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CONTENTS

Making Sense Of The African Energy Renaissance _____	2	Is This the End of French Neo-Colonialism in Africa? _____	40
Kenya-Hits And Misses For Ruto's First Year _____	4	Burundi- Ndayishimiye Dismisses Coup Rumors _____	43
Insights Into The Liptako-Gourma Charter _____	7	Diplomatic Row Persists Between Zimbabwe and Zambia _____	44
Africa Talks Tough At UN. _____	10	Africa Stands As One in Helping Morocco and Libya _____	45
Ghana- Akufo Addo On Reparations For Slave Trade _____	11	Tanzania- Samia Stirs Constitutional Row _____	48
Why The African Energy Week Matters _____	14	Photo News-From Yaoundé With Fresh Hope For Central African Think Tanks _____	51
Rwanda-Kagame Set For Fourth Term _____	19	A Reflection on BRICS _____	53
NJ Ayuk On The African Energy Revolution _____	20	South Sudan-Trinity Steps Up Corruption Crusade _____	57
Obasanjo Joins AEW Train _____	24	The State of Water Security in Africa_ Challenges and Opportunities _____	58
APPO SG Dr Omar Farouk On African Energy Perspectives _____	26	Tanzania-A Tale Of Power Crisis And Untapped Potential _____	60
Antonio Oburu Ondo On Energy Challenges and Progress In Guinea _____	28	Snapshot of A Banana Republic _____	63
Redefining Roles Of Think Tanks In Central Africa _____	31	TECNO Becomes Official Sponsor of the TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations 2023 _____	64
Dr Denis Foretia On The Central African Think Tank Forum _____	34		
Nigeria-Traveler In Chief For Tinubu's First 100 _____	37		

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Making Sense Of The African Energy Renaissance

By Ajong Mbpndah L

For Africa, it has been a tale of the good, the bad, and the ugly in the last couple of months. Contested elections in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe, military coups in Niger, and Gabon, and the ugly with a devastating earthquake in Morocco, and horrific floods in Libya. That the coups are taking place in West and Central Africa, the electoral brouhahas in West and Southern Africa, and the earthquake and flooding calamities in Northern Africa, paint a picture of a continent united in crisis. If the continent is bound together when it comes to crisis, it should bond even stronger when it comes to seeking solutions. While this may not always be the case, in the energy sector, a revolution seems to be brewing.

From numerous experts in the energy sector and credible continental bodies like the African Petroleum Producers' Organization, (APPO) and the African Energy Chamber (AEC), the stats are dire for Africa. Over 900 million of its 1.4 billion people live without access to any form of modern energy for cooking or domestic heating. These people use wood, sticks, cow dung and other unhealthy sources of energy to cook and heat their homes, causing millions of deaths from respiratory illnesses, especially among infants, children and the aged, says APPO. As for electricity, which the developed world has come to take for granted, over 600 million Africans do not have access to it.

Making energy poverty history by 2030 is a crusade that the African Energy Chamber has embarked on. Birthed in 2021 by the African Energy Chamber (AEC) under the premise of making energy poverty history by 2030, the African Energy Week (AEW) has morphed into an annual energy event uniting African energy leaders, global investors, and executives from across the public and private sector for four days of intense dialogue on the future of the African energy industry. Through panel discussions, investor forums, industry summits and one-on-one meeting opportunities, the AEW plays a uniquely important role in driving discussions shaping the dynamics and trajectory of the continent's energy fortunes.

Heading into its third year, NJ Ayuk and his dynamic team at the African



Ajong Mbpndah L, Managing Editor

Energy Chamber have built a veritable movement resolute on changing the energy fortunes of Africa. Thanks in part to the relentless advocacy of the African Energy Chamber and other key stakeholders, the world has become more keenly aware of the unique Energy challenges of Africa.

Far from begging bowl in hand, Africa has made the world see it for the potential that it represents. For a continent that is getting tired of playing defence, the AEW is a strong component of the offensive game plan that the African Energy Chamber has embarked upon in ensuring that the colossal energy resources of Africa are put to ample use in meeting the development needs of the times.

The depth of passion and zeal deployed by the AEC in its mission of making energy poverty history is plainly remarkable. In January 2023, the AEC hosted an invest in Africa energy reception in London with European, US and UK investors attending and submitting interest in Africa's most bankable oil, gas, and power projects. The reception served to explore new avenues for financing large-scale energy projects on the continent, enhance trade and investment between Africa and Europe, and attract new players to Africa's most promising oil, gas, and power markets to achieve continent-wide energy security.

In the course of 2023, similar events hosted by the AEC have taken place in Oslo, Norway, Frankfurt, Germany, Paris, France, and Dubai, Arab Emirates. Strengthening trade and investment ties between Africa and Europe, exploring new avenues for financing, and developing Africa's sizable hydrocarbon, renewable and mineral resources were

key at each of these stops.

Far from just receiving or sheepishly following orders, Africa is taking the lead in articulating its own energy challenges and proffering solutions that sync with the unique needs and realities of the continent. At the recent World Petroleum Congress-WPC in Calgary, Canada, APPO Secretary General Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim said Africa was ready and open for partnerships to transform its energy landscape, but under different terms. SG Farouk was forceful in his defence of the African stance on the fossil fuels debate.

In a sign of seriousness, SG Farouk harped on progress in getting the African Energy Bank to its operational phase. With credible institutions like Afreximbank as funding partners, and a growing number of stakeholders ready to support, the bank is expected to fund projects across the continent. Bids have been flowing in from countries eager to host the permanent headquarters of the bank and a decision was imminent, Dr Farouk said.

At AEW 2022, Afreximbank signed a MoU with the AEC outlining key areas of collaboration and mutual interest, primary among these being capacity building, advocacy, and financing of African companies and infrastructure projects in the energy sector.

"We are very pleased to conclude this MoU with the AEC. For so long we have been looking for a committed and courageous connecting voice with intellectual depth and research capacity. We believe that by working with the AEC, we can begin to make great transformations in bringing energy to our people and reducing the number of people who do not have access to clean cooking and electricity. As we launch the African Energy Transition Bank, we also look forward, through this MoU, to the AEC becoming part of the instruments that will allow us to use finance to change the course of history in terms of energy access on the continent," said Afreximbank President Prof Benedict Oramah.

Last year, the African Energy Week was able to put together \$25 billion of investments going into African energy projects. We want to do even more this year; our goal is to get at least \$43 to \$44 billion in investments going out across Africa. We think it is impactful to get investors from all around the world

to sit at the table, deliberate, and sign deals, says NJ Ayuk.

Despite the great efforts and progress, the AEC believes that more needs to be done. It should not take more time to approve a project than you need to build it, says NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber. We've got to ask ourselves, how many projects across Africa today are stuck in the hands of bureaucrats who are either waiting to collect bribes/perks or not approving them, he posits.

The AEC equally argues that Africa needs to drop all visas on the continent. "We need to become visa-free; It doesn't make sense in 2023, that an African child has to ask for a visa to go around Africa, it should be on the platform of the African Union; They should mandate that if you don't give visa-free access to Africans, get out of the African Union, you're "Un-African." I take a principled position on that," says Ayuk.

From challenging African governments to go beyond lip service on driving intra African trade, to a massive industrialization drive to create more jobs, and stop more young Africans embarking on the perilous journey across the Sahara to find jobs in Europe, the AEC is bullish on what African governments should be doing. From diversifying its economies to avoiding the resource curse, the AEC is generous with visionary ideas that should mean well for any serious and ambitious government.

While we wait to see if African governments will muster the political will to sustain the fight against energy poverty, it is encouraging that a number of leaders have shown a willingness to engage with stakeholders. The ideas are there, the knowledge is there, the potential for partnership is there.

In the face of a restive population, technological advancement, social media, and a dynamic new generation of Africans who are more adroit on the potentials of the continent, any leader who does not get the fact that break is over does so at his or her own peril.

AEW 23, APPO at the WPC, hits and misses as Ruto clocks one in Kenya, the first 100 days of Tinubu in Nigeria, the security pact of Sahel countries, Kagame's fourth term bid and more are on the menu of the October issue of PAV Magazine. Happy Reading!!

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Kenya: President Ruto's Hits And Misses In First Year

By Samuel Ouma

Kenya's President William Ruto, on September 13, 2023, marked a year in office as the fifth president of the East African nation.

