

MAG 0623 - JUNE 2023

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## KESEENA CHENGADU

### On the THE RISE OF ÓRAMA

#### **NIGERIA**

*Tinubu Takes Charge*

#### **MALAWI**

*Chihana Up For  
Presidential Run*

*Dussey Floats African  
Political Alliance*

*Zoom On 15th CCA  
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## PAN AFRICAN VISIONS

7614 Green Willow Court, Hyattsville, MD  
20785

Tel: **2404292177**,  
email: **pav@panafricanvisions.com**,  
**editor@panafricanvisions.com**

**Managing Editor**  
Ajong Mbapndah L

**Contributors**  
Wallace Mawire  
Deng Machol  
Papisdaff Abdullah  
Ajayi Olyinka  
Prince Kuripati  
Hategeka Moses  
Asong Zelifac  
Samuel Ouma  
Primus Tazanu  
Jorge Joaquim  
Ishmael Sallieu  
Koroma,

Bah Uzman Unis,  
Mohammed M Mupenda,  
Pierre Afadhali  
Jean d'Amour Mbonyinshuti  
Nevson Mpofu  
Boris Esono Nwenfor  
Amos Fofung  
Jean d'Amour Mugabo  
Jessica Ahedor

**Advertising**  
Email:  
**marketing@  
panafricanvisions.com**

**Graphic Designer**  
Atemnkeng Jerry M,  
(Young Jerry)  
EC designs, Abudhabi - UAE  
+971 54 739 2997  
**atemjerry@outlook.com**

## Musings On A Union At 60

By Ajong Mbatndah L

On 25th May 2023, Africa and its diaspora celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Organization of the African Unity -OAU and its successor the African Union -AU. May 25 is a very important day in the history of Africa as it honours the vision and pan-Africanism of the Founding Members of the OAU-AU which laid the groundwork for the African renaissance and its socio economic and political development, AU Commission Chair Moussa Faki said in Addis Ababa.

Sixty is roughly the equivalent life expectancy for men in Africa, and for the continental body, the anniversary in a sense was more of stock taking and sober reflection than unbridled fanfare. From Chair Moussa Faki himself came some very sobering realities in remarks at a commemorative event at the AU Headquarters in Addis.

"Many of our Member States are in crisis. They are prey to deadly internal conflicts, fueled by the unbridled quest for supreme power, with the corollary of significant loss of human life. Beyond their political and social fragmentation, the significant elements of their national heritage are being destroyed and drowned in sometimes bloody pain," Faki said.

"When this tragic picture is compounded by other negative factors, such as the democratic decline through Unconstitutional Changes of Government, with their litany of oppression and gagging of freedoms, insecurity, the spread of terrorism, violent extremism, the uncontrolled circulation of arms, the harmful effects of Climate change, we have good reasons to place this celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the OAU, in the light of a meditation in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, who are forced to displacement or exile because of conflicts," Faki charged further.

For the immense potential that the continent has, many will agree that



Ajong Mbatndah L, Managing Editor

at 60, things should be different for the continent at many levels. How are a people known for their legendary hospitality involved in so many bloody conflicts? How come a continent endowed with abundant natural and human resources is still finding it so hard to meet its basic needs? Why is it so hard for Africans to freely circulate within their own continent? Why do African leaders jet out for medical treatment at the slightest sign of bad health when their own sons and daughters are amongst the best physicians in the world and serve in top hospitals? The paradoxes are just too many for a union at 60.

"During the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the OAU in 2013, our leaders, by adopting Agenda 2063, coupled it with an ambitious project, that of «Silencing the Guns by 2020» in order not to leave to the future generations the burden of war and insecurity," says Faki. In 2023, we still hear the loud sounds of guns, we still see a surge in military rules across the continent. We still see a growing number of leaders fueling internal strife and tensions by tinkering with established constitutional term limits to remain in power.

For afro pessimists the challenging state of things in the continent negates any talk or signs of hope. On the contrary, there are a myriad of reasons to remain hopeful for the

continent. In Agenda 2063, in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, AfCFTA, in the Afreximbank backed African Payment and Settlement System-PAPSS to unclog the wheel of trade, and more, there has been no shortage of ideas and programs that can profoundly transform the continent. What seems to be lacking is the political will and leaders who put country and continent first before self.

That Africa is moving forward is seen in another transition of power from President Buhari to Tinubu in Nigeria. That the elections had profound issues is no news, that it left many, especially partisans of Peter Obi disappointed and scared is understandable. That Nigeria had a peaceful transition although there is ongoing litigation should be the bigger take home point.

As the most populous African nation and economic engine, Nigeria sets the pace. If it gets it right, Africa gets it right, if things go wrong, the impact will reverberate across the entire continent. That the democratic experiment embarked upon with the presidency of Obasanjo in 1999 is still pushing on despite the bumps should be a source of hope. That the date of May 29 is now a tradition in Nigeria for power to change hands or for a leader to be sworn in is beyond symbolic.

As much as we harp on the issue of leadership, moving the continent forward is a task for every African. That is what Órama CEO Keseena Chengadu has been doing. Accompanied by a dynamic team of talented and visionary young Africans, Chengadu has grown Órama into a powerful corporate engine in facilitating access to Mauritius, Africa's financial hub and friendliest business destination.

"Mauritius plays a crucial role in facilitating significant capital inflows into mainland Africa that would otherwise be challenging or even impossible. This contribution alone has resulted in the creation of

approximately 4.2 million jobs across the continent," Chengadu tells PAV magazine.

As a sign of its growing clout Keseena Chengadu and her team have been actively present in diverse business themed events across the continent, and recently opened a new office in South Africa.

With a rising energetic populace comprising mostly youth, rising middle and upper class with economic and purchasing power, new discoveries and exploration within the energy sector, advancement in technology and innovation, awakening conscience of the African people, increased pragmatic leaders, AFCTA agenda 2063, and continuous push for the reunification of the continent, immigration reforms and the abundance of resources in Africa opportunities, are bound, prospects are good and Africa still holds the torch as being the future, says Keseena Chengadu.

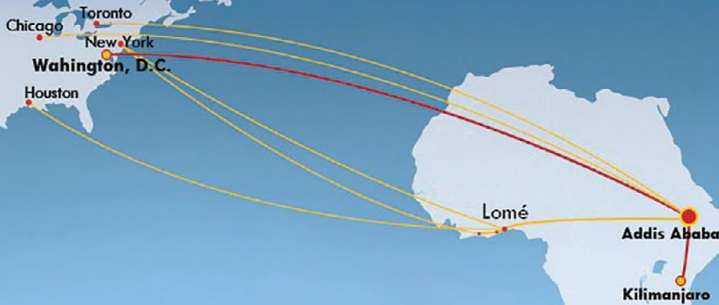
Looking across the continent, the optimism of Keseena Chengadu is buoyed by the recent inauguration of Dangote Refinery Complex in Nigeria. With the capacity to handle 650,000 barrels per day, energy experts think the refinery has game changing potentials beyond the spheres of Nigeria.

We see in the upcoming Council on Africa's US-Africa Business Summit in Botswana a sign of growing importance for the continent when it comes to global trade. From Angola becoming the 21st African Member State and the 1st Lusophone Member State of pan-African insurer, Africa Trade Insurance Agency – ATI, to the African Energy Chamber taking its invest in African Energy crusade to Paris, the floating of the African Political Alliance by the Togolese Foreign Minister Robert Dussey, and the spirited fight by Africans Rising for less border restrictions in Africa, there are multiple reasons for the continent to remain hopeful. As dark as the clouds maybe sometimes, the silver lining is there -Happy Reading. \_\_\_\_\_



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# Tinubu's Nigeria: A Promised Dreamland To Be Evaluated On A Self-crafted Yardstick

By Andrew Nsoseka

In his inaugural address to the nation on May 29, Nigeria's new President, Bola Ahmed Tinubu unveiled plans for Nigeria, plans which in many people's minds will make Nigeria a dreamland equipped with most of the things every segment of the Nigerian population has yearned for. Such bold promises are thus, what alongside campaign promises, his administration will be judged on.

From ending acute poverty, strengthening security, fighting terror, prioritising national unity, solving acute electricity problems, creating jobs, boosting employment, making Nigeria an investors' go-to place, fighting corruption, boosting infrastructural development, setting and attaining higher GDP growth, making agriculture lucrative, putting in place a favourable monetary policy, Tinubu promised Nigerians and friends of Nigeria much of what they mostly just dream of.

On issues of governance and relationship with the everyday Nigerian, he promised to lead, saying there will be no dictatorship. To his political opponents who are still in court challenging his victory, Tinubu said he is extending a hand to them, and at the same time, defending their constitutional right to challenge the results of the election in court.

Tinubu exhorted his fellow citizens to look forward with optimism, in their drive to build a better Nigeria that outlives them.

"As a nation, we have long ago decided to march beyond the dimness of night into the open day of renewed national hope. The question we now ask ourselves is whether to remain faithful to the work inherent in building a better society or retreat into the shadows of our unmet potential.

"For me, there is but one answer. We are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rob ourselves of our finest destiny. This nation's journey has been shaped by the



*We are too great a nation and too grounded as a people to rob ourselves of our finest destiny, says President Tinubu.*

prayers of millions, and the collective sacrifices of us all. We have endured hardships that would have made other societies crumble.

"Yet, we have shouldered the heavy burden to arrive at this **SUBLIME** moment where the prospect of a better future merges with our improved capacity to create that future. To the surprise of many but not to ourselves, we have more firmly established this land as a democracy in both word and deed", he said.

Tinubu also made a promise to govern on Nigerians' behalf and not rule over them. "We shall consult and dialogue but never dictate. We shall reach out to all but never put down a single person for holding views contrary to our own", he said.

To Tinubu, his administration will mend and heal the nation, and not tear and injure it. The new President promised to not only build an economically empowered Nigeria, but also bring in aspects that improve

Nigeria's way of life, encourages compassion toward one another, and duly reward collective effort to resolve the social ills that threaten to tear the country apart.

## **Tinubu's Progressive Good Governance Project**

In his inaugural speech, Tinubu outlined some bold plans and priorities his administration will set out to achieve. This will thus be the yardstick they will be judged with.

Tinubu said his administration will govern Nigeria by the constitution, and defend it from terror and all forms of criminality. On the economy, he promised to remodel it to bring about growth and development through job creation, food security and an end to extreme poverty.

Tinubu also promised to feature women and youths in his administration prominently. He also promised to continue taking proactive steps such as championing a credit

culture to discourage corruption while strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of Nigeria's various anti-corruption agencies.

On the issue of security, Tinubu said it shall be a top priority of his administration. "Security shall be the top priority of our administration because neither prosperity nor justice can prevail amidst insecurity and violence. To effectively tackle this menace, we shall reform both our security doctrine and its architecture. We shall invest more in our security personnel, and this means more than an increase in number. We shall provide, better training, equipment, pay and firepower", he promised.

Nigeria's new president also promised to target a higher GDP growth and to significantly reduce unemployment. This, he said will be accomplished by carrying out budgetary reforms aimed at stimulating the economy without engendering inflation.



He said an industrial policy that will utilise the full range of fiscal measures to promote domestic manufacturing and lessen import dependency will be ushered in.

Tinubu promised to make electricity accessible and affordable to businesses and homes alike. He said his administration will double power generation, transmission and distribution networks.

To investors in Nigeria, President Tinubu said his government shall review all their complaints about multiple taxations and various anti-investment inhibitions. "We shall ensure that investors and foreign businesses repatriate their hard-earned dividends and profits home", he said.

On Jobs, Tinubu said his administration must create meaningful opportunities for its youth. He said they shall honour their campaign commitment of one million new jobs in the digital economy and also work with the National Assembly to fashion an omnibus Jobs and Prosperity bill. This bill, he said, will

give his administration the policy space to embark on labour-intensive infrastructural improvements, encourage light industry and provide improved social services for the poor, elderly and vulnerable.

Concerning the agricultural sector that employs millions of Nigerians like it does most of Africa in rural areas, Tinubu said rural incomes shall be secured by commodity exchange boards guaranteeing minimal prices for certain crops and animal products. He also promised that a nationwide programme for storage and other facilities to reduce spoilage and waste will be undertaken. "Agricultural hubs will be created throughout the nation to increase production and engage in value-added processing. The livestock sector will be introduced to best modern practices and steps taken to minimise the perennial conflict over land and water resources in this sector" he said in his speech.

Giving a nod to efforts made by the outgoing Buhari administration on infrastructure, Tinubu said he will take the relay to keep the progress



*Nigeria's new President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, left, receives Nigeria flags from former Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, during the inauguration ceremony in Abuja, Monday, May 29, 2023.*

toward national networks of roads, rail and ports.

#### Ending Fuel Subsidy

The incoming Tinubu administration promised to end fuel subsidies, saying it favours the rich and not the nation's poor.

"Subsidy can no longer justify its ever-increasing costs in the wake of drying resources. We shall instead re-channel the funds into better investment in public infrastructure, education, health care and jobs that will materially improve the lives of millions."

Tinubu also promised to clean Nigeria's monetary policy. He said Nigeria's Central Bank must work towards a unified exchange rate, to direct funds away from arbitrage into meaningful investment in the plant, equipment and jobs that power the real economy. He said interest rates need to be reduced to increase investment and consumer purchasing in ways that sustain the economy at a higher level.

On Nigeria's recent currency swap, he said it was too harshly applied by the CBN given the number of unbanked Nigerians. He promised to review the policy, and that in the meantime, his administration will treat both currencies as legal tender.

On foreign policy, Tinubu said it will focus on encouraging peace and security, especially in the West African Sub-region. This he said, will be done by working closely with ECOWAS and the AU.



*The lofty promises from the Tinubu-Shettima administration will be highly scrutinized by a restive populace. Photo courtesy.*

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# Adesina's Blueprint To Tinubu On Rebuilding Nigeria's Economy

***The starting point must be macroeconomic and fiscal stability. Unless the economy is revived and fiscal challenges addressed boldly, resources to develop will not be there. No bird can fly if its wings are tied.***

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

The President of the African Development Bank, AfDB, Dr Akinwumi Adesina says to rebuild Nigeria's economy, the country needs to reduce the cost of governance, build world-class educational institutions, and accelerate skills development in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, as well as in ICT and computer coding, which will shape the jobs of the future.

Dr Adesina made the remarks following the Inauguration Lecture for the New President of Nigeria Bola Tinubu. The Nigerian economist said the starting point must be macroeconomic and fiscal stability while indicating that «unless the economy is revived and fiscal challenges addressed boldly, resources to develop will not be there. No bird can fly if its wings are tied.»

«Nigeria currently faces huge fiscal deficits, estimated at 6% of GDP. This has been due to huge federal and state government expenditures, lower receipts due to dwindling revenues from the export of crude oil, vandalism of pipelines and illegal bunkering of crude oil,” said Dr Akinwumi Adesina.

«According to Nigeria's Debt Management Office, Nigeria now spends 96% of its revenue servicing debt, with the debt-to-revenue ratio rising from 83.2% in 2021 to 96.3% by 2022. Some will argue that the debt to GDP ratio at 34% is still low compared to other countries in Africa, which is correct; but no one pays their debt using GDP.”

Nigeria's new president is inheriting a country with profound challenges. Unemployment has soared, and financial insecurity has spread across Africa's largest economy under former President Muhammadu Buhari.

Tinubu — the former governor of



Lagos, Nigeria's economic hub — has promised to build on Buhari's efforts to deliver democratic dividends to citizens in a country where deadly security crises, widespread poverty and hunger have left many frustrated and angry.

«We have endured hardship

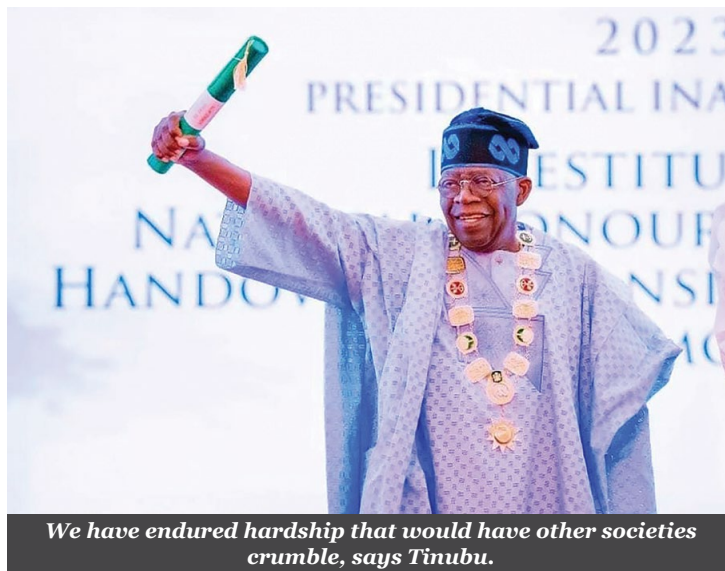
that would have other societies crumble,» said Tinubu. «Our mission is to improve our ways of life in a manner that nurtures our humanity, encourages compassion towards one another and duly rewards our collective efforts.»

«However, the vision for Nigeria's

economic rejuvenation goes beyond macroeconomic policies. I envision Nigeria transforming from a primary goods exporter into a formidable powerhouse that exports a variety of processed goods. This metamorphosis will propel us to the forefront of industrialisation, creating numerous job opportunities and fostering sustainable economic growth,” Tinubu added.

For Dr Adesina, the African Development Bank is currently working with Central Banks and countries to design and support the establishment of Youth Entrepreneurship Investment Banks. He said: “These will be new financial institutions, run by young, professional, and highly competent experts and bankers, to develop and deploy new financial products and services for businesses and ventures of young people.”

“Several African countries plan to establish Youth Entrepreneurship





*For faster growth, Nigeria must decisively fix the issue of power, once and for all, Adesina advises.*

Investment Banks. Nigeria should establish the Youth Entrepreneurship Investment Bank.”

### **Urgent need to reduce the cost of governance.**

Dr Adesina, who previously served as Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development said the cost of governance in Nigeria is way too high and should be drastically reduced to free up more resources for development as Nigeria is spending very little on development.

“Today, Nigeria is ranked among countries with the lowest human development index in the world, with a rank of 167 among 174 countries globally, according to the World Bank 2022 Public Expenditure Review report,” Dr Adesina, Honorary Doctor of Science said.

“To meet Nigeria's massive infrastructure needs, according to the report, will require \$3 trillion by 2050. According to the report, at the current rate, it would take Nigeria 300 years to provide its minimum level of infrastructure needed for development. All living Nigerians today, and many generations to come, will be long gone by then.”

“Governments need to assure

effective social contracts by delivering quality public services. It is not the amount collected, it is how it is spent, and what is delivered. Nations that grow better run effective governments that assure social contracts with their citizens.”

### **The most diversified economy lacks energy.**

The decades-long struggle to establish reliable power supplies in the West African country has been compounded by energy market volatility caused by supply disruptions triggered by the war in Ukraine. But even before that crisis, Nigeria has faced and continues to face frequent power outages.

