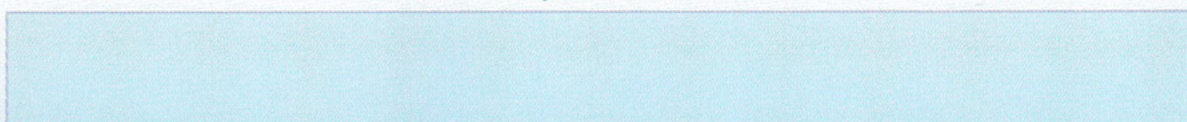
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