Ruto has developed an international image as an environmentalist and fighter for the reform of global financial institutions. However, millions of Kenyans associate his name with resentment and sorrow. They have even dubbed him Zakayo, the biblical tax collector, for overtaxing people.

When Ruto took office, the country had high expectations amid growing political heat and high living costs since he vowed to improve the lifestyles of many Kenyans living below the poverty line.

President Ruto has failed to fulfil his commitment to making living more affordable for all Kenyans. Compared to the preceding regimes, most Kenyans are suffering under his leadership.

Ruto's government introduced a controversial Finance Bill Act 2023 that doubled the value-added tax from 8 to 16 per cent, adding more miseries to struggling Kenyans.

In addition, Ruto instituted a tax system that requires workers to pay a 35% income tax for the top-earning individuals, a 1.5% housing levy, a 2.7% NHIF deduction, and a 2.5% National Social Insurance Fund (NSSF) deduction.

For the first time in history, fuel costs in Kenya surpassed Ksh. 200 per litre under Ruto's leadership. The cost of basic products and services, including food and public transportation, has increased due to the new fuel prices.

The Energy and Petroleum Regulatory Authority ascribed the sharp rises in petrol and diesel prices mostly to the surge in global crude oil prices, which caused the landed price of diesel, for instance, to climb by about 20 per cent.



Ruto has earned himself a strong continental profile, but still falls short with deliverables on his domestic agenda

Kenya's inflation also hit 8.25 per cent compared to 6.61 per cent during the same period in 2022.

On public debt, Ruto has been on a borrowing spree despite accusing his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta, of burdening the country with unnecessary borrowings.

The debt increased to Ksh9.63 trillion (US\$65 billion) in the first seven months of the new administration. This includes Ksh4.54 trillion (US\$30.6 billion) in domestic debt and Ksh5.09 trillion (US\$34.4 billion) in overseas debt.

These figures show that under the Kenya Kwanza (Kenya First) government, so far, the total borrowing was Ksh933 billion (US\$6.3 billion), with Ksh176 billion (US\$1.2 billion) sourced locally and Ksh757 billion (US\$5.1 billion) sourced outside.

Despite vowing to combat corruption, the vice has torn apart Ruto's administration. The Kenya

Medical Supplies Authority (KEMSA) corruption scandal is one of the most severe scandals that has rocked Ruto's administration. Mismanagement and graft saw the state-owned corporation lose billions of shillings.

Furthermore, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) dropped high-profile corruption cases against those the administration wished to install to positions, casting doubt on Ruto's capacity to address the country's rampant corruption.

The ODPP justified the withdrawal of the cases, citing a lack of evidence. However, those individuals were acquitted since they were Ruto's close friends.

"The regime promptly appointed these individuals to the government, a stark contradiction to the pledge to uphold the rule of law. Corruption remains at the core of this administration's operations," said the civil society.

Ruto committed not to interfere with the independence of institutions during the elections. Contrary to his promise, institutions such as the judiciary, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Kenya Revenue Authority, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), and the National Land Commission are now dancing to Ruto's tune.

The Kenyan leader is also accused of bribing opposition legislators to interfere with the opposition's oversight role.

Several elected officials have abandoned the opposition and joined the administration, making it impossible for them to criticize the faults of Ruto's government.

"You cannot keep buying MPs with the country's money. Why don't you have enough lawmakers if you were elected? You forced your way into power and are now using money to purchase people since you know that



Kenyans think President Ruto has not delivered on promise to make life more affordable.

the parliament contains opposition MPs. MPs may be purchased, but not all Kenyans.

On police brutality, Ruto swore not to utilize the police to settle political scores, as past governments had done. This was not the case since Ruto's administration used police to disperse opposition supporters protesting high living costs and harsh taxation.

Human rights groups reported many fatalities during these protests. The cops also injured thousands of other people.

In this regime, police killings have become the norm, with President Ruto openly condoning these extrajudicial executions and praising the individuals accountable for them.

For instance, the civil society claimed that between March and August 2023, they had tracked down over 75 instances of extrajudicial executions and forced disappearances.

"It is becoming apparent that there has been a reconstitution of a police killer squad that has been targeting innocent Kenyans. The deployment of police to suppress protests was perceived as an endorsement by the political leadership to employ excessive force, including injuring and killing protesters," stated the civil society.

The Kenyan President vowed to form a small government in his manifesto, and he has been creating positions for his friends and supporters. For example, he appointed 50 Chief Administrative Secretaries, a post the Court said was unconstitutional. He also established the post of Prime Cabinet Secretary.

During his inauguration, Ruto pledged to work for all Kenyans, even those who did not vote for him. On the contrary, tribal nominations have been prevalent, with many public

positions held by members of two communities.

On press freedom, the media has been under heavy fire. High-ranking government officials have been caught on video abusing and threatening journalists and media outlets.

Ruto has also broken his pledge to offer opportunities for youth. Young people were overlooked during governmental appointments, and many were unemployed. In March, the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) reported that the number of

jobless Kenyans had increased to 2.97 million. The number is projected to climb due to enterprises shutting and retrenching due to an unfavourable business climate.

He further promised that his administration would revamp the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) so that all Kenyans may be enrolled as beneficiaries. He said that the government will assist Kenyans who cannot pay the monthly charges. However, despite the passage of one year, nothing has been accomplished.

Even while he has failed in certain areas, he has also succeeded in others. He launched the Hustler Fund to generate employment and stimulate economic growth.

The program, launched on November 30, 2022, provides loans to people, groups, and enterprises at a single rate of 8% per year. The report shows that over eight million Kenyans have applied for Hustler Funds.

He also instituted fertilizer subsidies to boost agricultural output. The price of a 50kg bag of fertilizer dropped from Ksh7000 (US\$47) to Ksh3500 (US\$24) and subsequently to Ksh2500 (US\$17) as a result of the subsidies.

Ruto also appointed the six judges rejected by the former President Uhuru Kenyatta.



Kenyans are still in wait for the hustler President to deliver on key campaign promises.



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Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali: Triple Alliance Shaking-Off France's Neocolonial Yoke?

By Jude Ndeh Asah

The mutual defense pact, the military leaders of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger signed last September 16, is arguably a decisive kink to put paid to what observers call France's neocolonial domineering presence in the Sahel region. It marks the sour state of a paramour that has sired only wanton exploitation of enormous natural resources for the benefit of ruling class and their foreign allies, while the people wallow in want and deprivation.

Known as the Liptako-Gourma Charter, the pact establishes the Alliance of the three Sahel states. It indicates that Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso are each other's keeper and would respond collectively if any of them is attacked. For one thing, the alliance seems to be a tacit response to fears that troops of Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, backed by France, will attack Niger. But for growing public opinion against the bid, ECOWAS under its current leader, Nigeria's President, Ahmed Bola Tinubu, had planned to launch a military offensive against Niger's junta in order to re-install President Mohammed Bazoum in power.

Both France and ECOWAS condemned the military coup that ousted Niger's supposedly democratically elected leader, President Mohammed Bazoum last July 26. While commenting on the alliance in a tweet, Mali's Junta leader, Col. Assima Goita said: the alliance will be a combination of military and economic efforts between the three countries.

The three military leaders did not fully react to observations that they were chasing away France which is a reliable ally in the fight against terrorism. The Liptako-Gourma border area where the alliance was signed, is the citadel of Jihadist insurgencies that erupted in Northern Mali in 2012 and spread to Niger and



The three nations are battling Islamist rebels affiliated with al-Qaida and the Islamic State organization. Photo courtesy.

Burkina Faso in 2015.

Political watchers have qualified the triple alliance as the arch nemesis of ECOWAS and France that seem to be losing out in a mental exercise on how to dislodge Niger's Junta and reinstall President Bazoum. The pact partly reads as follows: "Any attack on the sovereignty and national integration of one or more contracting parties shall be considered as an aggression against all the other parties and shall give rise to a duty of assistance, including the use of armed forces to restore security."

Since 2020, all three countries have suffered military coups in which soldiers overthrew democratically elected presidents. The recent coups in Niger and Gabon, have provoked a lot of tongue-wagging to the effect that France is facing the nemesis for its domineering presence in most of its former colonies in Africa. The coup in Guinea Conakry, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger seem to carry the potency of a stern warnings that it was time for France to stop "farming" in Francophone Africa.