Since the privatisation of the national grid in 2013, the nation's electricity system has collapsed no less than 130 times with a lack of electricity representing the biggest and most intractable problem facing the country. Regular power cuts can last for hours, days or even months, while millions of people have no access to any electricity at all.

In December 2022, high-profile Nigerian investor and entrepreneur Tony Elumelu blamed the unfolding crisis on systemic corruption and

mismanagement of the country's energy sector and slammed the government's “endemic corruption” for a decision by oil majors Shell and Eni to declare force majeure on key Nigerian oil flows.

“For faster growth, Nigeria must decisively fix the issue of power, once and for all. There is no justification for Nigeria not having enough power,” Dr Adesina said. “The abnormal has become normal. Nigeria's private sector is hampered by the high cost of power. Providing electricity will make Nigerian industries more competitive. And it is not brain surgery.”

“I commend the Government of Nigeria on the recent commissioning of several power projects. But there is still much to do. Nigeria should invest massively in renewable energy, especially solar. The African Development Bank is implementing a \$25 billion Desert-to-Power program to provide electricity for 250 million people across the Sahel, including the northern parts of Nigeria.”

### **Human capital is Nigeria's asset.**

If properly harnessed, human capital development is capable of unlocking Nigeria's potential.

Nigeria's population of more than 200 million people is expected to quadruple by 2050, reaching 733 million by 2100, making it the world's third most populated country after China and India. What this implies is that the country has the potential to have even more human capital that would compete favourably globally if managed right.

“The best asset of Nigeria is not its natural resources; Nigeria's best asset is its human capital. We must invest heavily in human capital to build up the skills Nigeria needs to be globally competitive, in a rapidly digitized global economy,” Dr Adesina noted.

“We must build world-class educational institutions, and accelerate skills development in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, as well as in ICT and computer coding, which will shape the jobs of the future.”

Today, over 75% of the population in Nigeria is under the age of 35. This presents a demographic advantage. But it must be turned into an economic advantage.

“Nigeria must create youth-based wealth. We must move away from the so-called “youth empowerment programs”. Youths do not need handouts. They need investments. The current banking systems do not and will not lend to the youth. Special funds, while palliative in approach, are not systemic and are also not sustainable,” Dr Adesina said.

“What's needed to unleash the entrepreneurship of the youth in Nigeria are brand new financial ecosystems that understand, value, promote and provide financial instruments and platforms for nurturing business ventures of the youth at scale.”

“The African Development Bank and partners including Agence Francaise de Developpement and the Islamic Development Bank launched the \$618 million I-DICE program to develop digital and creative enterprises. They will create 6 million jobs and add \$6.3 billion to Nigeria's economy.”



# Faki Calls For Unity As AU Clocks 60

By Samuel Ouma

The African Union Commission Chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat called for unity among Africans during the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), currently known as African Union, 60th anniversary held on May 25, 2022.

“On this solemn day, the celebration of which plunges us back into the spirit of the Founding Fathers of the OAU, I would like to amplify their voices, which continue to reverberate, beyond their graves, by making a vibrant appeal to all of us, Africans of the Continent and of the Diaspora, so that the strength of our unity and our long-awaited and expected solidarity operate, henceforth, as indispensable levers for our power and emancipation,” said Faki.

The African Union celebrated its 60th anniversary under the theme «Our Africa, Our Future» in all 55 African member states.

Faki said the celebration honoured the role and commitment of the continental organisation's founders and many other Africans and the diaspora who have worked tirelessly to promote political and economic progress in Africa.



*Faki said the celebration honoured the role and commitment of the continental organisation's founders and many other Africans and the diaspora .Photo AU twitter.*

He warned that Africa should not be used as a geostrategic battleground to establish a new Cold War, which would be extremely harmful to the success of multilateralism, on which global peace and security rely.

Several superpowers, like the US, UK, China, Ukraine, France,

Germany, etc., are in the race to boost ties with Africa. Faki claimed these countries are using debt services and the fall in prices of raw materials to gain entry into the continent.

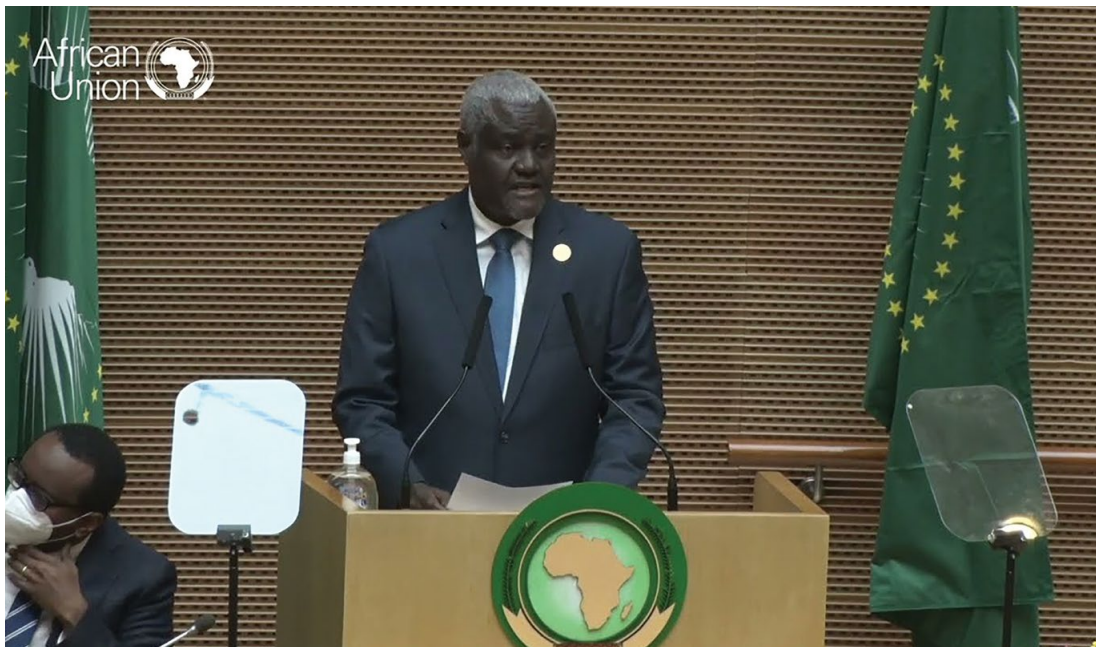
“In this international context of confrontation of divergent geopolitical interests, the will of each

side threatens to transform Africa into a geostrategic battleground, thereby, recreating a new version of the Cold War that is very detrimental to the effectiveness of multilateralism, on which global peace and security depend,” added Faki.

“In this zero-sum game, where the gains of others would translate into losses for Africa, we must resist all forms of instrumentalisation of our Member States, taken individually and collectively, by sharing the strong conviction that our future remains and will depend on the patient and methodical building of our unity.”

At the same time, Faki highlighted some of Africa's achievements, such as independence and victory over Apartheid, considerable economic and technological advances, sports, arts, and the continent's expanding worldwide position.

He, however, acknowledged negative factors that continue to drag the continent behind, such as democratic decline through unconstitutional changes of government, with their litany of oppression and gagging of freedoms, insecurity, the spread of terrorism,



*In this international context of confrontation of divergent geopolitical interests, the will of each side threatens to transform Africa into a geostrategic battleground, says Faki.*



violent extremism, the uncontrolled circulation of arms, and the harmful effects of climate change.

Faki urged African leaders to identify the core causes of the following issues and take steps to address them.

“In the face of such a combination of circumstances and events that are asymmetrical to the proclaimed will of our leaders to build the Africa we want, there is need for reflection on the way to courageously identify the root causes but above all to endeavor to translate into deeds the pledge made, that of our Leaders to see Africa united,” he reiterated.

Despite these challenges, Faki stated that Africa continues to be distinguished by its high level of resilience, citing how African countries handled the Covid-19 pandemic as an example.

“Africa was able, despite alarmist forecasts, at the time, to hold firm in the face of the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic. Better still, it seized the opportunity of this misfortune to rethink its Health Strategy, in a concerted action by our Heads of State and Government. An evidence that if Africa wants, it can, whatever



*Right to left, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission greets Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.*

the nature and type of adversity it may have to face,” stated Faki.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was established on May 25, 1963, when 32 leaders of independent African states and representatives of the African liberation forces met in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, to establish a political and economic road map for

the continent’s full independence and political and economic development.

To hasten the progress of economic and political integration in Africa, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU called a special session in 1999.

The Organization of African Unity’s Heads of State and Government

published «The Sirte Declaration» on September 9, 1999, urging the creation of an African Union.

Three years later, the African Union (AU) was formally established in 2002 during the Durban Summit as the OAU’s replacement.

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ngt\_press@yahoo.com  
www.nkemnjiglobaltech.com

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# A Mix Bag At 60 For The African Union

*The African Union strives in pursuing Africa-wide socio-economic and political stability alongside security and advancing the African identity.*

*By Boris Esono Nwenfor*

**B**UEA, Cameroon – The Chairperson of the AU Commission, formerly Organisation of African Unity, now known as the African Union (AU), Moussa Faki Mahamat, has called for resistance to all forms of instrumentalization of member states, stating that Africa must not become a “geostrategic battleground”.

“In this zero-sum game, where the gains of others would translate into losses for Africa, we must resist all forms of instrumentalisation of our Member States, taken individually and collectively, by sharing the strong conviction that our future remains and will depend on the patient and methodical building of our unity. Africa must unite, said Kwame Nkrumah,” Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission said in celebration of AU Day on May 25.

“The imperative duty that challenges us, today, with insistence, in this international environment marked by identity withdrawals and outbursts of protectionism, is to give real, dynamic content to this unity, if



*A conflicting balance sheet for the continental body at 60.*

we are determined to build the Africa we want.”

May 25 is Africa Day, commemorating the establishment of the OAU in 1963 – a journey that has seen the organisation grow rapidly

with its members working together to surmount common challenges and achieve collective goals. While the African Union stands testimony to progress, all the backsliding about the continent being a lumbering

behemoth mostly boils down to who shapes the narrative.

“When this tragic picture is compounded by other negative factors, such as the democratic decline through Unconstitutional Changes of Government, with their litany of oppression and gagging of freedoms, insecurity, the spread of terrorism, violent extremism, the uncontrolled circulation of arms, the harmful effects of Climate change, we have good reasons to place this celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the OAU, in the light of a meditation in solidarity with our brothers and sisters, who are forced to displacement or exile because of conflicts,” Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission said.

## ***Africa Union Must Remain United.***

Various leaders who took the rostrum called for unity as the African Union strives in pursuing Africa-wide socio-economic and political stability alongside security and advancing the African identity.



*Unity is no more a catchphrase but a means of survival in an increasingly complex world, says Ethiopian PM Abiy.*



Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed underscored that unity is “no more a catchphrase but a means of survival” in an increasingly complex world. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa echoed Abiy, appealing for unity and to “uphold the bonds that frame our destiny.”

«Can we proclaim we are free when our people are still in the grips of poverty and our systems are shocked by corruption, ineptness and indifference? Can we yet assert independence while we seek beyond ourselves and our continental borders to deliver us from the challenges we are faced with?» Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said.

“We use Africa Day to reaffirm the importance of consolidating democracy and consolidating good governance across Africa,” South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa said.

«I think there has been a lack of commitment among the political allies that are mandated to advance Africa's regional agenda. Among the challenges is the lack of political will by leaders and in many cases, they form the political elite mandated to champion the direction of the African Union, thereby making it difficult for the AU to act accordingly against challenges faced by the continent,” said Professor Adeoye Akinola, an expert on African affairs in an interview for VOA.

“There is also this understanding in Africa that sovereignty of AU members must be respected, but several African leaders who are members of the AU are perpetrators of the challenges faced by the continent.”

“On this solemn day, the celebration of which plunges us back into the spirit of the Founding Fathers of the OAU, I would like to amplify their voices, which continue to reverberate, beyond their graves, by making a vibrant appeal to all of us, Africans of the Continent and of the Diaspora, so that the strength of our unity and our long-awaited and expected solidarity operate, henceforth, as indispensable levers for our power and emancipation,” Moussa Faki Mahamat added.



*We use Africa Day to reaffirm the importance of consolidating democracy and consolidating good governance across Africa, says South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.*

#### Mix bag of achievements

The AU has put cornerstones in place towards realising the goals of the founders. The end of coups and civil wars; working towards establishing an African common market; and getting Africa to speak with one voice in global governance are worthy goals to persist in pursuing.

The AU has been instrumental as dozens of its ad hoc military missions have helped governments with the suppression of terrorism from the Sahel to northern Mozambique. Various AU and regional economic community peacekeepers have served in the Democratic Republic of Congo's numerous civil wars for decades.

“I know that despite the difficulties of all kinds, Africa remains characterised by its great capacity for resilience. It was able, despite alarmist forecasts, at the time, to hold firm in the face of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Better still, it seized the opportunity of this misfortune to rethink its Health Strategy, in a concerted action by our Heads of State and Government. Evidence that if Africa wants, it can, whatever the nature and type of adversity it may have to face,” Moussa

Faki Mahamat said.

“This is what the AU records show through the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the First Decade of Agenda 2063. Significant progress has been made in various areas. They could have been greater, had it not been for the exogenous shocks that accentuated the fragilities which our efforts were already working to overcome.”

«We work toward addressing conflicts, from early warning systems to management of the conflict, and also resolution. We also focus on post-conflict reconstruction,» the head of the African Union's Peace and Security Council, Neema Chusi, tells TRT Afrika.

In sixty years, the African Union has achieved important results but has proved ineffective in preventing, or at least sanctioning, coups and civil wars on the continent. The hoped-for greater unity of the continent has often collided with substantial differences in terms of the development of various macro-regions, with even growing tensions, for example between the countries of the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, among others) and the sub-

Saharan ones.

One failure of the AU is in not preventing serial coups. There have been more than 200 coups following the era of independence in the 1960s. The obvious reason is that the continental body never sends a military intervention to suppress the putschists, to capture them and bring them to trial for treason. It limits itself to diplomatic pressures against them, such as suspending their membership.

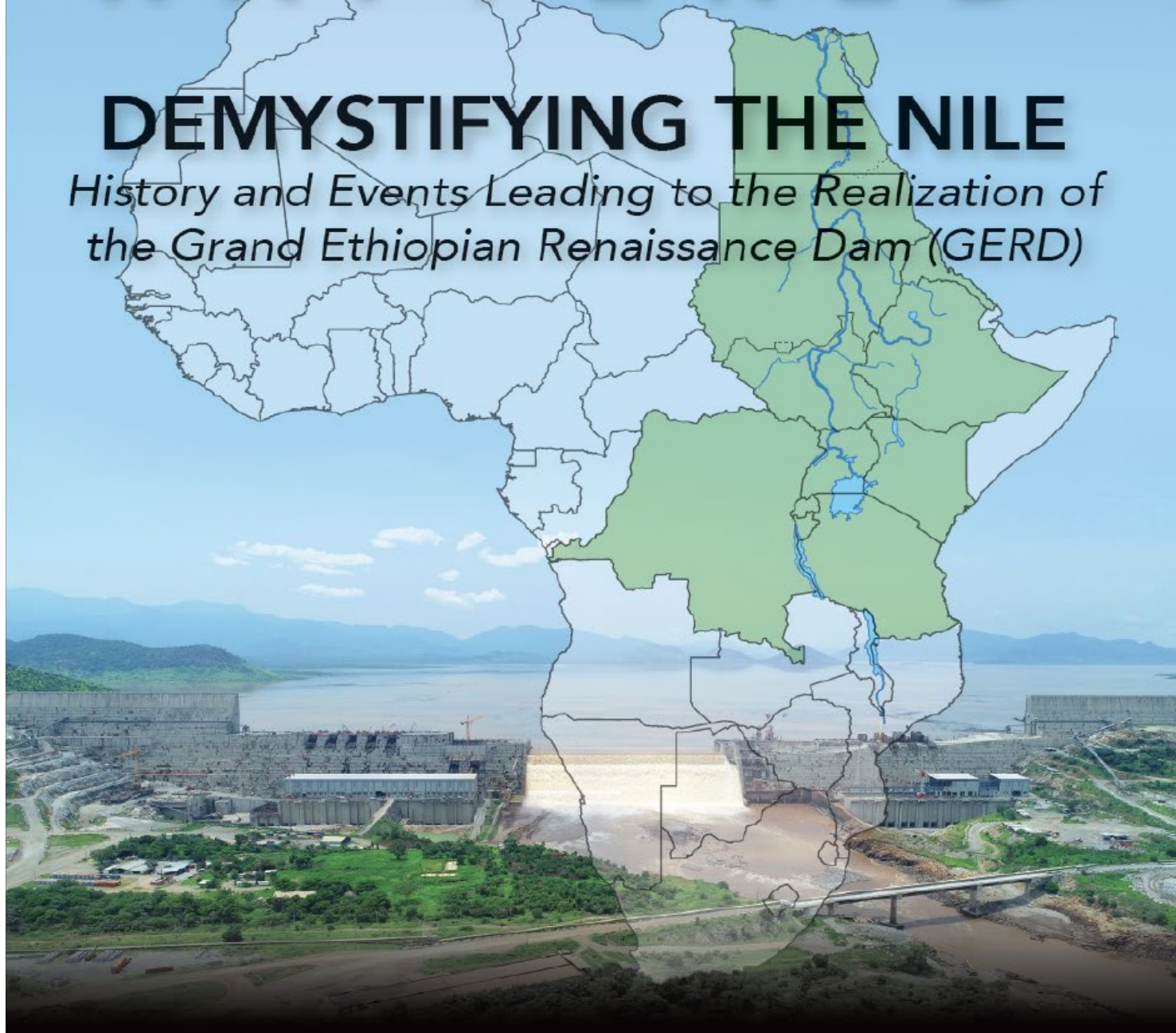
«When the Organization of African Unity was founded on May 25, 1963, it was a symbol of the liberation of African peoples and their hope for a happy future,» Adriano Nuvunga, a human rights activist and chairman of the Mozambican non-governmental organization CDD (Center for Democracy and Development), told DW.

«Today, the African Union is an organization that primarily represents the interests of the powerful. It is toothless and ineffective, and it repeatedly proves itself incapable of ensuring prosperity, security, and peace for all Africans.»

# HOW *this* HAPPENED

## DEMYSTIFYING THE NILE

*History and Events Leading to the Realization of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)*



Dereje Befekadu Tessema



# Dussey Floats African Political Alliance

By Prince Kurupati

To add to the list of African Union, ECOWAS, COMESA, SADC and the like, Africa now has another regional grouping. The new body goes by the name African Political Alliance and it's the brainchild of Prof Robert Dussey, Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Togolese Abroad.