The ousting of the French Ambassadors in these countries lays bare the end of a marriage of convenience between the two parties. The diplomatic altercation between France and Niger came to a head recently when French President, Emmanuel Macron, refused to recognize the Military Junta as Niger's legitimate authority.

French influence over its former colonies in West Africa has petered out dramatically in recent years. Its forces have been kicked out of Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali, thereby reducing its role in the fight against Islamic insurgencies. France's military base in Niger's capital, Niamey, had become the object of anti-French protest after the staging of the July 26 coup.

Talk was rife that the Sahel countries were dumping their former colonial master, France, in favour of a new suitor called Russia. Small wonder that pro-coup demonstrators in Niger were seen waving Russian flags, while calling on the French troops to leave their country. This

situation is fueling fears among Western countries that Niger could emulate Mali by replacing their troops with fighters of the Russian mercenary group, Wagner.

Given the fact that anti-French sentiments are running riot, President Macron has said France will pull its soldiers out of Niger. This will be a damper on French influence and counter-insurgency operating in the Sahel Region. The over 60-year love affair in which France has maintained strong economic, military and humanitarian aid ties with its former colonies, is fading out dramatically. This development, analysts say, is exacerbating Western specter of Russia's expanding influence in Africa. It is equally fuelled by reports that Russian Mercenary force, Wagner, has established firmly in Niger's neighbor, Mali, ready to strike in the wake of any eventuality.

After seizing power, the leaders of the military juntas in the Sahel Region, have promised to improve security and look beyond their traditional allies for support. While

addressing the U.N. General Assembly recently, the head of Guinea's Junta, Col. Mamadi Doumbouya, said the recent military coups in Africa represent an attempt by soldiers to save their countries from the broken promises of unscrupulous civilian leaders. Hear him: "The coup plotter is not only the person who takes up arms to overthrow a regime. I want us all to be well aware of the fact that the real putchists, the most numerous, are those who avoid any condemnation-they are those...who cheat to manipulate the text of the constitution in order to stay in power eternally."

As anti-French sentiments in Francophone Africa peak, analysts say events are marking the beginning of an end to an incestuous affair between France and its former colonies that is said to be largely responsible for underdevelopment and the stunted growth of democracy in the continent. The phenomenon in which former French colonies are shaking off the burden of neocolonial yoke from their shoulders, has triggered what is referred to as the second scramble



The new military leadership in Niger has stepped up public outreach to bolster support. Photo credit Balima Boreima, Getty Images.

for Africa with Russia and China wading in as a formidable counter forces against the West. Against this backdrop, there is growing panic among some conservative

neocolonial puppet leaders who have oppressed the people and suppressed their aspirations for long. They want to maintain the status quo for selfish reasons. Small wonder that

allegations of a military coup in Congo Brazzaville recently, shook the over 40-year old Denis Sassou Nguessou regime into vicious wrath. The panic seems to be the main pandemic in the CEMAC region that is made up of former French colonies with the exception of Equatorial Guinea. Following what Afro-barometer qualifies as the full sway of Cameroonians in favour of a military coup to dislodge the dictatorship in place, the government of Cameroon has issued an order prohibiting its citizens and the media from making any comments about the likelihood of a coup d'état in the country.

In wake of this euphoria, some human rights activists have expressed fears that if the former French colonies choose to do business exclusively with Russia and China, it would spell doom for citizens because these countries do not pay so much attention to the respect for human rights, democracy and the rule law. The situation is, indeed, dicey. Democracy is, indeed, standing trial in Francophone Africa.



Goodbye France reads a message carried by protestors in Niger against western backed sanctions. Photo credit Mahamadou Hamidou, Reuters.



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Africa Talks Tough At UN.

By Prince Kurupati

Global leaders convened in New York towards the end of September to attend the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). All the leaders took turns to address the world in the process highlighting the success they have achieved as well as relaying their plans for the future both individually as sovereign nation-states and as signatories to regional/continental bodies.

A high number of African leaders who addressed the General Assembly all echoed the same thing during their presentations. They made it explicitly clear that Africa was no longer a continent to be side-lined when global issues are discussed, and that Africa now demands to have a seat at the high table. The time of begging to be recognised globally is now over.

Since the decolonisation era starting in the 1960s to the 80s, the continent was always looked down upon when it came to global discussions. The future of the continent was discussed in faraway lands by the same people who had subjugated the locals to imperial rule during the colonisation era. While foreign powers no longer had their own men and women in top government positions, they still ruled African countries through proxies in key government agencies and departments as well as via their global dominance in issues of trade, aid and investment.

The time for subcontracting Africa's future to foreign powers and dancing to the tunes played by former colonial masters is now over as reiterated by leader after leader who graced the UN General Assembly podium. Kenyan President William Ruto boldly stated, "We as Africa have come to the world, not to ask for alms, charity or handouts, but to work with the rest of the global community and give every human being in this world a decent chance of security and prosperity."

Echoing the same sentiments was the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa who said Africa is now



Africa has no need for partnerships based on official development aid that is politically oriented and tantamount to organised charity, said Felix Tshisekedi of the D.R.Congo.

poised to "regain its position as a site of human progress". He said this is despite having to deal with a "legacy of exploitation and subjugation".

Nigerian President Bola Tinubu said that the global community should not view the African continent as a "problem to be avoided" but rather, Africa should be seen as "true friends and partners". With Africa having a huge and rich human resource base which is bulging by each day, President Tinubu said "Africa is nothing less than the key to the world's future".

While acknowledging the need for Africa to get a seat at the high table and to be involved in all high-level discussions which concerns its future and that of the world in general, Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo said there is also a need to reflect on the past as most of the problems that are bedevilling the continent can be traced back to "historical injustices". In reflecting on the past, President Akufo-Addo said there is a need to look beyond the colonisation and start with the slave

trade as that's the genesis of Africa's problems. To correct the historical injustices, President Akufo-Addo called for reparations for the slave trade to be paid.

"It is time to acknowledge openly that much of Europe and the United States have been built from the cast wealth harvested from the sweat, tears, blood and horrors of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the centuries of colonial exploitation," President Akufo-Addo said.

The President of the Democratic Republic of Congo Felix Antoine Tshisekedi agreed that foreign powers for long benefitted immensely from African resources while the continent itself remained in subjugation. He said that Africa's abundant natural resources which the world still needs today if not more than ever makes the call for global recognition a must. He however urged fellow African leaders not to entangle themselves in unfavourable deals owing to the need to get what they desire.

"Africa has no need for partnerships based on official development aid that

is politically oriented and tantamount to organised charity... Trickling subsidies filtered by the selfish interests of donors will certainly not allow for a real and effective rise of our continent," President Tshisekedi said. President Tshisekedi leads the country that has some of the much-needed resources in modern day that is, cobalt and copper which are essential in the global energy transition to clean energy adoption.

Reinforcing and adding further to what President Tshisekedi said was the Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi who said that Africa is "a partner that has a lot to offer to the world and not only a warehouse that supplies cheap commodities to countries or international multinational corporations."

Murithi Mutiga, the program director for Africa at the Crisis Group said there is no better platform nor time to demand for a seat at the high table than at the United Nations General Assembly. Mutiga applauded the stance taken by African leaders at the 78th UNGA Session saying,

"Those calls will grow especially at a time when the continent is being courted by big powers amid growing geopolitical competition."

The chief analyst for the Horn of Africa/Gulf region at the Nairobi-based Sahan Research think tank Rashid Abdi was also impressed by Africa's oneness at UNGA in demanding recognition at all levels of global interactions and discussions. With Africa rapidly growing economically, Abdi said "There is definitely potential for Africa to be more assertive and to drive progressive and fairer change in the global system".



Africa is a partner that has a lot to offer to the world and not only a warehouse that supplies cheap commodities to countries or international MNCs, said Felipe Nyusi of Mozambique.

"Reparations must be paid for Slave Trade" - President Akufo-Addo

By Andrew Nsoseka



No amount of money will ever make up for the horrors, but it would make the point that evil was perpetrated, says Akufo Addo.

The President of the Republic, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, has demanded for the payment of reparations for the countries affected by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

According to President Akufo-Addo, "No amount of money will ever make up for the horrors, but it would make the point that evil was perpetrated, that millions of

productive Africans were snatched from the embrace of our continent, and put to work in the Americas and the Caribbean without compensation for their labour."