The inaugural gathering of the African Political Alliance was held on 3 May 2023 in Lomé, Republic of Togo. In attendance at the inaugural gathering were Foreign Ministers and Heads of delegations from the Republic of Angola, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Guinea, the State of Libya, the Republic of Mali, the Republic of Namibia, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Togo. Chairing the gathering was H.E. Mrs. Victoire Tomegah-Dogbe, Prime Minister of the Republic of Togo, and H.E. Prof. Robert Dussey.

In launching APA, Prime Minister Tomegah-Dogbe said Togo had been moved by the problems bedeviling Africa as a whole, particularly on the geopolitical and diplomatic fronts. Prime Minister Tomegah-Dogbe said the time has come for Africa «significantly review its relationship



*The first Conference of Foreign Ministers of the African Political Alliance (APA), an informal framework for enhanced cooperation, was held on May 3, 2023 in Lomé, Togo.*

with the rest of the world for its better representativeness within multilateral institutions of collective action and in global governance».

The Togolese Prime Minister said the challenges that Africa face on the geopolitical and diplomatic fronts are immense and as such, they need out-of-the-box solutions. It's against this background that APA, an informal regional grouping was established. Its mission is to come up with context-specific, out-of-the-box solutions

devised by Africa for Africa.

As an informal regional grouping, Prime Minister Tomegah-Dogbe said APA is not here as an adversary to the usual already existing cooperation frameworks but it's there as a complimentary partner. She said APA's efforts are largely geared towards uniting the ideas of African nations which share the same Pan-Africanism ideals as well as all those «determined to work for an uninhibited, politically strong, non-aligned, independent (Africa) and acting with sovereignty on the international scene.»

Among the issues discussed by all countries in attendance were «the challenges and prospects relating to the strategic positioning, sovereignty and expression of Africa's common positions on the international scene». The African Foreign Affairs ministers also «examined issues and current challenges of pan-Africanism and African renaissance, the challenges of strengthening cooperation and endogenous capacities to respond to terrorism, as

well as the main axes of cooperation and the institutional outlines of the African Political Alliance.»

Following, the discussions, the African Foreign Affairs Ministers reached a consensus on several issues. Perhaps the most important one was the call for broader action to be taken to ensure that Africa gets permanent seats on the UN Security Council. The Ministers agreed that its unacceptable for «Africa, which alone brings together almost 28 % of United Nations member states» not to have a permanent Security Council seat. APA reaffirmed the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration but said Africa does not need one but «two (2) permanent member seats with full privileges including the right of veto, as well as five (5) non-member seats of the Security Council.»

APA also «affirmed their attachment to the principle of non-alignment laid down in 1963 by the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) as being one of the essential principles that should structure the relationship of the newly independent African countries with the rest of the world.» This when put in the context of the contemporary Russia-Ukraine



*Championed by Togolese Foreign Minister Robert Dussey, the APA believes time has come for Africa to significantly review its relationship with the rest of the world.*



The APA will hold the 9th Pan-African Congress in Lomé, in 2024.

War is quite significant as external powers are pushing African nations to pick sides between the warring parties.

On the Pan Africanism front, APA recognized the role and importance of the Pan Africanism movement

in liberating the continent from the yolk of colonialism. It concluded that some of the challenges facing Africa today can be corrected when nations embrace the ideas of Pan-Africanism. Determined to see this turn into reality, APA has already struck a

deal with the African Union to hold the 9th Pan-African Congress in Lomé, in 2024. The congress will run under the theme, «Renewal of pan-Africanism and Africa's Role in the Reform of Multilateral Institutions: mobilizing resources and reinventing Itself for action».

At the end of the gathering, a decision was agreed upon to start formalizing APA. Togo was tasked with chairing the high-level committee «responsible for working on the founding reference texts, the main lines of cooperation and the institutional outlines of the African Political Alliance.» The high-level committee was given a six-month window to formalize APA and it is also tasked with setting the date for the next meeting.

A glimpse at the discussions that

took place during the inaugural APA meeting shows that the grouping aims at addressing many of the issues Africa has been battling with for far too long. A deep look at APA's mission, objective and goals will just add to the nobleness of this grouping.

Despite how noble APA's mission, objectives and goals look, one question still comes to mind. APA comes into a field that already has other actors. Its mission is more or less similar to the missions of these other actors. As such, will APA be successful and achieve all its objectives, chief among them getting permanent spots for Africa on the UN Security Council? Well, the best answer at this time is, time will tell. The hope is that APA is that regional grouping which will finally do away with elitist deliberations with no end product and rather act, as a vehicle to bring about much-needed change.

## Mozambique: Frelimo Oils Engine For 2023 Elections

*Mozambique will hold local elections on 11 October 2023 in 65 municipalities across the country, with Mozambique's ruling party Frelimo having organised many antics to win the process while still at the voter registration level.*

By Jorge Joaquim

The voter registration ran from 20 April to 3 June in all of the country's 65 municipalities, ahead of the municipal elections scheduled for 11 October. The process was marked by many irregularities, especially in areas where the opposition was sympathetic, which increased suspicions of political manipulation in favour of Frelimo.

Many potential voters in opposition-influenced areas were left out of the process, according to independent observers. Around 1.5m potential voters did not register. 8.3m voters were registered of an expected 9.8m, according to preliminary data from election administration body STAE. While registering almost 85 per cent of the national target may look like a success, in fact many of the 1.4 million potential voters left out wanted to register but were prevented from doing so.

The main opposition party, Renamo



and MDM argued that large numbers of potential voters had not yet been registered, particularly in parts of central and northern Mozambique

which they regard as opposition strongholds.

A large number of anomalies have stained the voter registration.

The computers and printers used to produce the cards broke down repeatedly at the registration posts, and members of the registration





brigades were so poorly trained that they took an unconscionably long time to process each voter. This was despite a pilot registration exercise in February.

The opposition suspects that many of these breakdowns were deliberate, intended to slow down registration in areas believed to favour opposition parties. It is certainly remarkable that registration appears to be around 100 per cent in Gaza province, a stronghold of the ruling Frelimo Party, while there are still lengthy queues in opposition-run cities such as Beira and Quelimane.

In its latest bulletin on the voter registration, the anti-corruption NGO, the Centre for Public Integrity (CIP), argued that voters believed to be from opposition areas were deliberately hindered from registering in the early weeks of the registration, and these blockages were organized by district directors of STAE (Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat) and the registration post supervisors, many of whom are allegedly members of the Mozambican Youth Organisation (OJM), the youth wing of Frelimo.

In the case of Beira, the pro-Frelimo

bias was so extreme that the CNE suspended the Beira STAE director, Nelson do Rosario. He had recruited the supervisors into a clandestine WhatsApp group which mobilized for Frelimo and against the opposition. The messages from this group leaked into the public domain, and they included calls to “liberate” Beira from opposition control.

Other illegalities detected included removing equipment from the registration posts in order to operate clandestine registration in STAE warehouses and even in private homes in the dead of night. Since this was done away from the prying eyes of journalists and political party monitors, it is not known how many people who have no right to vote in the municipal elections were registered in this way.

#### Strange data

The province with the highest registration was Cabo Delgado. It had a target of registering 696,000 voters, and its final figure was 734,000 – 105 per cent of the target. The impact on the registration of the fight against Islamist terrorism in the province is not clear. One Cabo

Delgado municipality, Mocimboa da Praia, was temporarily occupied by the terrorists, who were driven out by Mozambican and Rwandan forces in 2021.

Much of the population of the Mocimboa da Praia municipality was displaced by the war, and the displaced people have not all returned. Some of the displaced, however, have been accommodated in other municipalities, such as Pemba, Montepuez and Chiure.

Also, millions of citizens resident in the 65 municipalities registered, but by the end of registration on Saturday night many thousands had not received their voter cards, which is the only proof that they are registered voters. On voting day, each voter should present his or her voting card at the polling station. Thousands of people queued up for hours, or even days, to register, but now may be unable to use their constitutional right to vote and to be elected, because the electoral administration has defaulted on its legal obligations.

The Mozambican chapter of the regional press freedom body, MISA (Media Institute of Southern Africa), has protested at the failure of the

electoral management bodies to deliver voter cards to many thousands of citizens who registered as voters.

The increase in equipment available and the expansion of the working hours of the registration posts helped increase significantly the number of people registered in the closing period of the Mozambican voter registration – “but this was not enough to compensate for the delays in the first five weeks”, comments the civil society consortium “Mais Integridade” (“More integrity”).

It happens in a context that Canada has pledged to disburse 1.5 million Canadian dollars to support the current electoral cycle in Mozambique, taking into account the need to ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups as well as guarantee greater transparency. According to the Canadian high commissioner, Sara Nicholls, the holding of credible elections in Mozambique is of concern to her country's government, which is why the initiative will continue in the coming years.

**Opposition asks Catholic Church to intervene**

The leader of Mozambique's main opposition party, Renamo, Ossufo Momade, has asked the Roman Catholic Church to intervene in order to convince the government to avoid fraud, saying that is concerned with the illegalities detected in the voter registration, which could be a prelude to fraud in the municipal elections. He cited the registration of people who are not eligible to vote, registration outside of the normal hours, and the theft of computers used in the registration.

Election observers from the "Mais Integridade" have called on Mozambique's election management bodies to eliminate from the database any voter who was registered outside the registration posts and outside the normal working hours, since these are irregular and illicit registrations. This would be quite easy. The computers used in the registration record the date and time of each registration. It would be simple to delete any registration that occurred after the posts should have closed.

The problems with registration meant that the environment for free, fair and transparent elections does not exist.

According to an investigation by the CIP Elections Bulletin there were few real mechanical failures



and most of the alleged registration equipment problems were caused, intentionally, by brigade members to prevent opposition party members from registering. A registration computer expert claims that the level of breakdowns reported in these elections has never occurred in any country. And it is strange that the problems reported by supervisors are not communicated to the Lexton/Artes Gráficas consortium that has technicians to repair the malfunctions, which adds to the

suspicion of manipulation of the equipment for political ends.

## Frelimo getting ready

Five months prior to the municipal elections, Frelimo has become the first party to begin the procedures for selecting candidates. Mayors are no longer directly elected. The municipal elections will elect municipal assemblies, and whoever is at the top of the list of the party winning the largest share of the vote will become the mayor. Hence, the

internal Frelimo elections will decide who is the head of the list for each municipality.

Both main opposition parties, Renamo and the MDM, have promised to contest all 65 municipalities, but neither has yet begun choosing their candidates.

Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi said recently that each member of the party must participate actively in identifying and carrying out concrete actions that make it possible to attain the strategic goal of a Frelimo victory in all 65 municipalities. He stressed that Frelimo needs to reorganize itself to face the challenges of the municipal elections s.

"This is a moment of extreme importance in the national political cycle", Nyusi said. "Our Party has the challenge of maintaining the governance of the 44 municipalities currently under our rule, of recovering the nine that are currently run by the opposition, and of winning in the 12 new municipalities".

He warned that such a victory can only be won on the basis of "transparency, responsibility, justice and integrity". Above all, the Party must ensure that its election candidates are capable of attracting the support of the voters "for an overwhelming Frelimo victory".





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# Keseena Chengadu On The Órama Way

By Ajong Mbatndah L

Within Africa, there are many individuals who have primarily associated Mauritius with a holiday destination, unaware of the abundant business opportunities it offers as a reputable International Financial Centre, says Órama CEO Keseena Chengadu. Accompanied by a dynamic team of talented and visionary young Africans, Chengadu has grown Órama into a powerful corporate engine in facilitating access to Mauritius, Africa's financial hub and friendliest business destination.

"Mauritius plays a crucial role in facilitating significant capital inflows into mainland Africa that would otherwise be challenging or even impossible. This contribution alone has resulted in the creation of approximately 4.2 million jobs across the continent," Chengadu tells PAV magazine.

As a sign of its growing clout Keseena Chengadu and her team have been actively present in diverse business themed events across the continent, and recently opened a new office in South Africa.

With a rising energetic populace comprising mostly youth, rising middle and upper class with economic and purchasing power, new discoveries and exploration within the energy sector, advancement in technology and innovation, awakening conscience of the African people, increased pragmatic leaders, AFCTA agenda 2063, and continuous push for the reunification of the continent, immigration reforms and the abundance of resources in Africa opportunities, are bound, prospects are good and Africa still holds the torch as being the future, says Keseena Chengadu.

**May we start with an appraisal of how things have stood with Órama since the year started, how has business been for you?**

Keseena Chengadu: It's been absolutely great compared to last



*Mauritius is a good base to expand into Africa, says Órama CEO Keseena Chengadu.*

year, although a company of modest size, our strategies have elevated us to become a force to reckon within a short span. Our brand has become firmly established, and our clients express great satisfaction with the services and solutions we offer. Our proactive marketing campaigns have generated a significant increase in inquiries. Our team is growing as anticipated, fueled

by innovative ideas, unwavering dedication, and a genuine passion for our mission. The evolving needs of our clients and the current business climate have compelled us to seize the opportunity to expand into South Africa sooner than anticipated.

Within Africa, there are many individuals who have primarily associated Mauritius with a

holiday destination, unaware of the abundant business opportunities it offers as a reputable International Financial Centre. The recent grey listing of certain countries in Africa has further prompted investors to explore alternative jurisdictions like Mauritius.

Overall, we are delighted with the current progress and remain committed to driving forward towards the end of the year. Our focus is on delivering sustainable growth solutions that cater to our clients' businesses.

Your primary focus remains Mauritius as a business destination, what are some of the reasons that make that country stand out from other African countries as a business destination?

Keseena Chengadu: Mauritius is a tiny island nation but extremely powerful in supporting the whole of the African continent in several ways. Aside from being the most peaceful with great economic and political stability, it is also the number one country in Africa with the ease of doing business according to the world bank report.

As per the World Economic Forum, Mauritius has facilitated the inflow of nearly \$80 billion into mainland Africa, thanks to its robust compliance and regulatory framework. Additionally, its strong banking sector and well-developed infrastructure have fostered seamless capital flow, supported by the absence of exchange control policies.

It is also important to note that it has a very simple, low and attractive tax system favorable to all business while it presents modern cutting edge innovative financial vehicles complete to several developed nations that equips businesses to take advantage of to attract capital, have a smooth operation, expand exponentially across the world while growing sustainably. Good governance and leadership cannot be overemphasized with government



even more committed to ensuring investor protections and policies to thrive businesses, Mauritius is an example of success in Africa. Additionally, it is the only country that special treaties with several countries including the only one in Africa to sign such bilateral treaties with India and China aside the several existing DTTA with other nations that allows businesses in Mauritius to preferential access to 70% of the world market.

**How can the potential that Mauritius has and the work you do be of benefit to other countries of the continent?**

Keseena Chengadu: Mauritius plays a crucial role in facilitating significant capital inflows into mainland Africa that would otherwise be challenging or even impossible. This contribution alone has resulted in the creation of approximately 4.2 million jobs across the continent.

Granted investments into Africa are channeled through Mauritius, if Mauritius were not there, some of those investments would have either not been done or would have gone through competing jurisdictions such as Dubai, Luxembourg, UK, Singapore and the Netherlands. Interestingly majority of these countries who are benefiting from these mediations do not even have bilateral relations with Mauritius.

Furthermore, there are countries currently on the financial watchlist (FATF's grey list), and this situation has a profound impact on business owners in Africa. In this regard, Mauritius serves as an alternative solution for these entrepreneurs to restore and optimize their business operations. This is especially significant as Mauritius has been recognized and included in the EU and OECD's whitelist, providing a reliable platform for conducting business.

It is good to note that the bilateral agreements such as the DTAA that Mauritius has with its counterpart parties does not only serve as a framework for the avoidance of double taxation on



*Mauritius plays a crucial role in facilitating significant capital inflows into mainland Africa that would otherwise be challenging or even impossible, says Keseena Chengadu.*

income earned by individuals and businesses in both countries but it also aims to promote bilateral trade, investment, and economic activity through effective tax planning and certainty of tax treatment with a leverage of strengthening economic cooperation between the two countries by preventing tax evasion, providing tax relief and exemptions, promoting investment and trade and resolving tax disputes. Without a doubt, Mauritius reaps the rewards of offshore activities, as do the destination countries in various aspects. These include foreign direct investments, private equity and portfolio investments, infrastructure development, enhanced productive capacity, job creation, technology transfer, skill development, and downstream tax revenues.

It is important to note that despite the existence of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAA), businesses investing in Africa diligently fulfill their tax obligations in the respective jurisdictions where

they have subsidiaries or permanent establishments. Therefore, our clients responsibly fulfill their tax obligations in the appropriate jurisdictions while simultaneously benefiting from the tax advantages that Mauritius offers. Furthermore, in the event that dividends are declared, under a DTAA, companies pay taxes based on the lower of the tax rate in the respective country or the rate specified in the tax treaty. Additionally, these companies are eligible for a tax credit in Mauritius for the taxes they have already paid in the country where the investment is made (investee country). This mechanism ensures that companies are not subjected to double taxation and allows them to benefit from the provisions outlined in the tax treaty. View this article for more information.

**Can you shed light on the office that Orama recently opened in South Africa?**

Keseena Chengadu: South Africa and Mauritius go way back sharing

a very special relationship. Both countries support each other, and evidence of their strong relationship is backed by their bilateral treaty in form of the Double taxation agreement which further strengthens the economic cooperation between the two countries.

Given the current challenges faced by South Africa, including energy deficits, being grey listed, and the potential threat of sanctions from other global powers, it is evident that these circumstances have caused unease among investors. However, these challenges also present an opportunity for us to position Mauritius as a viable alternative investment jurisdiction for investors seeking a secure and stable environment. Understanding that in the end it's not about competition but rather solutions and conducive environment for investors business to thrive is what is important as we work toward creating a better and thriving African continent.

South Africa is a huge market with several potentials, and we understand the terrain and market as well as the cultural and political dynamics and business climate very well as we have been servicing clients amongst others. South Africa also has one of the busiest and developed international airports (O.R Tambo International airport) with great connectivity and serves as a major transit point for most of our clients who are traveling to various jurisdictions and that enables clients connecting flights to easily and quickly stop over at our office to discuss business.

The expansion will bring substantial advantages to our clients, encompassing enhanced services and convenience. With Sandton serving as a prominent hub for international business in Africa, the establishment of a new office strengthens our local presence and deepens our relationship with domestic clients. This presents an excellent opportunity for clients to engage directly with our professionals, fostering face-to-face communication instead of relying solely on online or mail correspondence. As a result, clients will enjoy a more personalized

experience, allowing Órama to tailor its services more effectively to meet their individual needs.

Moreover, the expansion into South Africa brings forth a myriad of fresh prospects for our clients, granting them access to promising new markets. As Mauritius has long served as the gateway to Africa, our physical presence on the ground ensures that clients seeking to expand their operations in South Africa can rely on us for invaluable firsthand experience and insights into the regulatory frameworks in place.

A company managed in a country renowned for its strong economic standing, venturing into another thriving territory, immediately garners enhanced credibility within those markets. This expanded presence empowers clients with a wider reach and has the potential to bolster their future growth trajectories, opening doors to increased opportunities and prosperity.