Taking his turn to deliver Ghana's national statement at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the President noted that the time has come Europe and the United States of America to

acknowledge that the vast wealth they enjoy was harvested from the sweat, tears, blood and horrors of the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the centuries of colonial exploitation.

"Maybe we should also admit that it cannot be easy to build confident and prosperous societies from nations that, for centuries, had their natural resources looted and their peoples traded as commodities," he

added.

President Akufo-Addo stressed that the world has been unwilling and unable to confront the realities of the consequences of the slave trade.

He, however, indicated that, this is changing gradually, and it is time to bring the subject of reparations firmly to the fore.

"Granted that current generations are not the ones that engaged in the slave trade, but that grand inhuman enterprise was state-sponsored and deliberate; and its benefits are clearly interwoven with the present-day economic architecture of the nations that designed and executed it," he said.

The President continued, "If there are any hesitations in some minds about the paying of reparations, it is worth considering the fact that, when slavery was abolished, the slave owners were compensated for the loss of the slaves, because the human beings were labelled as property, deemed to be commodities. Surely, this is a matter that the world must confront, and can no longer ignore. The AU has authorised Ghana to hold a global conference on the issue in November in Accra."

Touching on the vexed matter of

illegal financial flows from Africa, he referred to the report of the panel chaired by the highly respected former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, on the illicit flow of funds from Africa, which states that Africa is losing, annually, more than eighty-eight billion United States dollars (\$88 billion) through illicit financial outflows.

"Yes, those monies too must be returned to the continent. It is difficult to understand why the recipient

countries are comfortable about retaining such funds, and are happy to call those countries from whom the monies are taken as corrupt," President Akufo-Addo indicated.

He was of the belief that a joint taskforce of the African Union Commission and the OECD Secretariat, under the auspices of the UN, should be charged to find ways of stopping the damaging outflows.

On the matter of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals,

the President stated that, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ghana, like many other parts of the world, were making progress with the seventeen (17) SDGs, and she had good reason to believe she would achieve the 2030 target.

"Today, the picture we have on our performance is not very bright. Most of the twenty-one (21) targets designated for achievement by 2020 have not been met, and we are not on track to achieve many other targets by

2030," he said

Indeed, according to the 2023 SDG report, just twelve percent (12%) of the SDGs targets are on track to be achieved.

"Progress on fifty percent (50%) of the targets is weak. The most disappointing part is that we have stalled or retrogressed more than thirty percent (30%) of the targets. We need to accelerate action on the entire project," the President stated.



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Rwanda's President Paul Kagame To Seek Fourth Term In 2024

By Jean Pierre Afadhali

Rwanda's President Paul Kagame has recently confirmed he will seek re-election in 2024 in polls he is widely expected to win, and extend his rule to nearly three decades, making him one of the longest serving leaders in Africa.

Kagame officially became President in 2000 after the resignation of his predecessor Pasteur Bizimungu and he is eligible stay in power after a constitutional amendment in 2015 changed term limits that would have prevented him to stand for re-election after two years later.

In a recent interview with the French Pan-African Magazine Jeune Afrique Rwanda's President confirmed he will run for president next year.

«I am happy with the confidence that the Rwandans have shown in me. I will always serve them, as much when I can. Yes, I am indeed a candidate,» he said.

Critics accuse Kagame of cracking down on opposition, independent media, and civil society.

The President has consistently rejected accusations. In a recent interview with the French magazine Kagame said he was not bothered by the opinion of outsiders.

Kagame is credited for Rwanda's



President Paul Kagame has won previous elections with comfortable margins. Photo credit AP

stability and economic development after the 1994 Genocide against Tutsis.

Mr. Kagame won the last election in August 2017 without a strong challenger for a seven-year term with nearly 99 % of the vote, according to the country's electoral commission.

Philippe Mpayimana, an independent candidate, who is a

former teacher in France, journalist by profession and a relatively new party called the Democratic Green Party at the time challenged him.

In the 2017 presidential vote, Green Party's candidate Dr. Frank Habineza got less than one per cent of the ballots. In a recent BBC Radio programme Dr. Habineza said his campaign was undermined by some local leaders.

Democratic Green Party's leader strongly opposed the controversial referendum that allowed President Kagame to run for a third term but conceded after losing a court case. Now, the politician who is also a member of parliament has accepted that Kagame has the right to run for a fourth term.

The Green party leader was quoted by The East African news outlet as saying: "We did not support the constitutional amendment to allow President Kagame to run for a third term in 2017, but we lost our case in court, so he has a right to run for the next two terms. There is nothing

illegal in that. We will fight again – democratically - if the constitution is changed again to allow him contest beyond 2034."

The United States in 2015 criticised the constitutional change, saying Kagame should step down when his term ended and allow" a new generation of leaders to come through."

The Rwandan President is finishing his last seven-year term and could rule Rwanda until 2034, when his new two five-year terms end.

A small party called the Democratic Islamic Party (PDI) has already endorsed Kagame's bid for a fourth-term as expected. PDI has previously supported the ruling party Rwanda Patriotic Front. Kagame will likely win the next elections according to some observers who say the polls will be the most predictable in recent History.

So far three candidates have declared their intention to run for president in August 2024 elections. Democratic Green Party's Habineza



President Kagame inaugurating the KivuWatt Gas Methane Power. Despite criticisms on issues of human rights and democracy, President Kagame is hugely popular across Africa.

has declared his intention to run for president for the second time after the 2017 defeat. Didace Gasana, a former journalist and columnist with the defunct independent newspaper 'Umuseso' declared in early 2022 that he would be a contender in 2024 presidential elections without details apart from a social media announcement.

Claire Nadine Kasinge, a political activist based outside Rwanda was reported in media to have intention to run for president in August 2024.

Some observers and rights groups have criticized elections in Rwanda for neither being free nor fair. Human Rights Group (HRW)said the 2017 vote took place in context where free

speech was very limited. In past some opposition politicians alleged they were prevented by immigration office to enter Rwanda to run for president.

Former Prime minister Faustin Twagiramungu who is based in Belgium claimed Rwanda's immigration denied him travel documents to go to Rwanda. Similarly, in 2016 Thomas Nahimana, a former priest turned controversial politician based in France was stranded at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya after being denied access to a flight to Kigali, on Rwandan government orders according to media reports.

At the time Mr. Nahimana who held a French passport claimed he

had applied for a Rwandan passport at the Rwanda mission in Paris, but the embassy took long to respond to his application.

It was reported that that the Rwandan Immigration Board sent a letter to the airlines operating to Kigali warning them against allowing Mr. Nahimana from boarding a flight to Kigali.

According to the East African newspaper, President Kagame's fiercest critic, Victoire Ingabire, also wants to be on the 2024 presidential ballot. In 2010 she returned to Rwanda from exile to run for president, but She was subsequently arrested, charged and convicted on various charges. president Kagame

pardoned her in 2018. Ingabire is barred by laws that prevent former convicts from serving in public office.

If Kagame wins the August 2024 vote as is highly likely, he will strengthen his position as East Africa's second longest-serving leader after Yoweri Museveni of Uganda and one of the top 10 Africa's longest serving presidents.

Some have taken to social media to support his confirmed candidature, but others criticized him for seeking to extend his "long" rule and clinging to power.

Why The African Energy Week Matters

By Ajong Mbapndah L

From humble beginnings when Fair weather friends turned their backs again on Africa against the backdrop of Covid 19 in 2021, the African Energy Week (AEW) has blossomed into the continent's premier energy event. A perfect blend of quantity and quality, the AEW weaves a mosaic of a continent that knows its challenges, conscious of its potential and unambiguous on the path that must be followed to make energy poverty history.

Birthing in 2021 by the African Energy Chamber (AEC) under the premise of making energy poverty history by 2030, the African Energy Week has morphed into an annual energy event, uniting African energy leaders, global investors, and executives from across the public and private sector for four days of intense dialogue on the future of the African energy industry. Through panel discussions, investor forums, industry summits and one-on-one meeting opportunities, the AEW plays a uniquely important role in driving discussions shaping the dynamics and trajectory of the continent's energy fortunes.

Heading into its third year, NJ Ayuk and his dynamic team at the African



Energy Chamber have built a veritable movement resolute on changing the energy fortunes of Africa. Thanks in part to the relentless advocacy of the African Energy Chamber and other key stakeholders, the world has become more keenly aware of the unique Energy challenges of Africa.