Furthermore, this allows Órama access to a larger pool of talents, which can lead to the incorporation of newer technologies and more experienced staff. Since Sandton is a hotspot for African trades and industries, the new office will allow the company to recruit diverse talents with extensive experience with knowledge of the African markets. This, in turn, is expected to lead to the development of new cutting-edge technologies and innovative solutions beneficial to our clients.

Our office is also strategically located in the prime area in the heart of Sandton with close proximity to the Gautrain station, the Radisson Blu Gautrain Hotel and the Nelson Mandela Square which is amongst the safest areas and easily accessible to our clients and employees.

**How does the opening of this office fit in the broader vision that Órama has for the rest of the continent and any plans to open more offices?**

Keseena Chengadu: It's the concept of playing a supportive role where one falls short. It's an African progressive agenda, where Mauritius maximizes



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P: (230) 460 9312/460 1777



[www.oramacorporate.com](http://www.oramacorporate.com)  
[info@oramacorporate.com](mailto:info@oramacorporate.com)

*As a sign of its growing clout, Keseena Chengadu and her team have been actively present in diverse events across the continent, and recently opened a new office in South Africa.*

its strength as a team player and allows an avenue for businesses to utilize its strategic resources and vehicles where the continent is not equipped, ultimately ensuring continues business progress, sustainability and growth in the African businesses community when it comes to operations.

Órama has a vision of how businesses should grow in the 21st century, and shares the belief that people, entrepreneurs and corporations are the tools the world needs to build true sustainability. We provide entrepreneurs, companies and investors with the opportunities to thrive and shape a prosperous future.

Presently, South Africa encounters challenges such as energy deficits, being grey listed, and the potential threat of sanctions from other global powers. It is important to note that Nigeria is currently also grey listed, and the implications have a wider impact on the entire continent when viewed from a broader perspective.

Investors are seeking solutions to navigate these obstacles, and Órama serves as a valuable cushion by utilizing the opportunities presented by Mauritius to alleviate the evident concerns among investors. It is undoubtedly an opportune moment for us to offer these solutions, and we take great pride in promoting Mauritius as Africa's

own International Financial Centre, providing African solutions tailored to the needs of investors.

**Besides the financial sector, what other areas should interested investors be on the lookout for in Mauritius and Africa?**

Keseena Chengadu: Real Estate: The real estate sector in Mauritius and Africa offers significant potential for investment, particularly in commercial, residential, and hospitality developments. With growing urbanization and increasing demand for quality infrastructure, real estate projects present lucrative opportunities.

Energy: Energy development in Africa extends beyond renewable sources to include the significant role of oil and gas. Africa boasts substantial oil and gas reserves, making it an important player in the global energy market. Investors interested in the energy sector can explore opportunities in oil and gas exploration, production, refining, and distribution across various African countries, including Mauritius. Oil and gas projects contribute significantly to the economic growth and development of African nations. They provide job opportunities, stimulate local industries, and generate revenue through exports. Additionally, the development of the oil and gas sector often leads to

infrastructure improvements, such as pipelines, refineries, and storage facilities, which benefit both the energy industry and the broader economy. While Africa embraces the expansion of renewable energy projects to address energy deficits and promote sustainability, the oil and gas sector remains crucial due to its significant energy demand and existing infrastructure. It is important to strike a balance between transitioning to cleaner energy sources and leveraging the potential of oil and gas resources to meet the continent's energy needs and drive economic development.

Blue Economy: Given Africa's extensive coastlines and rich marine resources, the blue economy presents immense potential. Investments in sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, maritime transport, tourism, and marine biotechnology can contribute to economic development while preserving ocean ecosystems.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT): Africa's ICT sector is growing rapidly, driven by increased internet penetration, mobile technology adoption, and a thriving digital ecosystem. Opportunities exist in areas such as telecommunications, e-commerce, fintech, software development, and digital services, with Mauritius serving as a regional technology hub.

These sectors demonstrate the diverse investment opportunities



available beyond the financial sector in Mauritius and throughout Africa. It is important for interested investors to conduct thorough market research, engage with local stakeholders, and leverage the support provided by investment promotion agencies to identify specific opportunities aligned with their investment goals.

***There are many who still have a skewed vision on the investment climate in Africa, using your experience and leadership in Mauritius, what are some of the reassuring realities you want to share with potential investors?***

Keseena Chengadu: Africa's economic growth is set to outpace global forecast in 2023-2024 – according to African Development Bank biannual report. Africa is set to outperform the rest of the world in economic growth over the next two years, with real gross domestic product (GDP) averaging around 4% in 2023 and 2024. Rising energetic populace comprising mostly youth, rising middle and upper class with economic and purchasing power, new discoveries and exploration within the energy sector, advancement in technology and innovation, awakening conscience of the African people, increased pragmatic leaders, AFCTA agenda 2063, and continuous push for the reunification of the continent, immigration reforms and the abundance of resources in Africa – I think Africa still holds the torch as being the future. The prospects are very bright, opportunities abound.

***In terms of challenges, what are some of the typical ones that you face?***

Keseena Chengadu: It is crucial to address and reshape the prevailing narrative among some individuals in Africa today. Regrettably, there remains a lack of belief in their own capabilities and systems, coupled with a deficiency in support for their own continent.

Despite the competence and reputation of Mauritius as an International Financial Centre (IFC), some individuals still harbor doubts and believe that it cannot match up



***Órama works closely with investors within the energy sector in Africa to ensure smooth and tax efficient operations of energy investors in Africa using Mauritius as a reputable hub.***

to other competing jurisdictions. Consequently, they opt for utilizing other jurisdictions while neglecting the opportunities available within their own continent.

However, it is important to highlight that the records and history of Mauritius speak for themselves, gaining recognition not only on a global scale but also from esteemed organizations such as the World Bank and the European Union. These endorsements affirm the competency and credibility of Mauritius as a reliable and trustworthy IFC.

The time has come to challenge this mindset and instill a sense of pride and confidence in African capacities and systems. By embracing the potential within their own continent, individuals can contribute to its growth and development, leveraging the remarkable achievements and standards set by Mauritius as an example.

***In terms of recommendations that could make the investment climate across Africa even better, what are some of the suggestions you have for African leaders?***

Keseena Chengadu: «Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!» in the voice of United States President Ronald Reagan in West Berlin

speech on June 12, 1987. African leaders must move fast to unite the continent economically and do so fast by opening borders to their own people and remove, or at the very least minimize, visa restrictions, especially for high-income earners, entrepreneurs, and business leaders within Africa. This step is crucial for fostering infrastructural development and promoting increased trade among African nations, among other benefits. African leaders must recognize that the collective representation of Africa to the world as one voice is key and advantageous rather than individualism. Policies initiated must be considered by the people of Africa.

***We have seen Órama working in partnership with African themed energy events hosted by the African Energy Chamber, how is this in line with your vision and will you be part of the African Energy Week 2023?***

Keseena Chengadu: Órama works closely with investors within the energy sector in Africa and our role is to ensure smooth and tax efficient operations of energy investors in Africa using Mauritius as a reputable international financial center with robust regulatory policies and world class investor protection schemes as

well as a conducive environment for doing business, ensuring they have solid grounds for sustainable growth and expansion as they tackle energy deficits challenges on the continent.

Mauritius has no foreign exchange control policies despite it being the most compliant country in Africa coupled with a robust banking system and financial vehicles and instruments and business support systems which enable the free flow of capital and investments into their respective operational jurisdictions thereby giving them the peace of mind to function properly.

The African energy week conference is by far the largest energy event on the continent. With more than 4200 total attendance, 47 participating Ministries 36 Government delegations, including foreign governments, international organisations, including participations from OPEC, IEA, The World Bank, GECF, IEF, European Investment Bank, Hydrogen Europe and World Nuclear Association, 23 African NOCs. It creates a perfect ground and opportunity for networking and sponsorship while we use the opportunity to enlighten prospects and clients about the opportunities that Mauritius presents for business growth.

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# Zoom On 15th CCA U.S-Africa Business Summit With Florie Liser

By Ajong Mbapndah

The Corporate Council On Africa's U.S.-Africa Business Summit this year is the ideal opportunity to both advance and to check-in on the commitments made and initiatives launched at the Biden-Harris Administration's U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit and Business Forum, says Florie Liser. Fielding questions from PAV, Florie Liser who CEO of the CCA is, says the exchange will be rich when prominent U.S. and African government and private sector leaders meet at the 15th U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Gaborone, Botswana from July 11-14.

In addition to host President Masisi, over six other heads of state or government have confirmed participation at the Summit which is also expected to host a high-level U.S. Government delegation that will include senior officials from key agencies responsible for supporting and promoting the U.S.-Africa economic relationships.

Botswana has been a great partner over the years and has been a leader in both political and economic governance, says Florie Liser. In the upcoming Summit the country will have a good platform to highlight the progress made using their mineral wealth to support value chains across sectors of the economy, including expanding opportunities in manufacturing, ICT, tourism, financial services and the broader services sector, Liser says.

Despite progress made over the years and the huge opportunities available, Africa still only represents 2% of U.S. trade, and it is a trend the CCA is working hard with key partners to change, Florie Liser says.

**May we know how preparations are going for the upcoming US-Africa Business Summit in Botswana?**

Florie Liser: With the strong support of President Masisi and involvement of his government, and



the effort of the CCA Board of Directors who represent both American and African corporate CCA members, and our CCA team, preparations are well underway, and we expect a robust turnout. Importantly, along with the White House and State House in Gaborone, we have a shared vision that CCA's U.S.-Africa Business Summit this year is the ideal opportunity to both advance and to check-in on the commitments made and initiatives launched at the Biden-Harris Administration's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and Business Forum this past December in Washington, DC. CCA was a co-organizer of the Forum and looks forward to re-convening prominent U.S. and African government and private sector leaders at our 15th U.S.-Africa Business Summit to be held in Gaborone, Botswana on July 11-14. There have been a lot of important developments across several major sectors on which our Summit's various sessions and events will focus, and anticipate candid, productive discussions to advance U.S.-Africa trade, investment and commercial engagement, private sector-led economic growth and

job creation benefiting the people of both the United States and of Africa. Even at this early date we have confirmation from six African heads of state or government (seven including President Masisi), and we very well could have a few more by the time the Summit kicks off on July 11th. We also expect a high-level U.S. Government delegation that will include senior officials from key agencies responsible for supporting and promoting the U.S.-Africa economic relationship. We have also seen tremendous interest from the private sector – many impressive corporate sponsors and more approaching us every week. What is most energizing to me is seeing the enthusiasm among both U.S. and African small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). CCA is pleased to say that SMEs constitute more than half of our members, and we have seen many of them go on to achieve tremendous growth through engagements and opportunities offered at CCA's past Summits. In terms of preparations, we are working closely with a Government of Botswana multi-Ministerial team as well as Botswana service providers

who, together, with my team, are ensuring that we will have a very successful Summit.

**Of the 54 countries in Africa, what were some of the reasons that facilitated the choice of Botswana as the choice of the 2023 US-Africa Business Summit?**

Florie Liser: CCA is blessed to have so many great partners to work with, and we are thrilled to be holding the 15th U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Gaborone. Botswana has been a great partner over the years and has been a leader in both political and economic governance. President Masisi personally led the Botswana delegation to our Summit in Morocco last year, and he and his Cabinet are remarkably committed to advancing private sector growth through trade and investment in several key areas. My sense is that Botswana is keen to highlight the progress they have made using their mineral wealth to support value chains across sectors of the economy, including expanding opportunities in manufacturing, ICT, tourism, financial services and the broader services sector. President

Masisi last year in Marrakech made a strong pitch for why he and his country should be the national host for CCA's next Summit on the continent, and in the end, I and the CCA Board of Directors decided that hosting in a leading country in Southern Africa after last year's Summit in Morocco offered our members and other stakeholders exposure to the diverse business opportunities and latest developments across the continent. And of course, the theme of this year's Summit – "Enhancing Africa's Value in Global Value Chains" highlights a strategic goal of African governments and the African Union for Africa to be a bigger player in regional and global value chains and take advantage of some shifts to manufacturing in and sourcing from Africa because of the post-pandemic need to re-align supply chains. This goal and evolving trends are strongly supported by CCA, and we look forward to advancing at the Summit.

## Compared to previous CCA summits, what are some of the innovations that attendees should expect in Botswana?

Florie Liser: Every host and Summit has its own unique features – not only due to the unique culture and environment that each country offers, but also because we are of course living in a highly dynamic time, and the business environment is constantly changing. We're excited to hold this year's Summit in a new conference and hotel facility, which reflects progress in Botswana's strategy to be a destination of choice for major international events and conferences. We're also working on some exciting improvements on the conference app and some of the services we'll be offering at the Summit. And as for the shape and substance of the Summit proceedings, we are excited that we will have high-level dialogues on key sectors (mining, energy transition, manufacturing, ICT, health, agribusiness) that will include African heads of state and ministers, USG senior officials and CEOs and other private sector executives; as well as country-focused "Doing Business



*Botswana has been a great partner over the years and has been a leader in both political and economic governance, says Florie Liser seen here with President Masisi.*

In..." sessions. Attendees should also expect a plenary session providing a progress report on U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit commitments, sessions on the creative economy, the African sports industry, AGOA and future of the U.S.-Africa trade relationship, and women's leadership, among others.

## In terms of confirmed participation may we know some of the leading actors or companies that will be in Botswana for the CCA Summit?

Florie Liser: Besides African Heads of State (thus far from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) and Ministers and a high-level

delegation from the United States as mentioned earlier, we are delighted that several dozen CEOs of high-profile companies have confirmed their attendance and an impressive number of registrations from small and medium-sized enterprises. I am particularly delighted to see an increase in the number of women-owned business executives confirming attendance and in many cases participation in our Summit sessions. We'll soon have more details about confirmed speakers, but I can tell you that the sessions will feature CEOs and senior executives from several notable U.S. and African banks and financial institutions, companies in the energy, mining, health, agriculture and ICT sectors, and a number of

senior U.S. Government and other African government officials.

## How will you sum up the current state of business ties between the USA and Africa?

Florie Liser: The current state of business ties between the U.S. and Africa is good, but it could be – needs to be – much stronger. We're seeing more and more American companies looking to expand existing operations into more African markets, while other American companies come to the continent for the first time. Particularly after COVID, there is a broad recognition of the need to rethink global supply chains and how companies can produce for Africa's vast continental market as progress is made in implementing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) – a gamechanger for Africa's regional trade as well as with its global partners, including the United States. As companies are looking for more opportunities, they are increasingly aware of all the legal and regulatory actions African governments have made to enhance business conditions on the ground – though there is still much room for improvement, which we also hope to speak to. There are also important initiatives to support the expansion of Africa's automotive, pharmaceutical, ICT and manufacturing sectors. While it's great to see more American companies pursuing opportunities, Africa still only represents 2% of U.S. trade. We need to be a lot more ambitious about developing this potential through initiatives such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Prosper Africa and the work done under its umbrella by a number of U.S. government agencies like the Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the U.S.-Export-Import Bank, the Departments of State, Commerce, Agriculture and Energy, USAID and USTR to name a few. The goal should be to increase U.S.-Africa trade and investment tenfold.

## Your leadership of the CCA now spans three administrations



*Despite progress made over the years, Africa still only represents 2% of U.S. trade, a trend the CCA is working hard with key partners to change, Florie Liser says.*



**both Republican and Democrat, what is your take on how the Biden /Harris administration has fared in fostering stronger business ties with Africa?**

Florie Liser: The Biden-Harris Administration has done a good job of elevating the prominence of Africa in America's national security and its economic and business strategies – making clear the geo-strategic importance of Africa to the U.S. as a critical partner in addressing some of the most pressing global issues such as fighting pandemics like COVID and preparing for future pandemics, managing climate change and energy transition, combatting terrorism and violence, enhancing good governance/ rule of law, and promoting sustainable growth. Holding the U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit and Business Forum last December in Washington was an important step in signaling Africa's importance and advancing the U.S.-Africa relationship. The fact that more than 40 African presidents and Heads of State attended the three-day event is a clear signal of the breadth and depth of the potential for the U.S. and Africa to have a much stronger, more strategic partnership. I was pleased that CCA co-partnered with the USG and others to help organize the Business Forum at the Summit, during which there were private sector deals signed totaling \$15.7 billion, in addition to the \$55 billion in total U.S. government commitments to Africa which includes \$15 billion in new two-way trade and investment commitments, deals and partnerships. It's been good to see the Administration follow up on those announcements, including a steady pace of senior level visits to Africa, including by Vice President Harris and several Cabinet members already this year. I am counting on them to keep up that pace, and to continue to deliver on the commitments made last December. CCA's U.S.-Africa Business Summit in Botswana will be a first major opportunity to have U.S. and African public and private sector leaders re-engage, get an update on progress on all of the Leaders' Summit and Business Forum commitments, and to discuss the way forward in



*The forum will be ideal to check in on promises, commitments and initiatives launched by the Biden-Harris Administration during the last US-African Leaders Summit.*

enhancing the U.S.-Africa economic and commercial relationship.

***In terms of recommendations for actors in both the US and Africa, what needs to be done to broaden business ties?***

Florie Liser: There is a lot that can be done. The first priority is for Congress to renew the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) this year through 2035. That would give companies and African countries the reassurance they need to plan new investments in manufacturing and other sectors that will help realize the potential from AfCFTA, while also deepening trade and investment ties between U.S. and African companies. There is a golden opportunity for African countries to leverage AfCFTA implementation to both modernize and harmonize statutory and regulatory environments which could break down barriers to private sector investment and business activity. Beyond that, there is always scope for the U.S. Government to sharpen the tools it uses to promote trade and investment, reducing the time it takes to approve investment and export finance programs, while also working with companies to adapt approaches to support evolving opportunities in sectors like infrastructure finance, ICT and energy to name just a few sectors. Most importantly, however, U.S. and African companies need more opportunities to connect, such

as through the CCA U.S.-Africa Business Summit.

***With keen competition from other global actors like China, Japan, Russia and others, how do you make the case for Africa to prioritize corporate ties with USA companies?***

Florie Liser: While African governments and companies certainly have an ever-increasing range of potential partners, there is a tremendous advantage in dealing with the U.S. public and private sector. On the USG side, there are major benefits from the more than \$9.5 billion in grants (not loans) the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has made to 24 African nations. DFC, Eximbank, and USTDA are financing loans and supporting projects in key sectors important to Africa's development. And U.S. companies bring some of the best available products in the sectors that are most important in terms of driving economic growth. They are transparent about what they offer and the terms of the deal, and they honor their commitments. They also tend to focus on supporting their sales with training and after-sales services, looking to become long-term partners rather than one-off transactions. They provide skills and technology transfer to their African partners. And, importantly, let me just say that unlike the companies

from many other countries, U.S. firms seek partnerships in countries in which they work, and they seek to hire local nationals – not to import the bulk of their workers like some other countries do. Simply put, there are broader, longer-term benefits to partnering with the USG and to seeking expanded presence of American businesses in Africa.