Far from begging bowl in hand, Africa has made the world see it for the potential that it represents. For a continent that is getting tired of playing defence, the AEW is a strong component of the offensive game plan that the African Energy Chamber has embarked upon in changing in

ensuring that the colossal energy resources of Africa are put to ample use in meeting the development needs of the times.

The mission of making energy poverty history is one that the AEC takes on increasing gusto. In January 2023, the AEC hosted an invest in



President Sall's presence at AEW resonates as a testament to the significance of this gathering, attracting influential leaders, experts and stakeholders from the global energy sector.

Africa energy reception in London with European, US and UK investors attending and submitting interest in Africa's most bankable oil, gas, and power projects. The reception served to explore new avenues for financing large-scale energy projects on the continent, enhance trade and investment between Africa and Europe, and attract new players to Africa's most promising oil, gas, and power markets to achieve continent-wide energy security.

In the course of 2023, similar events hosted by the AEC have taken place in Oslo, Norway, Frankfurt, Germany, Paris, France, and Dubai, Arab Emirates. Strengthening trade and investment ties between Africa and Europe, exploring new avenues for financing, and developing Africa's sizable hydrocarbon, renewable and mineral resources were key at each of these stops.

In addition to these, NJ Ayuk and his team at the AEC have participated at almost all the energy events in the continent from South Sudan, to Senegal, Angola, and others. The AEC has served as a partner at global events like the recent World Petroleum Congress in Calgary, Canada. The credibility of the AEC is also seen in the amount of energy related content that is routinely churned out. Uniquely educative and generously available, the AEC is also

a credible source of information on multiple facets and developments in the African energy landscape.

It is this kind of painstaking hard work that makes the AEC stand out from others with questionable motives and agendas for the continent. It is this kind of track record that heightens excitement about the AEW. The genuine concern for the continent, the depth of knowledge on its realities, the unbridled passion to turn things around, and the fortitude in the face of immense odds are ingredients

which have endeared both the AEC and its signature program the AEW to the minds of most Africans. Far from just another slogan, making energy poverty history is something that resonates well with most Africans.

A revolution on course is what the AEC has succeeded in creating with resounding success of the first two editions of the AEW in 2021 and 2022 respectively. The Energy fiesta that the AEW has morphed into is unique in its genre. It starts with a just Energy transition concert to welcome participants and enthused young

people on the energy stakes for the continent. Back by popular demand, the music and energy concert is scheduled to take place at the scenic Cabo Beach Club on October 16.

"It promises to be an evening of culture, music, and meaningful conversations. As AEW emphasizes the importance of an Africa-centric approach to the energy transition, the 'Just Energy Transition Concert' complements this vision by fostering investment, development, and broader involvement in the energy industry," the AEC said in a press statement. Announced for the concert are some of the best names in the African music scene now like Headlining the concert will be Some of the leading artist to headline the concert include, South African internet sensation turned amapiano star Kamo Mphela, Nigerian Afrobeat star Spyro, renowned Nigerian recording artist DJ Dollar, and others.

While Presidents Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Felipe Nyusi of Mozambique addressed AEW 2022 via video call, the 2023 edition is expected to have the presence and participation of Senegalese President Macky Sall, and his counterpart from Namibia Hage Geingob. President Sall's presence at AEW resonates as a testament to the significance of this



Namibian President Hage Geingob who will deliver the opening keynote address at AEW 2023 is expected to outline his country's vision and the dynamic growth of the oil and gas sector.

gathering, attracting influential leaders, experts and stakeholders from the global energy sector. His insightful keynote address will set the tone for comprehensive discussions and transformative initiatives that will unfold during the conference, the AEC said in a statement.

«He is a champion for the energy industry. He understands Oil, Gas and Renewables. Senegal's dynamic strides within the energy industry are truly commendable. The nation has embarked on a journey of remarkable transformation. From pioneering renewable energy projects to leveraging its abundant natural gas resources, Senegal is setting a new standard for energy development in Africa. The nation's commitment to sustainable progress and a balanced energy transition is inspiring and serves as a beacon of hope for the entire continent,» states NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the AEC.

At the forefront of President Sall's vision lies a just energy transition, one that harnesses the potential of clean hydrocarbons such as gas for industrialization while simultaneously enhancing access to development finance across Africa. His steadfast advocacy for this balanced transition reflects the urgency of addressing the energy crisis while fostering sustainable development, says the AEC.

«Senegal's energy sector stands as a shining example of transformative growth under President Sall's leadership. On the natural gas front, President Sall has championed projects that harness Senegal's hydrocarbon potential. The Greater Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) project, with its 15 trillion cubic feet of gas resources, is a testament to Senegal's capacity to contribute significantly to global energy security, while the Yakaar-Teranga field development further bolsters Senegal's domestic energy portfolio. Both projects are making progress and are poised to position the country as a global



Hydrocarbons Minister Bruno Jean Itoua will be promoting Congolese oil and gas, African investment, and a collaborative approach to a just energy transition at AEW 23.

Liquefied Natural Gas producer and exporter,» the AEC says.

In alignment with AEW's overarching theme, «The African Energy Renaissance: Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization and Free Markets,» President Geingob will articulate Namibia's vision of an energy renaissance. This vision encompasses the dynamic growth of the nation's oil and gas sector alongside its promising advances in green hydrogen development, and how these resources will create an energy secure and resilient future for southern Africa, says the AEC.

According to the AEC, President Geingob's leadership has been instrumental in driving Namibia's energy ambitions, making it a focal point for investment and innovation. Namibia, with its burgeoning energy sector, has seen recent oil discoveries that are poised to transform the nation into a significant player in the global energy landscape. The nation's strategic location along the southwestern coast of Africa has led to significant offshore discoveries, attracting substantial international investments from industry giants. Between 2022 and 2023, the country's oil and gas fields witnessed five discoveries - Venus-1X in PEL 56, made by TotalEnergies

EP Namibia and its associates, and Graff-1, Jonker-1X, La Rona-1, and Lesedi-1X in PEL 39, jointly made by Shell Namibia Upstream BV and its collaborators. These discoveries have positioned the country as both an attractive investment opportunity and increasingly important oil and gas market for Africa.

In addition to these finds, the AEC says Namibia is making progress with its natural gas agenda under the leadership of President Geingob, prioritizing gas-based power generation and investment. The Kudu project is the main development in this area. This significant endeavor intends to use offshore natural gas reserves for generating electricity, enhancing Namibia's energy sources, and lessening its dependence on imported power. Investors have openings in gas infrastructure, power generation, and related projects within this sector, and with the country's recent exploratory success, this industry has exploded, promising even higher returns and opportunities for financiers and project developers.

Namibia under President Geingob has created a conducive enabling environment for energy investment, attracting major international players like ReconAfrica, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Woodside, Galp, and other industry leaders. This

collaborative investment approach not only fosters economic growth but also accelerates the nation's progress towards energy security and sustainable development.

«As we look to the future of energy in Africa, Namibia stands as a shining example of what can be achieved through visionary leadership and a commitment to sustainable development. Under President Geingob's guidance, Namibia's energy sector has become a beacon of opportunity, attracting major investments, and driving innovation. The country's focus on regulatory clarity, environmental responsibility, and green energy initiatives sets a precedent for the entire continent. Namibia's journey in the energy sector is a testament to the transformative power of strategic leadership and collaboration on the path to a brighter, more energy-secure Africa where we can Make Energy Poverty History,» says NJ Ayuk.

For his hard work and transformative agenda in Namibia amongst others, the AEC Board has selected Geingob to receive the 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award this October during the African Energy Week 2023 in Cape Town. The award recognizes African leaders who have taken bold steps to improve the socioeconomic development and the well-being of Africans by accelerating energy sector growth in our continent and President Geingob amply fits the description, the AEC says.

Under efforts to advance dialogue surrounding the continent's energy future, African Elder Statesman Olusegun Obasanjo will host the Energy Growth and Just Transition Presidential Roundtable at African Energy Week (AEW) 2023. Obasanjo's expertise regarding African economics and energy will be critical for strengthening discussions on Africa's approach to the energy transition and his insights will help support deals and decision-making during the event.

Obasanjo will also award the AEW 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award to Namibian President Hage Geingob and Senegalese President Macky Sall, while engaging with a strong slate of African and international stakeholders on the future of the continent's energy sector.