***For companies that may read this interview and develop interest in participating at the forum, any tips for them?***

Florie Liser: We hope companies will get as excited as we are about the Summit and decide to come to Botswana and see for themselves. They should register soon, however, to ensure they get a space, as we are likely to sell out. The Summit website is [www.usafricabizsummit.com](http://www.usafricabizsummit.com) – sign up soon! Space is limited!

***You have been to Botswana before, many of the participants will be going there for the first time, what can you share with them about that country?***

Florie Liser: First time visitors are in for a treat. There is a lot to see and do in Botswana, including excellent infrastructure, some truly spectacular wildlife and nature preserves, and great food. The most remarkable feature, however, is the people themselves who we know will provide a very warm welcome in Gaborone.



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# Africa Investment Forum Showcases \$1.475 Billion In Green And Renewable Energy Deals At African Development Bank 2023 Annual Meetings

*Africa Investment Forum's current pipeline comprises 90 deals valued at \$62.9 billion*

The Africa Investment Forum presented four renewable energy and sustainability projects worth nearly \$1.5 billion to investors on the sidelines of the African Development Bank Group's 2023 Annual Meetings.

The curated projects, which are drawn from all of Africa's regions, are sourced from the Africa Investment Forum's pipeline. They reflect gathering urgency in Africa, the world's most vulnerable region to climate change, to accelerate climate action, including closing financing gaps by securing an ever-increasing share of global capital for the continent.

The African Development Bank's 2023 Annual Meetings are being held under the theme, Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Climate and Green Growth in Africa.

The investment roundtable, held in Sharm El Sheikh, attracted a range of private investors, including venture capital and private equity firms.

## From hydropower to plastic recycling green projects showcase ample opportunities on the continent

The transactions included a hybrid hydrogen feedstock/ ammonia project in North Africa that will source 400 MW of renewable energy to produce—without CO<sub>2</sub> emissions—183 tons of hydrogen feedstock daily to generate



*The Africa Investment Forum showcased \$1.5 billion of renewable energy and sustainability projects to investors during the African Development Bank's 2023 Annual Meetings.*

1,000 tons a day of green ammonia via electrolysis. Additional investment of \$27 million is needed to move the project towards bankability.

The second transaction, in West Africa, is a 27 MW hydropower project that has successfully undergone feasibility assessments. It has also attracted funding support from a number of international entities and multilateral development agencies. Among projected benefits, the deal will service 700,000 households, generate 600 direct and indirect jobs over the life of the project, and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 81,000 tons each year. The project represents an increase of 10% in the country's total electricity generation capacity.

The investment roundtable also featured an opportunity to invest in

a \$73 million plastic recycling and sustainability company's expansion drive into seven African countries across West, Central and Southern Africa. The project has attracted the interest of several funders of project preparation and technical assistance to conduct feasibility studies in the target countries. It promises important benefits: creation of 16,000 jobs as well as opportunities for 20,000 waste pickers in targeted countries. It will also divert 214,000 metric tons of plastic waste (PET, PP, PE) from landfill dumps and reduce carbon emissions by 149,000 metric tons. Currently only 10% of Africa's plastics are recycled. The project resonated positively with growth capital investors that attended the roundtable.

The transaction incorporates

important technological features, including cutting-edge processing lines and app-based collection and payment options. These features were viewed as enhancing the project's scalability across Africa and the project resonated positively with growth capital investors that attended the roundtable..

The fourth transaction is an opportunity to invest in a \$440 million Southern Africa hydropower independent power producer that will generate 544,000 MWh/year of energy. It will also include water distribution and flood prevention elements. Other benefits include 3,000 construction jobs through project completion. The transaction sponsors are seeking \$12.5 million to finalize the project's development phase.

Africa Investment Forum Senior Director, Chinelo Anohu, hosted the event. She said, "there is a need for the Africa Investment Forum on the continent. We can't overemphasize both the convening power and the strength of the platform." She said the transactions showcased represented only a small part of the platform portfolio.

In addition to the African Development Bank, representatives of the Africa Investment Forum founding partners Africa Finance Corporation, Africa50, Islamic Development Bank,



*AfDB President, Akinwumi Adesina, and heads of intergovernmental organisations and African development finance institutions following a meeting in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on 25 May 2023.*

Development Bank of Southern Africa, Trade and Development Bank and Afreximbank attended.

Investors present asked follow-up questions to learn more about the projects presented.

The event also included an update on the Africa Investment Forum's

current pipeline, comprising 90 deals valued at \$62.9 billion and classified as either in the capital raise phase or the bankability phase.

The Africa Investment Forum's flagship Market Days event, to be held in November 2023, will bring together international deal sponsors, investors

and government leaders to showcase transactions that are ready to progress toward closure.

Championed by the African Development Bank and seven other founding partners (Africa50, Africa Finance Corporation, Afreximbank, Development Bank of Southern

Africa, European Investment Bank, Islamic Development Bank and Trade and Development Bank), the Africa Investment Forum is Africa's investment marketplace to accelerate transactions to close Africa's investment gaps.

\*Source AfDB

## Africa Welcomes a New Oil Refinery - The Largest One in the World to Date

By Prince Kurupati

Nigeria's very own and Africa's richest person Aliko Dangote continues to elevate the status of both his country of origin and the entire African continent to greater heights thanks to his top business acumen. Just this past month, Dangote opened a massive single-train refinery with the capacity to handle 650,000 barrels per day. This new single-train refinery which will affectionately go by the name Dangote Refinery Complex becomes the biggest oil refinery of its nature in the world.

Though Nigeria produces much crude oil, in the past, it has encountered major problems when it comes to getting ready-made refined fuel for its local population. This was necessitated by the fact that much of the crude oil would be exported as is to foreign nations. This in turn forced Nigeria to import refined fuel at much higher exorbitant fees. Last year alone, Nigeria spent USD 23.3 billion importing petroleum products. Over the past five-year period, the Central Bank of Nigeria reports that the "cost (including freight) of petroleum products imports into Nigeria doubled over a five-year period from about US\$8.4 billion in 2017 to US\$16.2 billion (indicating an annual average of US\$11.1 billion), before rising further to US\$23.3 billion by end-2022". Not only this but the transportation of the imported fuel either via the pipeline or tankers posed its problems hence the persistent fuel challenges in the country.

The recent development ushered in by Aliko Dangote means the shortages of refined fuel is now a thing of the past. Also, as in the words echoed by



The first products of the refinery are expected to hit the market in July .Photo courtesy.

Dangote, the refinery will eliminate "the tragedy of import dependency". Dangote's single-train refinery possesses the capacity of handling 650,000 barrels a day meaning it more than meets the Nigerian peak demand. This in essence means it has the capacity to even serve the interests of the continent.

If the Dangote Refinery Complex operates at full capacity as intended, industrialists are convinced that the refinery's ripple effects will have a positive bearing on all industries that rely on petroleum products. They would be able to fetch petroleum products at affordable costs to power their operations and in turn, this increases "their competitiveness in the global market while promoting local industry capabilities".

Moreover, there is also the issue of

job creation. During the construction stage, the Dangote Refinery Complex employed about 40,000 workers according to Nnaemeka Vincent Emodi who writes for the African publication, The Conversation. Of the 40,000, 29,000 were Nigerians and 11,000 foreigners. Once the refinery starts functioning at full capacity, it will employ a quarter of a million workers! This will essentially make it one of the biggest employers in Nigeria.

Seated on a 2,635-hectare piece of land, the Dangote single-train refinery is now the biggest private investment in Africa. The USD 20 billion investment was to a large extent funded by the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank).

In his keynote address during the official commissioning of the Dangote

Refinery Complex, Mr. Dangote had lots of warm words to Afreximbank stating, "I must especially appreciate Afreximbank and its President, Prof Benedict Oramah (CON), whose unwavering support and encouragement and thoughtful advice has helped us to overcome even the most daunting challenges. Prof Oramah, I want to thank you not only for this project, I want to thank you for the great job you are doing for Africa as a whole".

While Dangote expressed optimism and hope that the refinery will as soon as June start operating at full capacity, energy experts are a bit cautious warning that this may not be the case. They cite Nigeria's declining crude oil production as well as vandalism of pipelines, oil theft and underinvestment as the main



impeding factors. The agreement between the Dangote Refinery Complex and the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for the latter to supply 300,000 bpd of crude to the former may pose major challenges. This is necessitated by the fact that NNPC is obligated by other contractual agreements to supply oil to ExxonMobil, Shell and Eni. To meet all its targets, NNPC will therefore need to function at full capacity something it has struggled with in the recent past.

If NNPC fails to meet its target to supply 300,000 bpd of crude to the Dangote Refinery Complex, the complex will more likely be forced to source crude from external actors such as Trafigura and Vitol according to economist Kelvin Emmanuel. This will in essence counter Dangote's plan to eliminate "the tragedy of import dependency".

Also, of concern is the refinery's contribution to Nigeria's commitment to net zero emission goals. Outgoing President Muhammadu Buhari during his address at the COP26 Climate Change meeting in 2021 said Nigeria is committed to net zero emissions by 2060 to protect the country's environment and ecosystem and all its future generations. Oil refineries are known to be one of the major contributors to global carbon emissions accounting for 4% of all emissions. There is thus the danger of the Dangote Refinery Complex countering the efforts already taken to tackle carbon emissions.

In addition to the refinery plant, the Dangote Refinery Complex is



*The presence of President Buhari and key regional leaders underscored the importance of the revolutionary project.*

also home to a 435-megawatt power station, a deep seaport and a fertiliser plant.

Top international delegates attended the official commissioning of the Dangote Refinery Complex including emissaries from Ghana, Senegal, Niger, Benin Republic, and Chad presidential departments. Also, in attendance is the outgoing Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari.

In his speech, the outgoing Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari thanked Dangote for his efforts in uplifting Nigeria and called upon other business people and entrepreneurs to chip into the country's macroeconomics and elevate Nigeria's economic status.

«I urge and encourage our other great entrepreneurs to emulate this

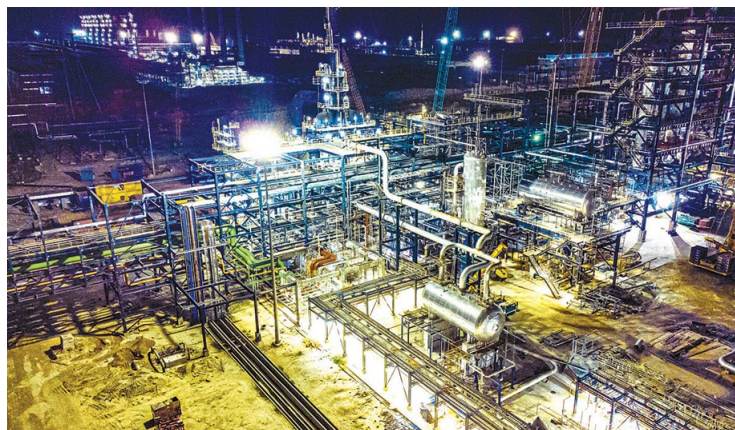
iconic Nigerian industrialist and join the government in accelerating our growth to realise our country's globally recognised economic potential... We must create the necessary conditions for our private sector to grow and partner with the public sector to accelerate economic growth across the continent. We must not allow outside powers to use some of our leaders to destabilise our economic and political trajectory," Buhari said.

He went on to state that the recent past and current global challenges which have also affected Nigeria directly and indirectly such as the Covid-19 pandemic, militancy and security issues, drops in oil prices as well as the Russia-Ukraine War means that the cooperation between the private and public sectors is more crucial now than ever before if the country is to rise above all these challenges. He thus called upon the private sector to be proactive in establishing synergies with the public sector.

"The consequence of these challenges (infrastructure shortfalls, militancy, and foreign crises like the 2008 financial crisis, drops in oil prices, the COVID-19 epidemic, and the Russia-Ukraine war) constitutes a severe strain on our economy, limiting the government's ability to provide basic infrastructure without

resorting to huge borrowings... Our government, therefore, took the decision to focus attention on creating an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive and fill the enormous gap in investments not only in infrastructure but also in all critical sectors... We recognise that without the active participation of the private sector and a strong commitment to a public-private partnership, our economy would continue to remain severely challenged and our economic growth impeded," Buhari said.

President Buhari's call for the private sector to venture more into national affairs was also echoed by Godwin Emefiele, the governor of Nigeria's Central Bank. Governor Emefiele said «We have it on good authority that the Dangote Group has paid down some portion of the commercial loans, even before the commissioning of this facility... This reflects the astute creditworthiness and commercial capability of the Group and its Chairman, Alhaji Aliko Dangote. Your Excellencies, please permit me at this juncture to appreciate all the participating local Nigerian banks, who did not only partner with the project through effective financing but were keenly aware of the importance of the project to our nation.»



*Energy experts think the refinery has game changing prospects for Nigeria.*



# A JUST TRANSITION

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N J A Y U K



# Angola Becomes ATI's 21st Member State, Pays USD25m In Capital Subscription Fees

*The country becomes the 1st Lusophone Member State of the African Trade Insurance Agency, ATI.*

The Republic of Angola has become the 21st African Member State and the 1st Lusophone Member State of pan-African insurer, Africa Trade Insurance Agency - ATI, after paying a capital subscription of USD25 million.

The membership was funded the Angolan National Treasury resources and proceeds from the landmark BITA water project - a strategic public investment for the construction of infrastructure for the treatment, supply and storage of drinking water that will benefit 2.5 million people in Angola.

Welcoming Angola's membership, ATI's Chief Executive Officer, Manuel Moses, noted the country's demonstration of its commitment to diversify its economy through ATI's trade and investment risk mitigation solutions.

"We are happy to support Angola in its quest to economic diversification and becoming an agricultural powerhouse on the African continent. Angola's membership is timely as ATI's risk mitigation and credit enhancement services will act as a catalyst for strengthening and diversifying Angola's economy, supporting both increased investment, exports and trade under Africa's continental framework of the AfCFTA," Mr. Manuel said.

Under this one of a kind blended finance and guarantee innovative structure, the Republic of Angola – along with the lenders covered by ATI under the transaction – agreed for the use of proceeds under the syndicated loan to also include the financing for the purpose of Angola becoming a member of ATI. ATI provided guarantee and insurance support for this World Bank's partially guaranteed facility to the Government of Angola for the expansion and



*ATI's risk mitigation and credit enhancement services will act as a catalyst for strengthening and diversifying Angola's economy, says ATI's CEO Manuel Moses.*

improvement of water supply service in the urban and peri-urban belts of Luanda.

## Current exposure

ATI's gross exposure in Angola, the largest country in Southern Africa Region, currently stands at USD467M mainly in construction, energy & gas, trade & transport, water supply and wholesale & retail sectors, with transactions valued at USD1.4B.

"This development was made possible because of ATI's pan African mandate that allows the organization to cover transactions in Angola and beyond, despite ATI non-membership. Now that Angola is a fully-fledged shareholder of ATI, the country can fully access more of ATI's guarantee solutions to attract more Foreign Direct Investments and boost its internal and external trade across the region," Mr. Manuel explained.

Angola's economy is mainly driven by its oil sector but the country seeks to pursue new growth models for economic diversification through the

agricultural sector and private sector development.

With ATI's support, Angola is on the path to fiscal consolidation, manage their debt ceiling, increase in public and private investment, in order to resume the ascending curve of sustainable and inclusive economic growth as well as human development.

ATI has grown from a small African start-up in 2001 into a pan-African institution with presence across Africa and with a significant global reach. Besides Angola, other member countries include Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Institutional members include African Development Bank, African Reinsurance Corporation, Atradius Group, Chubb, CESCE (Spanish ECA), Ministry of Finance India (represented by ECGC), SACE

SIMEST, The Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Trade and Development Bank (TDB), Kenya-Re, The PTA Reinsurance Company (Zep-Re), and the UK Export Finance.

## Notes to Editors

### About African Trade Insurance Agency, ATI

ATI is a pan-African institution that provides political risk insurance to companies, investors, and lenders interested in doing business in Africa. With deep roots in Africa, we are best positioned to understand and assess the risks here – and to help mitigate them. As a result, we offer robust risk solutions to our clients. Our financial partners have come to rely on our assessments because of our credibility, financial strength, and underwriting capacity.

For more information, please visit <https://www.ati-aca.org/>

# Malawi: Chihana Braces For Presidential Run

By Joseph Dumbula

Malawi's democratic history will be incomplete without the name, Chakufwa Chihana. The late Chakufwa Chihana was a widely celebrated human rights activist, pro-democracy advocate, trade unionist and politician. His works earned him national and regional recognition as Malawi's father of democracy. He is attributed with ushering in pluralism in Malawi. Following in his father's footsteps, Chakufwa Chihana's son, Enoch is bent on reviving and rejuvenating the movement that his late father founded, the Alliance for Democracy (Aford). Perhaps, this is with one eye on the ballot in the next elections?

This is not Enoch Chihana's first dance in Malawi's political and electoral ground. Chihana's party was one of the nine constituent political parties in the Tonse Alliance. The Tonse Alliance is the alliance which catapulted current President Lazarus Chakwera and his Malawi Congress Party to the presidium in 2020 while in the same vein, putting the final nail in the coffin of long-time leader Peter Mutharika's political career.

Once friends (in the Tonse



*Chihana cheering party followers at a most recent rally.*

Alliance) but now 'political foes', President Chakwera and his Malawi Congress Party are now set to go head to head against Enoch Chihana and the Alliance for Democracy. This comes after Chihana and his party explicitly demonstrated their desire to challenge in the upcoming polls citing President Chakwera's incompetence to put the country on a positive socio-economic development trajectory.

To get a better understanding of the Alliance for Democracy's roadmap for the upcoming 2023 General Election as well as Enoch Chihana's political ambitions, PAV's Joseph Dumbula sat down with Chihana to get his and his party's position.

The 59-year-old Chihana in the interview was coy on the subject of assuming his party's presidency and hence running as his party's

candidate. The political science, public policy and international relations graduate from Kansas State University in the United States of America left the decision in the hands of his party saying that 'it will be up to delegates at the convention to vote for me or anyone'.

***With the 2025 Malawi General Election fast approaching, is Aford ready to contest? Do the recent rallies that the party has conducted suggest that it's ready to compete?***

Enoch Chihana: You are quite right. We have been into a rebuilding process which is also part of a restructuring call, processes which will take us to the convention. At that convention, people will choose who should lead them. I should not be straightforward to commit to being the torchbearer myself as it will depend on what the delegates wish. But, I must say, it will require the entire party to stretch a comeback we are wishing for.

***In the 2020 elections, Aford was part of the alliance which helped President Chakwera wrestle power. This time, the party is going solo. Why the change?***

Enoch Chihana: In the first place, we must say that we have been observing the nation from both ends. From the inside, the government is working hard, but the impression does not look the same outside here. So, the areas that are flawed now, are those that we seek to address by taking the government mandate. However, 2025 is nearing, perhaps the current regime will make a turnaround and Malawians will be the best judges. We want Malawians to give us as Aford that mandate.

The day Chakwera was declared winner in the 2020 Fresh Presidential Polls, I had known that was the end of the Tonse Alliance. As Aford, we have not benefitted anything but



*No more allies. Chihana may be taking on President Chakwera in the next elections.*



only the UTM (led by Vice President Saulos Chilima) and the Malawi Congress Party led by Chakwera. So, to say the least, we are not part of the current regime at all. We feel that the economy is not performing as it is supposed to be and that is what we want to resolve.

**Tell us, does this now imply you no longer trust alliances and won't seek any in 2025?**

Enoch Chihana: We do not want to take this repeated path again even though there is the, 50+1 threshold. We will not again be compelled to partner with others. We shall be going solo in the view that Malawians understand our ambitions and what we thrive to bring to this nation. That is why, we are restructuring to beat the odds in the next polls. We have that power ourselves and we will let Malawians know our extents. We will hold a convention in September this year to elect new office bearers.

**What are you promising the nation of Malawi if Aford is elected into office?**

Enoch Chihana: We seek total change in how Malawi is operating. That is where we must start from onwards. We need to empower the youths and give ourselves goals that we must be able to fulfill. We have as a nation not done that and it comes through our party. Our conviction is that we must be in line with how other nations within the region are moving.

**What is the party's stand on calls for the legalization of same-sex marriages in the country amid accusations that your party has been getting support to rally behind the move?**

Enoch Chihana: We wish to deny that our party has been getting funds from proponents of same-sex marriage. Our stand is that Malawians should be left to live their lives without influences from external forces which seek to alter the beliefs of people.

We will strongly speak against same-sex laws and even if we win in



*Chihana and wife Tadala at a political event.*

the next elections, we shall ensure that these calls are not supported at all.

**Your party has an alignment with the northern region, where others have complained of underdevelopment and therefore call for a federal system of government. Your take on this call?**

Enoch Chihana: We feel that this conversation must really take place to balance developments across the regions. We see the need for such deliberations as it will be approved by Malawians see to it that there is a balance between developments

across our major three regions.

What inspirations do you draw from your father who is part of the country's history?

Enoch Chihana: The ambition of my father was to bring democracy and with the others, they managed to do that. But now, they left spaces we have to fill, and that is developing this nation. That is why, we are attaining that baton in a relay race perspective to improve. We can't just be stuck in our status.

**What are your ambitions now?**

Enoch Chihana: My ambitions should be separated from the party. But I am striving to ensure that we

have a strong party again. That is why I have been spearheading the exercises you referred to. We are doing that, to ensure that everyone takes the party as their own.

History of Aford and performance

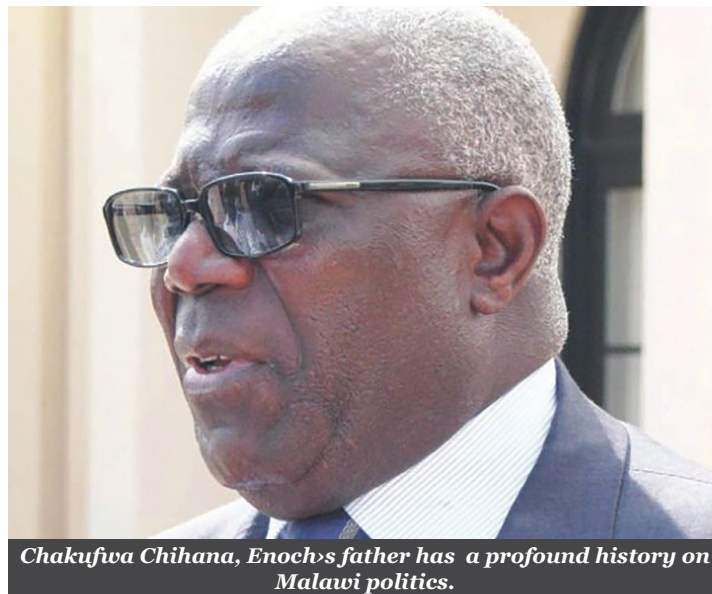
AFORD began as an underground political movement under Banda's dictatorship under the leadership of trade unionist and political activist Chakufwa Chihana.

He led an underground political movement that aimed at democratic multi-party rule. He was the first person to openly challenge the system. Therefore, he is known as the 'father of Malawian democracy' for his role in ushering in rule in Malawi.

The AFORD was opposed to furthering the reign of the autocratic leader Banda and sought rather promote the idea of true democracy. Under Chakufwa Chihana's influence, the AFORD political party began initially as a pressure group because political parties were illegal for some time under the dictatorial reign of Hastings Banda.

In the 1999 presidential elections, out of the 3,775,256 registered voters in Malawi, 562,862 voted for Aford marking votes for Chakufwa at 18.89 percent.

In 2009, Aford only attained percentage when the party was led by Dindi Gowa Nyasulu.

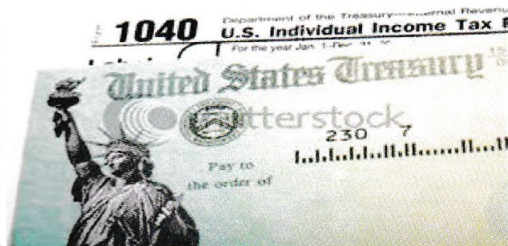


*Chakufwa Chihana, Enoch's father has a profound history on Malawi politics.*



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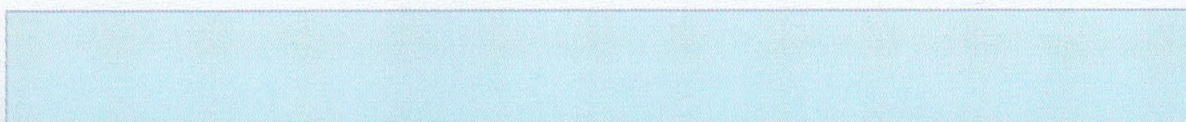
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# Sierra Leone : Why President Bio Deserves Another Five Years

By Francis Senesie\*



*President Maada Bio is seeking a second term of Office.*

President Julius Maada Bio will face his main rival challenger and opposition candidate of the All-Peoples Congress Dr. Samura Mathew Wilson Kamara in this June 24th elections, an elections believed to be another tightly contested elections in the West African nation.

Bio, who has ruled the country for nearly five years, is however favoured to win for another five years' term as the country goes to the polls. A recent survey by the Institute For Governance Reform (IGR) said his party, the ruling Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) stands a chance of winning majority seats in the next parliament with a range of 53 %-59% whilst the main opposition All People's Congress (APC) to retain its place as the main opposition occupying 37% to 46% seats followed by other parties.

In 2018, whilst running for

President, Bio campaigned on the ticket of the Free Quality Education, curbing corruption, to name a few. Like any other politician, every President comes with his own agenda, but most of these agendas have been cosmetic, but President Bio ushered in a new era, with his focus being the development of the academic strength of the young generation, whom he believed to be the "human capital " of any nation. He believed they would be the future leaders that would put the country on a firm footing. This priority area lays the foundation for all future development of any nation, because experts believe that an educated society will be a developed society.

"I promise a New Direction for Sierra Leone as a united, peaceful, progressive, dynamic, confident, enterprising, and happy nation where the people have unlimited access

to jobs, food, education and health services and where there is equal justice and equal opportunity for all. We must transform Sierra Leone into a Middle-Income Country of the 21st Century. This is my vision for Sierra Leone. The flagship of our strategic priorities will focus on developing the country's human capital through free education. We believe in giving every child a good education so that they can develop themselves, support their families and build our nation for the future," Bio said in 2018 during the launch of his party's manifesto. Thus, top in his manifesto promise for 2018 was Free Quality School Education. President Bio is convinced that when you educate a nation all other things will fall in place. There will be diversity of knowledge and skills that will contribute greatly to the development of the nation. When he introduced this idea, his critics

wondered how he was going to do it, but he was not perturbed by their pessimism, he kept his eyes on the goal, and today, FQSE is here to stay.

Through this program today, there are more kids in school than at any other time in the history of Sierra Leone, and even child-mothers have a place in school. To further enhance skills training among adolescents, His Excellency encouraged the establishment of vocational institutes, where young people who were unable to complete schooling for one reason or the other now have the opportunity to learn some trade that will make them self-reliant.

Having ensured that the FQSE has taken root, His Excellency embarked on other development drive, among which is the infrastructure, which included building roads that will link various parts of the country and enhance transportation of goods

and services across the country, thereby enhancing trade among citizens. Roads were being constructed across the country, as well as feeder roads in almost every region, being rehabilitated to facilitate accessibility. Bridges like the Rogbere

and Mabang were constructed, thereby opening the country to other areas, as well as reducing the time of travel to the provinces. Roadworks from Freetown to Liberia and Guinea have been improved by the new road network undertaken by his government.

As accessibility has been enhanced, President Bio embarked on the development of agriculture, with the setting up of a Seed Certification Agency (SLeSCA), charged with the responsibility to examine, test and certify all seeds for production in the country, with premium put on rice seed. Today, the rice seed used by farmers are all grown in the country, thanks to the new policy shift where no rice seed is being imported by the government for farmers. The past two years have been example of what Sierra Leoneans can do when given the opportunity to. Enough rice seed was produced that the country no longer imports rice seed for cultivation, which reduces the amount of money spent on importation of rice seed.

When President Bio took up office in 2018, he inherited a cosmetic electricity generation and distribution process, with the government spending huge sums of money on a power generating ship. He renegotiated the terms of agreement with the owners of the power ship and arrives at a reasonable agreement. But that did not deter him from exhausting other means of power generation. Under his leadership, the regional power pool was introduced in the country, with certain districts benefitting from the system, which is currently being rolled out across the country, albeit slowly. Whilst that is on-going, His Excellency also



*Francis Senesie thinks that President Bio deserves a second term to continue with his development agenda for Sierra Leone*

engaged development partners in respect of other energy generation means, and today there are several mini-grids in several districts.

To enhance tourism and facilitate traveling abroad, His Excellency embarked on the construction of a modern state-of-the-art airport terminal at Lungi, which has now increased the country's image and now has opened the airport to more and bigger air traffic and will attract more tourists to the country.

In the area of employment, the New Direction government of President Bio constructed various car wash centres across the city, thereby providing jobs for hitherto idle youths who were open to all vices. A Youth Corp was strengthened to provide training for youths from universities and schools, exposing them to the professional world through internships in business establishments across the

city. Some of these have gained employment where they went for working experiences. More nurses and teachers have been recruited and given pin codes, and their salaries reviewed.

In his bid to improve the health sector, President Bio's administration has been able to reconstruct and rehabilitate hospitals across Freetown and provided equipment for the facilities. The main referral hospital has been rehabilitated with new beds and other medical facilities provided. To address deaths from late transportation of patients to hospitals, the government introduced the Free Ambulance services across the country. Now pregnant women, who normally died on the road to hospitals for delivery or give birth on the roadside on their way from their villages to the nearest health facility, were now conveyed to the hospital

by the free ambulance service. All they have to do is to call a toll-free line and the ambulance picks them up.

The New Direction under Bio's leadership saw in October 2020 the expungement of the fifty-five yearlong Seditious Libel Section of the Public Order Act of 1965 that criminalized free speech and limits freedom of the press. This gave Journalists the latitude to practice their profession without being barred in solitary confinements for speaking up against politicians and other powerful individuals. This attempt was to expand democratic spaces, consolidate a more just and peaceful society, enhance the media industry promote and good governance.

The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act of 2022 (The GEWE Act) passed into law by Parliament and signed by President Bio. A monumental legislation that gives women the single largest increase to political participation in the history of Sierra Leone. The legislation gives women the opportunity to access finance, employment,

equal pay, maternity leave, and political representation. The law provides for 30% quota of women serving in governance both appointed including cabinet ministers, ambassadorial appointments, directorates, and elected offices including parliamentary, mayoral, and local government councils.

Amidst the above facts, President Bio has a passion for the development of the country, and if given another chance, he will do more for the country.

The Anti-Corruption Commission Act of 2008 as amended in 2019. Under Bio's administration, fighting corruption occupies the first five agenda items in his Manifesto. Given corruption as adverse effect to economic and social development, direct foreign investment, effective service delivery equal opportunity, and access to justice and the Rule of



Law. Bio appointed a young, but rather learned and determined commissioner to lead a robust team in the fight against corruption. 2019 Bio signed into law the Anti-Corruption Amendment Act of 2019 in fulfilment of both manifesto and public commitment to wipe out corruption and make it unfashionable in the lives of Sierra Leoneans especially those serving in public trust. Established a special Anti-Corruption Division within the High Court system and appointed five judges to sit on ACC cases exclusively and expeditiously. Bio's leadership introduced the Integrity Management Committees in all Ministries, Departments and Agencies. In the international arena, Sierra Leone's reputation on corruption control has been enhanced including Transparency International's Corruption Afro-Barometer, ranking Sierra Leone third in 2019 among 35 countries in Africa for Government's effectiveness in the fight against corruption. 66% of citizens believe in the government's seriousness in the fight against corruption. Sierra Leone current score stands at 79% in the Millennium Challenge

Corporation (MCC) since Bio came to office in 2018. A huge improvement from its failing 49% score with his predecessors. A newly constructed ultra-modern facility officially opened 5th June, 2023 to serve as ACC Headquarters in Freetown in addition to remodeled and equipped regional offices across the country to accommodate employees in their

work.

Bio has enjoyed a lot of support from international partners, the private sector, and multilateral institutions operating both locally and foreign. Among such organizations in the diaspora is the Senesie Empowerment Foundation founded by Francis Senesie and wife Wendy Senesie. Since its formation, the foundation



*Senesie Empowerment Foundation CEO Francis Senesie and his wife Wendy Senesie have spared no efforts in supporting initiatives that compliment the vision and development efforts of President Bio.*

SLPP North America fund raising event for Bio's re-elections donated the sum of \$5,000 in education project of the country. In addition, it has also donated the sum of \$16, 000 to support healing and health care in Sierra Leone to help boost health care infrastructure and system in the country.

With this kind of huge mark Bio has made, as stated in his recently launched manifesto dubbed "Peoples Manifesto" will prioritize in feeding Salone which entails an ambitious programme to boost staple food production to drastically minimize our reliance on food imports, increase our exports, create jobs, boost economic growth and reduce poverty, Human Capital development for nurturing skills for 21st century industry, with a gender focus, a Youth Employment Scheme to create the desired results. Clearly Bio deserves another five years to do more!!

\* Francis Senesie is a son of the soil, a progressive and patriotic citizen of Sierra Leone. My wife, Wendy and I started the Senesie Empowerment Foundation in 2019 as a way of giving back to the community and a thriving nation still lingering under the scars of eleven-year civil war. The Foundation's work centers around fostering positive change on the vulnerable population through advocacy for women empowerment, youth empowerment, providing education assistance to youth, and mobility assistance to persons with disability. The views in this article are his.

has contributed immensely to the development of Sierra Leone.

In 2020, the foundation as a way of complementing the government FQE, it distributed and donated over 80 million Leones worth of school materials to vulnerable children in Moyamba district, Southern, Sierra Leone.

The foundation also during the

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Edited by Wafula Okumu and Andrews Atta-Asamoah



# Buhari's Toothache And A Nation In Its Death Throes

By Chido Onumah\*

General Muhammadu Buhari (ret'd.) will leave office on May 29 after eight uneventful years. We hope it is the last time we hear from a man who rode to power eight years ago promising to end insecurity, strengthen the economy and fight corruption, none of which he achieved. Thankfully, he has vowed not to intervene in our national life and expressed his willingness to disappear to Niger Republic if we request accountability after almost a decade of ruinous leadership.

It is a fitting testament to the leadership calamity of the past eight years that Gen. Buhari (ret'd.) was in a London hospital two weeks to the end of his eight-year tenure, this time to treat toothache. He is ending his misrule much the same way he started it. While Gen. Buhari (ret'd.) has spent the last eight years taking care of himself and his health, he has left the country prostrate; more corrupt, more insecure, and more divided than he met it eight years ago. The only thing that seems to have improved since he became president on May 29, 2015, is his health and his family fortune.

Thanks to Dataphyte, a media research and data analytics organisation, we know that since 2016, Gen Buhari (ret'd.) has budgeted a total of N7.7billion (about \$16.7million), at the official exchange of N461 to a dollar, for the presidential clinic. A breakdown of this figure shows that N2.027billion (\$4.3million) was for recurrent expenditure while N5.6billion (\$12.3million) was for capital expenditure. In 2021, Gen Buhari (ret'd.) approved the construction and equipping of a 14-bed space presidential clinic at a cost of N21billion (\$45.5million).

Last November Gen. Buhari (ret'd.), was in London on "routine medical check-up." Nigerians have lost count of the number of days Mr. Buhari has spent in London on medical tourism since he came to power. According to Prof. Farooq A. Kperogi, in a November 2022 essay titled, "Buhari



*Buhari leaves office after two terms and plenty of unfinished business from his campaign promises. Photo courtesy.*

Misunderstood King Charles—and Burns Nigeria on His Way Out," Buhari's frequent London trips "while pretending to be president of Nigeria," may have provoked the question by England's King Charles III if Buhari had a home in London.

It is almost forty years since Gen Buhari (ret'd.) overthrew the democratically elected government of Shehu Shagari, truncating Nigeria's Second Republic. One of the reasons Buhari and his coterie gave for their treasonable act was to tackle "the great economic predicament and uncertainty, which an inept and corrupt leadership has imposed on our beloved nation for the past four years."

Brigadier General Sani Abacha (later, military dictator from 1993-1998), read the coup speech—purportedly on behalf of the Nigerian Armed Forces—that formally ended the government of President Shehu Shagari (1979-1983). Abacha spoke of "the harsh, intolerable conditions under which we are now living."

"Our economy has been hopelessly mismanaged; we have become a debtor and beggar nation [sound familiar?]. There is inadequacy of food at reasonable prices for our people who are now fed up with endless

announcements of importation of foodstuff; health services are in shambles as our hospitals are reduced to mere consulting clinics (emphasis mine) without drugs, water and equipment," he told a beleaguered nation.

Less than two years later, another general, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, would give the same reasons for overthrowing the regime of General Buhari.

"The last twenty months have not witnessed any significant changes in the national economy. Contrary to expectations, we have so far been subjected to a steady deterioration in the general standard of living; and intolerable suffering by the ordinary Nigerians have risen higher, scarcity of commodities has increased, hospitals still remain mere consulting clinics (emphasis mine), while educational institutions are on the brink of decay. Unemployment has stretched to critical dimensions," Babangida averred in his August 27, 1985, coup speech.