The cast at AEW 2023 will even be more impressive than at previous editions. The leadership at OPEC has made it a point to answer present in previous editions and is expected to be present. African Petroleum Producers Organization (APPO) Secretary General Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim is expected. At last year's edition, Afreximbank President Dr Benedict Oramah signed an MoU with the AEC. With the African Energy Bank nearing its operational phase with Afreximbank as a one of the leading partners, the institutional led by Dr Oramah is one of the leading development and investment partners that Africa has. That he will answer present in Cape Town speaks volumes on the growing importance of the AEW.

Equally expected in Cape Town for AEW 2023 is a delegation from the U.S Department of Energy. A keynote address will be delivered by Josh Volz, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa, Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia at the U.S. Department of Energy who will lead a delegation comprising Julie Middleton, Director of the Office of African and Middle Eastern Affairs in the Office of International Affairs, and Sarah Dhere, International Relations Specialist.

"At a time when Africa needs substantial investment and technology to advance its energy agenda and make energy poverty history, partnership with global counterparts has emerged as more critical than ever. The US Department of Energy has long-been an important facilitator of capital, technology, and expertise by US firms in Africa and will continue to play a fundamental role in unlocking new energy



Josh Volz, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Africa, Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia at the U.S. Department of Energy will deliver a key note address at AEW 2023.

opportunities across the continent," AEC Chairman NJ Ayuk says.

According to a release from the AEC, the U.S. Department of Energy delegation will participate in several panel discussions, investor forums and networking functions centered on advancing global partnerships under a common goal of alleviating energy poverty. Closed-room discussions will take place between the Department and various African leaders including South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Senegalese President Macky Sall, Namibian President Hage Geingob, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and many more. With the US Department of Energy's participation, the event will see new deals, discussions and ideas emerge.

Over a dozen Ministers in energy related disciplines will answer present in Cape Town. From the regulars like Gwede Mantashie of South Africa, to Bruno Jean Itoua of Congo, Tom Alweendo of Namibia, Nani Chrougha of Mauritania, Simon Pierre Boussim of Burkina Faso, Antonio Oburu Ondo of Equatorial Guinea, Matthew Opoku Prempeh of Ghana, Aly Seydouba Soumah of Guinea, and Yonis Ali Guedi of

Djibouti and participants will have the opportunity to engage with energy authorities of their choice.

Fresh off a consequential participation at the World Petroleum Congress in Calgary, Canada, Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim Secretary General of the Association of African Petroleum Countries, APPO, will be amongst the high-profile personalities in Cape Town. Serving his second term as APPO SG, Dr Farouk has had the merit of answering present at the AEW since the maiden edition in 2021. His vision and sustained efforts to put in place the African Energy Bank to fund Energy projects across the continent holds a lot of promise.

For an event that many gave little credence to at the onset, the AEC has defied the odds and is here to stay. There is no bigger platform or forum that encapsulates the totality of the African Energy scene the way AEW does. Both in terms of quality and quantity, the depth of the AEW is unmatched. Under the theme, 'The African Energy Renaissance: Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization, and Free Markets,' AEW aims to chart a new course

for Africa's energy landscape. AEW will serve as a platform for in-depth discussions, knowledge sharing, and networking opportunities, centered around the critical issues of energy poverty, sustainable development, industrialization, and the importance of free markets.

What will make African Energy Week 2023 stand out? NJ Ayuk the Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber anticipates a way bigger attendance, more and bigger deals, more robust discussions, and stronger networking opportunities for the attendees through the numerous breakout sessions and side events that will grace the week.

On the way forward, there is no turning back, says NJ Ayuk. The Energy stakes are just too high and the gap between the challenges and the potentials must be bridged for Africa to meet 21st century challenges. For so long the world has short changed Africa, says Ayuk, and it was inconceivable that the very resources the west used to build its economies should be denied Africa in the face of crucial needs.

"Africa, endowed with abundant resources, must capitalize on its vast oil and gas potential," says Ayuk, adding that, "With the collective knowledge and expertise of industry leaders, we aim to drive positive change, prioritize energy poverty eradication, promote sustainable practices, and foster a conducive environment for investment and growth."

With Africa's vast reserves estimated at 125.3 billion barrels of crude oil and 620 trillion cubic feet of proven gas, unlocking this immense potential becomes crucial to meet the continent's energy demands. In a continent where 600 million people face energy poverty and over 900 million lack access to clean cooking, ensuring energy security takes center stage, says the AEC in touting the merits of the AEW.



African Energy
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Speaker



Prof. Benedict Oramah

President and
Chairman
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African Energy Chamber

To Solve Energy Poverty In Africa, Keep Drilling Oil – NJ Ayuk, AEC Chairman

By Abubakar Ibrahim*



We have to deal with energy poverty in Africa where more than 600 million have no access to any form of electricity, most of them women, says NJ Ayuk

NJ Ayuk, the Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber in this interview with BusinessDay's Abubakar Ibrahim, speaks about the challenges with energy security in Africa and highlights how the upcoming African Energy Week (AEW) (October 16 – 20), will share insights on what is being done to improve energy accessibility, affordability, investment, and sustainability in the continent. Excerpts.

African nations often have vast energy resources, yet many still struggle with energy access. What do you see as the primary barriers to utilising

these resources effectively?

NJ Ayuk: To be more concrete, we have to deal with our above-ground risk issues like regulatory, political, security, and environmental risks around the energy sector in Africa.

It shouldn't take more time to approve a project than you need to build it. We've got to ask ourselves how many projects across Africa today are stuck in the hands of bureaucrats who are either waiting to collect bribes/perks or not approving them.

We should be moving fast. We should be driving, issuing permits, monetising things, and cutting red tape so that young Africans, entrepreneurs, and business people can go out there and drive Africa the

way we deserve.

In your book "Big Barrels: African Oil and Gas and the Quest for Prosperity," you discuss the potential of Africa's oil and gas resources for economic development. How can this potential be harnessed while avoiding the resource curse phenomenon?

NJ Ayuk: This is 2023, and the game has changed. We've got to start asking ourselves: What are China, America, and Europe using our oil and gas for? For example, Europe is using oil and gas to drive manufacturing and industry, create jobs, and build products like medicine and other

things that we use in our hospitals. They also create petrochemicals, design them in Europe, and sell them in Africa.

The second thing is that we go on a massive industrialisation drive to create more jobs and opportunities on this continent for our young people, rather than them trying to cross the Mediterranean and the Sahara to go find jobs in Europe on the European streets.

The third part of it, which we need to consider when we look at how to avoid that resource curse, is economic diversification. But that would not happen if we didn't make a concerted effort to start diversifying by building industries. For example, Russia moved from importing food to using gas to develop its economy. Today, that country exports 30 percent of the grain that is needed across the world.

At the just concluded Russia–Africa Summit 2023, most African leaders were saying we need grain, food, and all of that. We can produce food in Africa rather than beg for food from Russia, Europe, or other wealthy countries.

We need to go back to the basis of the African economy, which is Agriculture. Africa's green revolution is not hydrogen, wind, or solar; it has to be about agriculture and producing food, and it can be driven by natural gas. That way, we can beat the resource curse because new jobs will be created, and people can be fed.

Energy infrastructure is essential for economic growth. What role can regional partnerships and collaborations play in enhancing energy security across Africa?

NJ Ayuk: We've got to build pipelines into and across Africa; we need to pipe gas across Africa and make sure that we get gas into the



Africa's voice must be heard loud and strong as part of the global energy discourse, says NJ Ayuk

homes of people.

The Continent's energy infrastructure is also one of the big problems that need solving if we want the seamless movement of gas or any form of petrochemical, even medicines or food, to people across Africa.

Geopolitical factors can impact energy security. How can African nations navigate these factors to ensure a stable and reliable energy supply?

NJ Ayuk: First of all, the African Energy Chamber believes that Africa needs to drop all visas on the continent. We need to become visa-free; It doesn't make sense in 2023, that an African child has to ask for a visa to go around Africa, it should be on the platform of the African Union; They should mandate that if you don't give visa-free access to Africans, get out of the African Union, you're "Un-African." I take a principled position on that.

We've been talking a lot about intra-African trade, commerce, and geopolitics, and there have been promises for all of this to happen. It is very easy for Europeans and Americans to travel to African countries, but Africans can't travel

within Africa, and we are talking about driving intra-African free trade. Trade within Africa is so low, that less than 10 percent of Africans trade within themselves.