Babangida ruled for eight years. In 2009, sixteen years after he "stepped aside," he lost his wife, the delectable First Lady, Maryam Babangida, at the City Hope Hospital, California, USA, after years of battling ovarian

cancer. Babangida was reported to be by her side when she died. As military president, Babangida spent time in France for surgery—one of many subsequent overseas surgeries—for treatment of radiculopathy (pinched nerve), a medical condition in which "one or more nerves are affected and do not work properly."

When you hear or read the reasons these soldiers of fortune gave for upturning the constitution and how they ended up violating our fundamental freedoms and savaging the country, you want to weep for Nigeria.

Eight years ago, some Nigerians took a chance on Gen. Buhari (ret'd.). They were willing to replace a weak and rudderless president with one who vowed that he was a born-again-democrat, a man of integrity. He would end up dividing us into a country of 97 and 5 percent. It is trite to say Nigerians have been terribly disappointed; it is a great understatement to say that the cheque of tackling corruption and insecurity and building prosperity promised eight years ago has been nothing but a dud cheque.

Today, the country is broken almost beyond repair. Corruption is rife. We are a debtor nation, a deeply

fractured one at that. The country is more divided today than at any other time, and I am not talking about political division. Not since the civil war have we witnessed the level of division, fear and loathing we are experiencing today. Indeed, we are facing an existential crisis.

Make no mistake, the trouble with Nigeria did not start with Gen. Buhari (retd.) The trouble has been there from the outset.

Part of the solution to the trouble with Nigeria is effective and selfless leadership. Unfortunately, the leadership recruitment process in Nigeria is as polluted as the gutters of the major streets of the country. Prof Chinua Achebe in his 1983 book, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, noted that, "I know enough history to realize that civilization does not fall down from the sky; it has always been the result

of people's toil and sweat, the fruit of their long search for order and justice under brave and enlightened leaders."

Of course, Nigeria can redeem itself. But a nation can only have so many chances to redeem itself. Nigeria is certainly running out of chances. Time is running out on what

some people like to call the Nigerian project. Everywhere you turn to, you are confronted with poverty, decay, corruption, injustice, lawlessness, impunity, nepotism, and insecurity, occasioned by a bankrupt elite—certified scoundrels in every sense of the word—for whom enlightened

self-interest means absolutely nothing, who have occupied the political space and are holding the country by the jugular. The educational system has all but collapsed; health services are in shambles. If our hospitals were "consulting clinics" four decades ago when the current monstrosity truncated the Second Republic, today they are death chambers.

Unfortunately, there is no let-up in this quest for redemption. Of course, the challenge today is how to pull the country from the brink, save its beleaguered citizens, and restore the dignity of Africa and the Black race.

We must do it, by any means necessary!

**\*This essay is an excerpt from the introduction of an up-coming book: By Any Means Necessary: Rogue Elite, State Capture, and the Transformation of Nigeria.**



*The transition from Buhari to Tinubu ensures that power remains with the APC.*

## Zimbabwe: Mnangagwa Plays The AfDB Card On Sanctions Regime

By Prince Kurupati

Since the turn of the new millennium, Zimbabwe's image and standing on the global stage has not been a pleasant one. The net result of all the negative coverage – deserved in some instances and underserved in others – has been isolation. During the reign of Mugabe until his untimely demise in 2017, Zimbabwe did not really care about its isolation on the world stage. Rather, with the parting of one friend, it chose to look for another instead of trying the mend relations and have cordial relations will all global nations.

Following the demise of Mugabe, his successor Emmerson Mnangagwa took a different stance. Instead of leaving frosty relations with international actors as is, he decided to embark upon a re-engagement drive. The drive's main mission is to make Zimbabwe an investment destination of choice and a nation which welcomes everyone.

Several initiatives have been taken



*Former president of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano (left), Zimbabwe president Emmerson Mnangagwa, African Development Bank president Akinwumi Adesina.*

by the Zimbabwean government with regards to changing its international image. Some have had no success at all while others show just glimpses of hope. However, the one plan which seems to be working best for the country is the roping in of the African

Development Bank (AfDB) and its President Akinwumi Adesina as Zimbabwe's reengagement partner.

Inspired by his desire to shift Zimbabwe from its current pariah state on the global stage to a respectable status, President Mnangagwa invited

AfDB President Akinwumi Adesina and former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano to a roundtable to discuss the best way to take Zimbabwe forward in the process, deliberating on measures to take in ensuring that the country succeeds in



its re-engagement drive.

Banking on the help from the AfDB President, as well as President Chissano, President Mnangagwa, instituted Structured Dialogue Platforms. Structured dialogue platforms are roundtable meetings in which the three leaders as well as other captains of industry, creditors, development partners and top government officials from Zimbabwe come together to share ideas on how best to move in their concerted efforts to address Zimbabwe's debt clearance problem as well as restore Zimbabwe's positive image on the international front.

State newspaper The Herald reports that «Zimbabwe's total consolidated debt stands at \$17,5 billion. Debt owed to international creditors stands at \$14,04 billion, while domestic debt stands at \$3,4 billion. Debt owed to bilateral creditors is estimated at \$5,75 billion, while debt to multilateral creditors is estimated at \$2,5 billion.»

President Adesina acknowledges that Zimbabwe's debt is indeed huge and exterminating it all will require a great effort. He is however convinced that with the right tools and a willingness to work, success can be achieved. «Zimbabwe cannot run up the hill of economic recovery carrying a backpack of debt on its back. It is time for a comprehensive debt arrears clearance and debt resolution for Zimbabwe. But getting there is not a walk in the park. We must address history, to make history... economic sanctions are driving Zimbabwe further into unsustainable debt. The debt itself is not as debilitating as the arrears on the debt since the country cannot access international concessional financing or other revenue or less expensive financing to pay down its debt obligations.»

To President Chissano, addressing the arrears and debt issue in Zimbabwe will bring much-needed relief not just to Zimbabwe but to southern Africa as a whole. «The crisis in the country is having terrible consequences for the region, as Zimbabwe lies at the heart of Southern Africa. Many regional infrastructure development plans,



*It remains to be seen how serious President Mnangagwa will take the recommendations.*

including roads, railways and power transmission lines have been brought to a standstill, as they have to run through the country. The continental free trade is also undermined by the situation prevailing in Zimbabwe.»

In his recommendations after the very first meeting with the Zimbabwean President, President Adesina advised Zimbabwe to work on the following «...freedom of speech, human rights protection, implementation of laws in line with the constitution and implementation of the Motlanthe report.»

President Adesina's recommendations, therefore, meant that the country does not just need to prioritize figures and numbers in addressing the debt clearance issue but also need to work on other socio-political factors.

Following the recommendations by the AfDB President, the Zimbabwean President created «three sub-committees covering key areas of donor concern, including broad reforms and the compensation of white farmers displaced by our needful Land Reform Programme,» as he stated in his weekly column in The Sunday Mail, a state-owned newspaper in Zimbabwe.

Heeding the recommendations made by President Adesina and agreeing to a \$3.5 billion compensation plan meant at

compensating white farmers who lost their land during the Land Reform Program has somewhat divided the nation. Proponents of the plan argue that it is the best way forward as it eliminates the one main thing which the West said was a key causative factor in slapping Zimbabwe with economic sanctions. However, proponents who argue against the plan say it shows that Zimbabwe has compromised on its sovereignty as it allows foreign dictates to guide its domestic and foreign policies. They argue that the best use of the compensation funds is to channel them to welfare services like health and education that benefit ordinary citizens.

It's to be seen however how willing Mnangagwa is to pursue all the recommendations as President Adesina advised that time is of the essence if the arrears and debt clearance project is to bear any fruits. «So, timing counts; responsiveness counts; and financial sustainability counts.» It's also to be seen how Zimbabwe will handle the upcoming harmonized elections as President Adesina warned that «The full weight of re-engagement with the international community will depend on this. It will also depend not just on the election, but the entire electoral process that guarantees a credible election».

It seems however that Mnangagwa in heeding the recommendations by President Adesina is taking one step forward and two steps backwards. As noble as it is agreeing to the land reform compensation plan, the mere fact that Mnangagwa's party Zanu (PF) helped the Patriotic Bill sail through Parliament thanks to its 2/3 parliamentary majority is worrisome. The Patriotic Bill once assented to by the President will become law and that means all government critics will be at the mercy of the President and courts of law. This is necessitated by the fact that the Patriotic Bill seeks to inhibit criticism of the government with offenders liable to 10 years or more imprisonment. The nature of the Bill means that it's against freedom of speech, something which President Adesina advised Zimbabwe to work on if it wants to achieve success on its arrears and debt clearance drive.

Outspoken Zimbabwean investigative journalist Hopewell Chin'ono while speaking after the sailing through of the Patriotic Bill in Parliament said the debt clearance project has suffered a stillbirth as the Patriotic Act «seeks to jail Zimbabweans who criticize President Mnangagwa and his regime and also it seeks to jail Zimbabweans who expose corruption and looting in the name of patriotism.»



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# A Closer Look at Africa's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Industry: Established Players and Promising New Projects

By NJ Ayuk\*



***The African Energy Chamber (AEC) has outlined our expectations for Africa's gas sector in the "The State of African Energy Q1 2023 Report"***

Africa may not possess the vast conventional gas resources of the Middle East or Russia, and it may not be able to match the combined conventional and unconventional resources of North America. But it does have a sizeable amount of gas – at least 620 trillion cubic feet (tcf) – 17.56 trillion cubic meters (tcm) – in proven reserves.

That's more than enough to make Africa a key player in the global gas industry. In fact, it puts Africa in a position to influence the course of the industry, especially in light of long-term trends, including the shift to more flexible contract and delivery

terms, along with more recent developments such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The African Energy Chamber (AEC) has outlined our expectations for Africa's gas sector in the "The State of African Energy Q1 2023 Report", a new publication available for download on our website. The report covers our outlook on both upstream and downstream trends. Here, I'd like to offer some extra insight into our take on downstream developments – that is, on African liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, including the countries currently dominating the industry and those preparing to make their presence known.

## ***African Gas Takes the Stage***

First, some background.

I've already noted that Africa has

significant gas reserves. And prior to last year, those reserves had already drawn a significant amount of attention from international oil companies (IOCs) and other entities involved in the global gas trade. Indeed, they hadn't just attracted attention; they'd also attracted many billions of dollars in investment commitments from firms seeking access to large undeveloped gas deposits. IOCs were especially keen to enter offshore frontier provinces such as the Ruvuma basin, located off the coast of Mozambique, and the Senegal-Mauritania section of the MSGBC basin, located off the continent's western coast.

These companies were interested in Africa not just because they wanted to add new assets to their portfolios. They also wanted to maximize their

ability to serve customers seeking gas on flexible terms. This was in line with the long-term shift toward greater flexibility in the gas sector, which is shedding its previous reliance on overland pipeline deliveries and long-term, large-scale contracts with pricing formulae linked to crude oil.

That is, IOCs wanted African gas precisely because they saw it as an additional means of supporting alternative supply arrangements involving spot market purchases and tanker shipments of LNG. But they shifted from wanting African gas to needing it in late February of 2022, when conflict broke out between Russia and Ukraine. I continue to see this as a major topic requested by many to be on the agenda at African Energy Week taking place in Cape Town on October 16th to 20th.

## African Gas Enters the Spotlight

This event – the Russian invasion of Ukraine – turned out to be a tipping point for Africa's gas sector.

The conflict sent global energy markets into a frenzy. This was partly because it led the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union to introduce embargoes on Russian crude oil supplies and partly because it sparked concerns about possible interruptions in Russian gas deliveries to Europe via pipeline. (These concerns appeared to be valid, as Russian gas shipments to Europe became irregular last year despite the lack of a formal embargo such as the one imposed on oil.)

The conflict also led the EU to step up its long-standing campaign to reduce dependence on Russian gas. Russia has long been the largest outside supplier of gas to the European market, and up until the end of 2021, it was the source of at least a third of all volumes consumed within the EU. Uncertainty over these supplies heightened European interest in alternative supply sources – and a significant portion of that interest settled on Africa.

As a result, some IOCs and EU member states began pursuing deals with North African states that were already in a position to export gas to Southern Europe via pipeline. The Italian energy major Eni, for example, signed a deal with Libya's National Oil Corp. (NOC) in January 2023 with the intent of investing USD8 billion in a gas project that could export its output via the Greenstream pipeline. Eni has also added a number of gas-producing assets in Algeria, which has pipeline connections to both Italy and Spain, to its portfolio over the last

year.

However, some IOCs and EU states have focused on LNG-oriented endeavors that are in line with the growing flexibility of the global gas market. Italy is certainly set to benefit from Eni's efforts on this front; over the last year, the company has arranged to import more LNG from two existing suppliers, Algeria and Angola, while also launching LNG exports from the Coral field offshore Mozambique and striking a deal with the Republic of Congo (ROC) on its floating LNG (FLNG) project for the Marine XII fields.

Eni is hardly alone. For example, the British giant BP said earlier this year that it anticipated making a final investment decision (FID) on the Yakaar-Teranga LNG project, which focuses on a group of fields off the coast of Senegal, before the end of 2023. Meanwhile, Shell (UK) and Equinor (Norway) revealed in mid-May that they had finished negotiations on the USD42billion Tanzania LNG project and expected to sign a host government agreement (HGA) and production-sharing agreement (PSA) within the next few weeks.

And there are plenty of other examples! Altogether, there have been enough new investment pledges made that Africa is now on track to see its total LNG export capacity rise from the current level of 80 million tonnes per year to around 110 million tons per year by 2030 and to more than 175 million tonnes per year by 2040.

## Africa's slowly expanding cast of LNG players

But as the AEC explains in The State

of African Energy Q1 2023 Report," these commitments are not going to change the picture for African LNG immediately. For the time being, the continent's LNG business will continue to be dominated by the most established players: Egypt, Algeria, and Nigeria (and to a lesser extent, Equatorial Guinea and Angola).

Algeria and Egypt, our report notes, likely will maintain their existing LNG infrastructure capacity of about 29 million tonnes per year and 12.7 million tonnes per year respectively.

Nigeria, meanwhile, will increase its LNG infrastructure capacity from 22 million tonnes per annum (MMtpa) to 30 MMtpa when it completes the Nigeria LNG (NLNG) Train 7 development, our report states. The project by Nigeria LNG – a venture comprising the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Shell, TotalEnergies, and Eni – calls for the construction of an additional LNG train and a liquefaction unit for Nigeria's six-train Bonny plant.

Train 7, which was about 32% complete in late 2022, is intended to meet local needs while increasing Nigerian LNG exports, diversifying Nigeria's revenue portfolio, and helping the country better capitalize on its 200 tcf of natural gas reserves.

Nigerian maritime logistics company UTM Offshore, meanwhile, likely will nudge up Nigeria's capacity to just over 31 MMtpa when it completes the FLING project I mentioned above. As of last November, the FLNG was expected to start operating in 2027.

True, BP is due to begin first-phase production at Grand Tortue/Ahmeyim (GTA) block in late 2023, and Eni and its partners are set to

expand LNG production at the Coral field offshore Mozambique. Indeed, the AEC expects these projects to help push African LNG exports up to the equivalent of 66 billion cubic meters this year, up 5% on 2022.

However, it's going to take time to bring the rest of the new projects on stream and to build all these new onshore and offshore LNG plants. Tanzania LNG, for example, is not expected to begin production until 2028, and Eni's Marine XII project will not reach its full capacity of 3 million tonnes per year until late 2025. TotalEnergies of France is not likely to begin commercial operations on the Mozambique LNG project before 2025, and the U.S. giant ExxonMobil will need even more time to launch its Rovuma LNG project in Mozambique, since it has yet to reach the FID stage.

This means that Algeria, Egypt, and Nigeria will continue to account for the majority of the LNG coming out of Africa for the next few years – and that the balance won't really start to shift until the end of the decade. IOCs and EU states are currently laying the groundwork for expanding production and opening up new basins to support LNG projects, but it will take a few years for their efforts to pay off.

For more insights on LNG projects and other developments in the African gas sector, read our "The State of African Energy Q1 2023 Report." It is available for download at [www.EnergyChamber.org](http://www.EnergyChamber.org).

\* NJ Ayuk is Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber

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# A Successful Charm Offensive For AEC In Paris

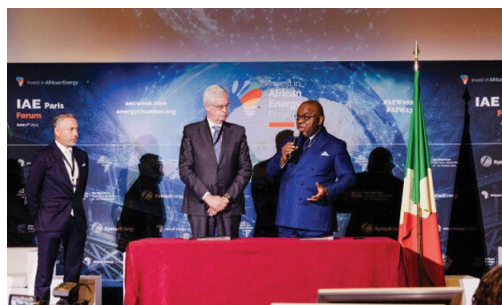
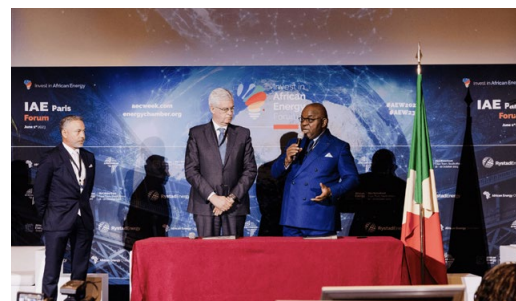
Hot on the heels of three European receptions that took place London, Oslo and Frankfurt, as well as a UAE event held in Dubai, the African Energy Chamber took its invest in African energy tour to Paris on June 1st.

During the Paris forum, discussions were centered on financing African energy projects; developing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for both African and European markets; and the role renewable energy and green hydrogen will continue to play in industrializing and electrifying Africa.

Tom Alweendo, Minister of Mines and Energy of the Republic of Namibia; Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, Minister of Hydrocarbons of the Republic of Congo; Ministerial remarks: Didier Budimbu Ntubuanga, Minister of Hydrocarbons of the Democratic Republic of Congo; NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the AEC; Per Magnus Nysveen, Senior Partner & Chief Analyst, Rystad Energy; Benoît de la Fouchardière, CEO, Perenco and Eric Melet, CEO Rail & Logistics Solutions, Africa Global Logistics, were amongst the plethora of leading energy actors

who graced the event.

PAV shares some photos from another memorable event which also served as a warming act for the African Energy Week 2023. Under the theme, 'The African Energy Renaissance: Prioritizing energy poverty, people, the planet, industrialization and free market,' the African Energy Week hosted by the African Energy Chamber, AEC, will take place in Cape Town, South Africa, from October 16-20.







Pan African Visions Magazine, 7614 Green Willow Court, Hyattsville, MD 20785  
Tel: 240 429 2177, email: [pav@panafricanvisions.com](mailto:pav@panafricanvisions.com), [editor@panafricanvisions.com](mailto:editor@panafricanvisions.com)



# Kenya: Sugar Prices Hit Record High

By Samuel Ouma

**K**enyans have been forced to dig deeper into their pockets after sugar prices recently increased by 33 per cent amid the already high cost of living that has impoverished thousands of people.

Retailers in Kenya were charging on average Ksh310 (\$2.26) for a 2-kilogram packet of sugar by the beginning of May 2023. However, the price increased by almost one dollar subjecting many to untold suffering. Pan African Visions conducted a spot check on Sunday, May 28, and discovered that renowned supermarkets nationwide were selling various brands of sugar for an average of Ksh415 (\$3.03) per kilogram.

A 50-kilogram bag of sugar now costs Ksh9,600 (\$70.09) at wholesale, up 31.5 per cent from Ksh7,300 (\$53.30) in April. Additionally, the Sugar Directorate's weekly records of sugar inventories showed a decline of 80%, 4,000 tonnes, instead of the ideal 20,000 tonnes needed to meet the nation's daily demand. Wholesalers claim that the market



shortage caused by sugar importers' reluctance to send in the sweetener over the past few weeks is to blame for the price spike.

Kenya's demand for sugar has been

rising consistently over the years due to changes in consumption habits, urbanization, income development, and population expansion. Sugar is utilized in many different industries,

including beverages, confections, bakery, dairy, pharmaceuticals, and ethanol, in addition to being consumed directly as a sweetener.

According to Sugar Directorate Head Jude Chesire, the gap has been caused by low factor output, which has caused certain millers to pull back on milling due to a significant scarcity of canes.

"Even in the international markets, the prices have gone up in countries outside COMESA. I think this is an issue that we have to tighten our belts for the next three months expecting that the in another one month or so.

We should start allowing sugar to come into the market because their production has begun. They will receive a duty to export sugar to Kenya. So we anticipate that that will happen so that the prices can come down," Chesire said.

The low cane production is attributed to millers' failure to provide farmers with inputs such as fertilizer and pesticides, resulting in a 60 per cent decline in cane yield. Reports show that despite farmers doing everything possible





to care for the crop in the last two years, the yield per acre in most plantations is now 30 tonnes, down from 75 tonnes in the past.

Kenya's average sugarcane yield is about 60 tonnes per hectare, which is lower than the global average of about 70 tonnes per hectare and significantly lower than the potential output of nearly 120 tonnes per hectare. This is attributable to poor agronomic methods, insufficient irrigation, pests and diseases, and aged sugarcane varieties.

The Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) also asserted that some sellers overcharged for the commodities as a result of the shortage. The group continued by saying that consumers bought sugar in large quantities expecting a protracted period of shortages, causing further problems.

High production costs are another element influencing sugar prices in the East African nation. Kenya's anticipated cost of producing sugar is US\$ 870 per tonne, greater than the global average of US\$ 450 per tonne. This results from high input prices for labour, electricity, pesticides, fertilizers, and transportation. The sugar sector is also plagued by inefficiencies, fraud, poor management, and antiquated technology.

Many sugar enterprises, including Mumias, Nzoia, Sony, Kabras, and many more, located in the Western part of the country, are struggling due to widespread corruption that impedes progress. For example, Muhoroni Sugar Company was closed four years ago after years of dealing with debts and unpaid taxes.

Another factor influencing sugar price fluctuations is high import dependency. Kenya relies mainly on imports to meet its sugar consumption



**Sugar in supermarkets.**

due to insufficient native supply. For instance, the country imported over 450,000 tonnes of sugar in 2019, primarily from Brazil, Thailand, India, and Uganda. Importing sugar, on the other hand, is not inexpensive, as Kenya faces high tariffs and non-tariff barriers from its trading partners. Furthermore, some imported sugar is smuggled or dumped into the market at cheaper rates than domestic sugar.

Due to a sugar shortage on the market, the Kenyan government opened the door for imports in December 2022 as part of a plan to ship in 100,000 tonnes of sugar from outside the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) region to help the country

avoid a shortage. The administration of President William Ruto also permitted the Kenya National Trading Corporation (KNTC) to import 200,000 tonnes of sugar duty-free.

The country also authorized 350,000 tonnes of imports from member countries, limiting imports to 180,000 tonnes in 2022. The first two vessels, carrying over 42,000 tonnes of sugar, docked in February to alleviate the agony of local millers' declining output.

Amid the sugar shortage, Kenyan police are holding more than five traders over distributing contaminated sugar in the market. The sugar in question, believed to contain copper residues, was docked

at the Port of Mombasa in 2018 but was deemed unsafe for human consumption by the Kenya Bureau of Standards (Kebs).

Kebs first directed that the sugar be destroyed by burning or burying it in an activity overseen by professionals. However, it eventually reversed its position and ruled that it should be transformed into industrial ethanol.

The sugar-handling agencies did not follow the procedures. The sugar was released and transferred to Thika, in the country's central region, where it was to be reused. Unscrupulous sellers repackaged and released them to the market in 1kg and 2kg packs. They were branded as local brands such as Kabras, Mumias Sugar, West Sugar, and Kilimo Kenya.

As the fight against contraband sugar continues, uncustomed and harmful sugar consignments have been impounded in different parts of the country. On May 21, police arrested a woman in possession of 14 bags of repackaging sugar in Kisii, Kenya' Southwestern. Also recovered during the raid were many empty polythene packets suspected to be used for packaging and 3 bales of banned polythene paper.

A few days later, police also seized 48 kilograms of sugar deemed unfit for human use in Ruaraka, Nairobi.

«In a raid conducted at a small scale shop within Riverside area in Ruaraka, police recovered 48 kilograms of the sugar and a further consignment of over 500 kilograms at a wholesale shop within the same area,» said the Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI)

«This is after a consumer who had earlier bought half a kilo at the retail shop for domestic use, noticed strange pellets and informed officers on patrol,» added DCI.





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# Africans Rising Puts Borderless Africa On Agenda

By Samuel Ouma



*Hardi Yakubu, Africans Rising Coordinator.*

**A**fricans Rising is a Pan-African Movement of over 30,000 individuals and 800 organizations working across the continent and diaspora to foster governments, corporations, and established national and global non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to focus on issues that Africans consider vital. The movement creates a venue for progressive African civil society leaders and groups involved in diverse civic initiatives to gather, communicate, collaborate, share knowledge, and develop solidarity among people and across concerns.

The Africans Rising movement and its members play an important role in bringing positive impact and global visibility to the challenges that Africans consider critical, such as

calls for a fair global trading system, concrete action to address the effects of climate change, and the formation and strengthening of a representative coalition to protect our natural resources and the environment.

The movement implements its work under five pillars namely expanding civic and political space, women's rights and freedom for all societies, promoting good guidance and ending corruption and impunities, promoting equity and dignity and promoting climate and environmental justice.

The group recently launched Borderless Africa campaign aiming at promoting the free movement of Africans across the continent abolition of visa requirements for intra-African travel, elimination of all

border barriers, and the widespread adoption of the African passport, including the availability of it to diaspora family.

Pan African Visions News Correspondent Samuel Ouma had a one-on-one talk with the movement's coordinator Hardi Yakubu on its progress and plans. Hardi is a Pan-Africanist organizer and social justice campaigner with focus on grassroots people power to build the Africa we want. Here was the conversation:

*Could we start with an introduction of yourself, the Africans Rising Movement and its objectives?*

Hardi Yakubu: My name is Hardi Yakubu. I am the Movement Coordinator for Africans Rising.

Africans Rising is a Pan-African movement whose objective is to mobilize African people to build solidarity and unity of purpose for the pursuit of Civic space expansion, climate justice, gender justice, reparative justice, borderless Africa.

*What prompted you to become an activist, how has the journey been and what are some of the challenges you have faced?*

Hardi Yakubu: Well, I have always been against any form of injustice since my school days. So, it took a lot of movement to stop complaining about those injustices whether they were being meted out to my colleagues in class or the entire school by some school authority. To be an activist I would say probably the law preferred word is revolutionary because you are seeking fundamental systemic changes and to be that is not easy it is something that takes a lot of sacrifice, a lot of courage because your security entire life is always on the line somebody whose office of authority that you are seeking accountability from is not happy. But it is not our job to make people happy, it is our job to demand accountability from those people who by their own volition have accepted to be the servants and employees of the people.

*As the movement coordinator, what are your responsibilities and what achievements have been recorded since you got to office?*

Hardi Yakubu: The role of movement coordinator in Africans rising is a secretariat job so that's why the movement coordinator according to the constitution is the lead of the Pan African secretariat. This is because there is a coordinating collective whose responsibility it is to provide strategic guidance and be able to bring the various regions together for Pan African solidarity and the secretariat is there as the



administrative but also operational units of the movement. So, in a nutshell for me, the movement coordinator is only an employee of members of the movement to bring them together to support them to connect and to support the coordinating Collective in his duties as a governing body. So, you have responsibilities to do with program implementation, fundraising governance support, financial oversight recruitment and supervision of staff being a spokesperson for the movement etcetera. So, it involves a lot but of course you have very dedicated staff in the secretariat who are helping in very important ways to get things done. You may not see them, you may not hear them, but they are there and then we have supportive coordinating collective members who are not only knowledgeable but always ready to step in where they are needed.

This is why I don't like talking about achievements as if I have done them individually and alone. If I have led people to accomplish something, I don't think I can take their credit as my achievement since it is collective effort that brought it about. A movement person does not do that and move as much as it recognizes the efforts of the individual also places emphasis on collective accomplishments. I think we've managed in a short time to put the concept of borderlands Africa in free movement on the front bench of movement members and a lot of our members are engaging with the concept and I'm very surprised to find the massive support that this campaign has gained from movement members and even non members across the continent. And of course, there are those who have been doing this work for years and therefore we are also building on the work that they have done and continue to do. But I think this borderless Africa shows a lot of promise that I believe points to something greater to come and that is always the pride of a movement - the promise.

**What are some of the difficulties and common challenges that**



*It is our job to demand accountability from those people who by their own volition have accepted to be the servants and employees of the people, says Hardi Yakubu.*

**Africans Rising is grappling with?**

Hardi Yakubu: One will always have one issue or another when dealing with people because we have a diversity of opinion, interests, backgrounds. But I see this as a beautiful challenge because in the end when one is looking at the end goal, if we are able to bring together all these divergent opinions interest and backgrounds to agree on a common vision of a unified peace for justice and dignified Africa, then that would be a monumental achievement for us all.

**What is the significance of the African Liberation Week and how will African Rising approach the week?**

Hardi Yakubu: African Liberation week is the week of May 25 every year during which Africans rise and mobilize membership and constituencies to take actions in solidarity. It is a pan African solidarity mobilization in a nutshell. We usually pick a theme in consultation with members to mobilize around that theme. This year's theme was borderless Africa as a broad theme with sub themes on fight against economic inequality and injustice fighting for gender justice, climate justice, dealing with the food crisis and the energy and climate crisis.

The Mobilization activities include peaceful demonstrations in multiple countries for borderless Africa, film shows, Concerts, poetry shows, football matches etc.

**Could you shed light on the Borderless Campaign and the response from African countries?**

Hardi Yakubu: I think in a short time we have been able to popularized the borderless Africa campaign amongst movement members. And as you know Africans rising is 45000 strong member movement with members across 55 African countries and over 100 others in the diaspora. Some of these members are organizations and social movements whose membership are very large so the buy in from them is a critical boost to the campaign and also, we are getting a lot of interest from other quarters. A touch of strategies one of the key pillars of the campaign is the People ones Petition for borderlands Africa. And we launched an online version of it but also quickly realized that as a social movement there are people who are not necessarily online and so deployed volunteers to collect signatures on the ground currently about 200 of them in 30 countries. During the African Liberation Week, we also activated the second pillar which is the grassroots mobilization

towards borderless Africa, and we saw peaceful marches and demonstrations in no less than Ten countries concerts, poetry, Campfires, community engagements, town halls Etc. We believe that direct engagement with the people is necessary to bring them on board the border as Africa because this is for all Africans and not just for the leaders. So, a grassroots push is absolutely necessary and that is the angle that we are taking. Of course, there is also engagement with leaders and policymakers across the continent to push further ratification of the AU protocol on free movement of persons.

**What benefits will African citizens receive if countries on the continent remove border controls and what about risks involved like illicit trade, money laundering, human trafficking, and so on?**

Hardi Yakubu: I think a borderless Africa Will boost into African trade, increase employment, facilitate the creation of transboundary infrastructure, harmonize labor and other frameworks making it easy for Africans to work across boundaries, increase cultural understanding and harmony, help to deal with security with collective strength and partnership, and overall make our continent a better place for all of us.



## Africans Rising

For Unity, Justice, Peace & Dignity

20  
23

African  
Liberation  
Week

Mass Mobilisation

**BORDERLESS AFRICA**

22<sup>nd</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> MAY 2023

[africansrising.org/africanliberationweek](http://africansrising.org/africanliberationweek)



*Africa Rising attaches serious importance to the borderless Africa campaign.*

And indeed these are not my words, these are findings that have been made in many studies published over the years. People may sometimes be too quick to list all the problems that we have. I think it is necessary to also look at what opportunities we can leverage to turn things around. As Africa is It's not all about money laundering, illicit trade or whatever. Our story is also about great innovation, massive energy, entrepreneurial spirit of our young and vibrant population and therefore the key thing to look at is what are some of the things that we can do on our own accord to activate and harness the potential inherent in this population. And I believe that borderless Africa is one of the key opportunities that we can take

advantage of.

***Africa is currently confronted with a slew of problems, including famine, climate change, poverty, youth unemployment, insecurity, and war. Which strategies do you believe can be employed to combat these threats that are dragging the continent down?***

Hardi Yakubu: I think the best strategy for any of these problems is to work together, that's all. In our isolated small states, there is very little that we can do on our own and that is why you see that a lot of the Times were being dictated to by external forces and given conditionalities because we have to go and borrow.

But if we are working together, we can deal with our security, our unemployment, and our climate issues collectively because if you travel around the continent, you will see that a lot of these issues are quite similar across borders and therefore it's only by working together that we can adequately deal with them.

***Apart from the borderless campaign, are there other projects the movement is working on, any insights into future plans?***

Hardi Yakubu: Africans Rising's pillars of work are encapsulated in the Kilimanjaro Declaration 2.0, which we implement through three broad approaches namely Pan-

African mobilization, movement building, campaigns and advocacy. So as you can see the Borderlands Africa is a key on African campaign other campaigns include, reparations, gender justice, Climate justice etc. We are also building a pan African solidarity action network that will pan Africanize African issues from one African country to the whole continent at any point in time. And then we have movement building and support where we build movements to take up issues on the ground and also support existing movements to do their work better in anti-corruption, holding government accountable, opening Civic spaces etc

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# French-African Foundation Fetes Young African Leaders

By Kestér Kenn Klomegâh

Placed under the high patronage of the President of the French Republic Emmanuel Macron and the President of the Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame, the French-African Foundation will bring together the new class for a week in France in June 2023 and then a week in Rwanda for high level meetings, interactive training and privileged moments of professional and personal exchanges with leading Franco-African and

international personalities from the political, economic, cultural, sports and associative spheres.

Young African leaders aged between 28 and 40 years in 2023, have also been chosen based on competitive performance in various areas and who have commitment to African's development. These young professionals have shown inclusive leadership that impacts on the community, country or region. Display of a privileged relationship with France and Africa.

This year, more than 2,000 young professionals from 53 African countries and France applied for the annual French-African Foundation's Young Leaders programme, which aims to shine a light on outstanding individuals who are bridging the gap between the two regions. After several selection stages and hundreds of auditions conducted by an independent jury, 30 young leaders were selected for their commitment to boosting Africa-France relations.

«The 30 Young Leaders innovate daily in their activities and redraw the contours of the link between France and Africa by helping it flourish in all areas. Taking into account the environmental, social, political and economic challenges shared by the two shores of the Mediterranean, the foundation is counting on these young people to help provide solutions, embody the relationship and develop

it further. As a link between Africa and France, Marseille is the ideal city to launch this new class!» - quote from Nachouat Meghouar, CEO of the French African Foundation.

Quotes from three Young Leaders: «Today, thanks to digital innovation, women have the opportunity to emancipate themselves and develop new skills, whether they are in Los Angeles or in a remote region of Cameroon. This desire for equality but also for economic and social justice allows us to find common and sustainable solutions. This is what I wish to promote for France, Cameroon and the African continent,» Nelly Kambiwa, Cameroonian, CSR Director Sopra Banking.

«The future of cinema and audiovisual creation is in Africa! The African continent is full of talent and unique stories. Within the CANAL+ Group, I am very proud to support pan-African producers, actors, scriptwriters, directors and technicians in the creation of their television series. Ambitious dramas, shot in the four corners of the continent, are thus offered, under the CANAL+ Original label, to millions of viewers in Africa, in France and throughout the world. What a pleasure to participate in the promotion of African cultural excellence!» Anthony Koka, Franco-Congolese, Fiction Programme Advisor at CANAL+ International

«I am Franco-Algerian and I want

to be a solution for my two countries Algeria and France in their diplomatic relations. I think it is time to look forward and to draw a common future for our children. And I hope to help future generations by giving millions of French and African children a glimpse of the challenges of digital technology and more particularly of artificial intelligence through the projects we are carrying out with the start-up Evolukid, which I created seven years ago. These are powerful tools for imagining the world and also for meeting the technical needs of many public and private players.» Morad Attik, co-founder of the start-up Evolukid and founder of the Kesk-AI programme

From war-torn Khartoum, Maha Dahawi, a doctoral student in genetics and Young Leader 2023, spoke out to express her support for the Sudanese people who are suffering from the war and the abuses carried out by the militias. In a poignant testimony, she called for hope in order to rebuild her divided country with her peers and shared her joy at joining the Young Leaders programme. Find Maha's testimony here.

As part of their giving back to the society, and in the interest of contributing to the development of this great continent, young leaders identified different areas of interest under the broad theme of sustainable development in which they carried out activities including

development-oriented projects and research to catalyze development of the continent of Africa.

It also involves playing useful roles in the sustainable growth and development of their societies, by applying their skills, technical know-how, knowledge and experience to decipher things that may not be working properly in order to innovate ways for creating a change.

Double French and Rwandan patronage: After

Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo in 2019 and Senegal's President Macky Sall in 2021, this year's French-African Foundation Young Leaders programme is under the dual patronage of Rwandan President Paul Kagame and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Rwanda Development Board Director General, Clare Akamanzi welcomed the new promotion to Rwanda; a privileged destination for tourism and international investments thanks to the gains in stability under the leadership of President Paul Kagame.

The French-African Foundation, an association created in 2019, aims to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of African and French leaders capable through their values and means of action, of meeting the economic, social and political challenges of the time. It further aims at identifying, bringing together and promoting high potentials in strengthening African and French relations.

The 2021 edition was placed under the High patronage of the French President of the Republic, His Excellency Emmanuel Macron and under the High Patronage of the Senegalese President of the Republic, Macky Sall, Senegal being the host country where the second edition took place. To find out more, visit the Foundation's website: <https://www.french-african.org/>







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Tel: +1 240 429 2177

pav@panafricanvisions.com | marketing@panafricanvisions.com

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