Some people say it's a conspiracy

by wealthy nations to keep us divided from one another, but I don't believe that. I think it is the problem of the elitist leadership we have in Africa; we need people who can get these things done and make things happen.

How can African governments attract foreign investment to develop their energy infrastructure while ensuring the benefits are shared equitably among their citizens?

NJ Ayuk: African governments need to create an attractive fiscal framework that helps attract investors from around the world and do what they have to do.

The fiscal framework must include a positive regulatory environment; it has to be so that you can create regulatory certainty, and fiscal stability, and give them the confidence that when they are in the country, some general or power station is not going to walk in and take over the project.

Once that is done and investors are assured, the financing flows in. African leaders need to leave business to private entities and focus on creating an enabling environment for businesses to thrive, which could lead to more jobs, taxes, and what have you.

African Energy Week is



African Energy Week 2023 will proudly take place under the theme, The African Energy Renaissance- Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization and Free Markets



We provide the opportunity for global investors and project developers to directly connect with African energy leaders, says NJ Ayuk on the AEC global offensive

approaching. Could you provide an overview of the event's main goals and objectives, and how it contributes to the advancement of Africa's energy sector?

NJ Ayuk: First of all, we are going to have a just energy transition concert this year to involve the youth in making energy poverty a thing of the past. We have Nigeria's Ruger and Chike and are looking to bring in more artists from across Africa.

AEC wants to bring more young people into the energy space. It can't be a game for people 50 and older, but it's got to be one where we look at young people under 30 coming in and playing too. We've created that space for them to thrive and drive bigger ideas/projects.

Last year, African Energy Week

was able to put together \$25 billion of investments going into African energy projects. We want to do even more this year; our goal is to get at least \$43 to \$44 billion in investments going out across Africa. We think it is impactful to get investors from all around the world to sit at the table, deliberate, and sign deals.

Also, discussions are going to be about everything: oil, gas, coal, renewables, and green hydrogen. We've got to bring everyone together to discuss these issues rather than just focusing on solar and wind. It's an energy mix, and we will discuss all kinds of energies, but we want to give Africans a voice; the world has to listen to what Africans have to say.

But bigger than that, we are going to have a united front going into

COP 28. We will have an African agenda, position, and policy and that's what the chamber has been working through year-round. We're going to make sure that every African Minister of Petroleum, African Minister of Power, African Minister of Environment, and more young Africans goes into COP 28. Let's do business, let's get deals done.

What key themes and topics will be addressed during African Energy Week, and how do they align with the current challenges and opportunities in the African energy landscape?

NJ Ayuk: Energy security is going to be the focal point of the event. We want to ensure that we can provide energy to all Africans, making energy

poverty a thing of the past. Drill, Africa, drill; it is a must. But we also want to look at the sustainable development of those energy resources in Africa, financing Africa's energy growth and industrialization.

Very important, and lastly, in beating the resource curse, we see new nations like Namibia, Mozambique, Senegal, and Mauritania that are starting to come into the oil and natural gas space. We want to be able to sit down with them and ensure that they don't make the mistakes that Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, or Angola have made in the past. We're going to sign deals, and we're going to do it better, and bigger for and by Africans.

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African Statesman Olusegun Obasanjo to Chair Energy Growth and Just Transition Presidential Roundtable at African Energy Week (AEW) 2023

Olusegun Obasanjo is the former President of Nigeria and an international statesman with a dedication to Africa's development.

African statesman and former President of the Republic of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo represents one of the continent's most influential and impactful leaders who has demonstrated a commitment to facilitating inclusive growth in Africa. His work and success in the political, economic and energy sectors have not only consolidated Nigeria's position as a major economic hub but Africa's position as both a competitive and highly attractive investment destination. From policy to finance to cooperation and inclusion, Obasanjo has played an instrumental part in shaping Africa's economy and will continue to represent a strong advocate and facilitator of Africa's growth.

Under efforts to advance dialogue surrounding the continent's energy future, Obasanjo will host the Energy Growth and Just Transition Presidential Roundtable at the 2023 edition of the African Energy Week (AEW) conference and exhibition – taking place from October 16-20. Obasanjo's expertise regarding African economics and energy will be critical for strengthening discussions on Africa's approach to the energy transition and his insights will help support deals and decision-making during the event. Obasanjo will also award the AEW 2023 Lifetime Achievement Award to Namibian President Hage Geingob and Senegalese President Macky Sall, while engaging with a strong slate of African and international stakeholders on the future of the continent's energy sector.

Faced with a number of development challenges, Africa's progress to date has largely been driven by individuals such as Obasanjo, who has spearheaded a wave of cooperation and dialogue among African countries and between the continent and global players. With a focus on a just and inclusive



African statesman and former President of the Republic of Nigeria Olusegun Obasanjo will host the Energy Growth and Just Transition Presidential Roundtable.

energy transition, Obasanjo has strongly advocated for a collaborative approach to investment, policy and growth, and continues to put Africa first. Obasanjo's expertise lies in his experience as Head of State of Nigeria and his work as Chairperson of the African Union (AU) from 2004 to 2006. Obasanjo served as Military Ruler from 1976 to 1979 and President of the Republic of Nigeria from 1999 to 2007, where he was instrumental in bringing democracy to the country. Following this position, Obasanjo took on several impactful roles centered around pan-continental collaboration and peace. In addition to his role at the AU, he served as Special Envoy for Africa for the United Nations. Now, Obasanjo coordinates cross-border cooperation and facilitates Africa-global dialogue towards a goal of advancing Africa's economic prosperity.

Collaboration and cross-border partnership success in Africa is

largely attributed to Obasanjo's ongoing efforts. In Nigeria, he made great strides towards strengthening the energy market. The country now represents one of the biggest oil and gas producers on the continent and boasts a promising renewable energy industry that is poised to lead West Africa's energy transition. Obasanjo spearheaded sustainable development on the back of democracy, transparency and investor clarity. Under his leadership, exploration and production took off, with up to 37 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and 200 trillion cubic feet of gas identified from his Presidential tenure to date. His administration established the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in 1977. Many projects also took off from across the entire energy value chain. Under efforts to privatize downstream assets and relieve state burden, Obasanjo facilitated the sale of the Port Harcourt and Kaduna refineries –

now under the NNPC's control. In the power industry, Obasanjo put in place ambitious targets of achieving 10 GW of electricity by 2007. As President, Obasanjo had a central objective to alleviate poverty and establish a democratic system, and his efforts in this regard have proven critical for Nigeria.

Now, Obasanjo works towards driving pan-African growth and development. On the cooperation side, Obasanjo has contributed to much of Africa's progress. He established the African Leadership Forum in 1988, uniting leaders from across the continent and global community to discuss issues and foster solutions to development. Obasanjo also co-established the New Partnership for Africa's Development in 2001 and the African Peer Review Mechanism, initiatives which have helped spearhead good governance in Africa. These efforts have been nothing short of crucial for Africa's

economic and multi-sector growth and will remain of central importance as Africa's energy sector grows.

"President Obasanjo has shown, time and time again, a dedication to inclusive, sustainable and widespread development in Africa. His efforts to alleviate energy poverty and drive long-term growth have translated into a series of impactful developments across the continent. As an African statesman, a distinguished leader and an advocate for Africa's prosperity, Obasanjo will continue to play a central role in facilitating growth

and development in Africa," states NJ Ayuk, Executive Chairman of the AEC.

This experience makes him the host of choice for AEW 2023's Energy Growth and Just Transition Presidential Roundtable. Dubbed the largest gathering of energy stakeholders on the continent, AEW 2023 takes place under the theme, The African Renaissance: Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization and Free Markets, and proudly hosts a strong slate of African governments.

During the AEW 2023 conference, Obasanjo will engage with a suite of governments, ministers and international authorities under a common goal of making energy poverty history in Africa by 2030. His passion for the continent and his commitment to fostering democratic growth will prove valuable at the event, and delegates can look forward to hearing his insights. There is still time to secure your place at the biggest energy event in Africa. Join AEW 2023 and network with the movers and shakers from Africa's energy

market.

About African Energy Week:

AEW is the AEC's annual conference, exhibition and networking event. AEW 2023 will unite African energy policymakers and stakeholders with global investors to discuss and maximize opportunities within the continent's entire energy industry. For more information about AEW 2023, visit <https://AECWeek.com>.

*African Energy Chamber

Africa is Ripe for Investments in Oil and Gas - APPO SG Dr Omar Farouk

By Ajong Mbapndah L

The current energy crisis in the world has underlined the global economy's dependence on fossil fuels, and many European countries have turned to Africa to deliver. And Africa stands ready to deliver. Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary-General of the African Petroleum Producers Organization, APPO, says Africa is ripe for necessary support, and investment in the oil and gas industry.

«With the climate change issue, we have come to realize that our salvation lies in coming together as a continent to pursue what we believe is in the best interest of our continent. There is now today a lot of collaboration, cooperation, and working together among our oil and gas operators, Dr Omar Farouk, the former General Manager, and later Group General Manager of the group Public Affairs Division, at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC said.

For Dr Omar Ibrahim Farouk, Africa will not be coerced into abandoning the exploration of oil and gas at once pursuant to the needs of external powers. “ Given Africa’s “peculiar situation in terms of socio-economic development, and the fact that the problems of climate change were caused, not by us but by the economically advanced countries of



APPO Secretary General Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim was the leading African voice at the 24th World Petroleum Congress in Calgary

the world using fossil fuels, calling us to join the same speedy train to net-zero is unfair and punitive,” Dr Farouk says

You are currently in Calgary, Canada for the World Petroleum Congress, may we know the specific message that you

brought to the World Petroleum Congress from Africa?

Dr Omar Farouk: We want the world to know that Africa is ripe for necessary support, and investment in the oil and gas industry. We are charting our course and we are looking for partners that will come with us on this drive towards

ensuring that Africa can fight the energy poverty that has gotten hold of our continent for so long.

We understand that Africa has been trying to make the world see its point of view when it comes to issues of fossils, may we know what progress you see in the world trying to understand the position that Africa is coming from?

Dr Omar Farouk: I think a lot has changed in the last two years in terms of the global perception of Africa's position on the energy transition. This is due to several reasons, one of which is the crisis between Russia and Ukraine where countries in the past were telling us to stop investing in oil and gas came back to say we need to invest in oil and gas.

What that message sends to us, and the world, is that the world is not ready for the speed at which we are being asked to move away from fossil



Dr Farouk and his delegation held discussions with Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education Rajan Sawhney, and University authorities led by Dr Ian Coates, Director of the GRI.

fuels. At the moment, we believe that all forms of energy need to be mobilized to conquer energy poverty across the world.

When we talk about energy, a lot of times, Africa looks towards the external world. How much cooperation are we seeing in the continent amongst African countries?

Dr Omar Farouk: For the first fifty to seventy years of our participation in the oil and gas industry, exploring, producing and so on of oil, each African country had tended to look to Europe or America. There wasn't that cooperation and collaboration amongst African countries in developing this industry. With the climate change issue, we have come to realize that our salvation lies in coming together as a continent to pursue what we believe is in the best interest of our continent. There is now today a lot of collaboration, cooperation, and working together among our oil and gas operators.

At one of the side events, you talked about the African Energy Bank, can you reiterate the progress that has been



made and the challenges encountered? At what point do we see the bank funding projects on the continent?

Dr Omar Farouk: The idea of the Africa Energy Bank came out in May last year when the Ministerial council of APPO, directed the SG and the Managing Director of the African Investment Cooperation, the financial arm of APPO, to negotiate with Afriximbank on the founding of the bank. For one year plus, we

have been discussing and negotiating and we have come to an end. This is in the sense that we have been able to agree on the charter of the bank, and we are now looking into the host country agreement. We believe that by the next Ministerial Meeting of APPO scheduled for November, in Cotonou, this will be presented to our ministerial council for consideration and approval.

Thereafter, we decide on the country that is going to host the headquarters and several countries have already been mobilized towards raising the funds for the bank. Afriximbank will put money upfront and we are going to raise money from our governments, national oil compares and other sovereign and private investors from our member countries.

As part of your trip, you were at the University of Calgary where you toured their infrastructure and laboratories, what inspiration came out from that for you?

Dr Omar Farouk: We were impressed with what we saw. One of the biggest challenges of the industry on the African continent is that of technology. Our visit to see what the University of Calgary and other institutions are doing in the oil and gas industry in Canada was inspirational and I can tell you they

have gone very far. These are the kinds of institutions we would like to partner with to establish oil and gas excellence on the continent.

We believe they have what it takes to do that, and we believe that they share our vision of the future of the oil and gas industry. We will be happy to partner with them to establish regional centres of excellence across the African continent.

Dr Farouk is serving a second term as SG of APPO, may we know some of the success stories you have had and how you envisage the next few years?

Dr Omar Farouk: I believe one of the things I have been very happy with is the expression of serious commitment by our member countries to the growth and collaborations amongst our member countries. If you look at what is taking place now at the Forum of CEOs of National Oil Companies of APPO, you will see that attendance at meetings is ninety-something per cent; we have 16 Deputy CEOs attending meetings of the CEOs of APPO member countries. This was never the case in the past. We also have a forum for research training institutions; participation has also been very good, and the same for the ministerial meetings. We are happy with what is happening, and I can say that there is a lot of commitment from our member countries to solidify the successes that we have made.

From Calgary, what next for APPO in the coming months?

Dr Omar Farouk: From here we are going back to Brazzaville, and we are going to prepare for our next ministerial meeting. Before them, we have the African Roundtable on Local Content taking place in Nigeria and another seminar on training for the oil and gas industry and immediately after that we will go to Cotonou for the Statutory Meeting of APPO, where our long-term strategy committee, the executive board and ministerial council will meet to review what we have done in the last year and approve what we plan to do next year.



Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim in discussion with the President of the WPC on the sidelines of the recent congress in Calgary, Canada.

Antonio Oburu Ondo Reveals Strategies to Explore, Drill and Unlock Offshore Potential in Equatorial Guinea

In an exclusive interview with the African Energy Chamber, President of OPEC and Equatorial Guinea's Minister of Mines and Hydrocarbons, Antonio Oburu Ondo, dives deep into the country's exploration and drilling Strategies.

OPEC members recently met in Vienna for the 8th OPEC International Seminar. What measures is OPEC currently taking to stabilize the market given recent price increases?

The global oil market has experienced a relatively volatile few years, but OPEC remains committed to contributing towards market stability, both for producers and consumers alike. We have been closely monitoring the market and the associated global dynamics, and our recent seminar in Vienna featured in-depth discussions about production and maintaining a balance between supply and demand. OPEC will continue to monitor the market while cooperating with our member and non-member countries to address any market imbalances.

Equatorial Guinea's Gas Mega Hub (GMH) initiative continues to make progress with a Heads of Agreement signed with Marathon Oil Corporation for the second and third phases of the project. What does the timeline look like for the project? Can we expect any milestones to be achieved in 2024 and 2025?

Phase one of the GMH comprised the tie-back of the Alen Field to the Punta Europa Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal on Bioko Island. This phase delivered first gas in February 2021, and soon thereafter, the government, alongside its project partners, have been working towards getting phase two onstream. In March this year we signed an agreement with Marathon Oil and

Noble Energy for the next two phases of the project and we expect phase two to come online as early as January 2024. This stage involves processing gas from the Alba Field while phase three will facilitate gas processing from Noble Energy's Aseng oil and gas field. Marathon Oil is also currently evaluating two infill drilling opportunities to improve the Alba production performance.

So, we will be starting 2024 with a major milestone and are aiming to reach many more after that. We have recently also established a bilateral trade agreement with Cameroon on cross-border oil and gas development while other exploration projects continue to make progress. A similar agreement was signed with Nigeria in 2022. These endeavors open up new opportunities for the expansion of the

GMH by maximizing feedstock for the terminal.

With production decreasing due to natural declines in legacy fields, what efforts are being taken by the Ministry to boost output?

In addition to drilling works being undertaken to improve and maintain production levels at existing fields,



African Energy
Week 2023

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE
AFRICAN ENERGY CHAMBER



**Antonio
Oburu Ondo**

President of OPEC and
Equatorial Guinea's Minister of
Mines and Hydrocarbons

MAKING
ENERGY
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African Energy Chamber

the Ministry is making great strides towards accelerating exploration across the country's offshore acreage. Our recent agreement with Cameroon will see the two countries jointly develop oil and gas projects along our maritime borders, including the Yoyo and Yolanda fields, the Etinde gas field and the Camen and Diega fields.

The country's enabling environment for investment and strong record of successful offshore finds have also seen new E&P players join the market. Earlier this year we also signed three production sharing contracts with Panoro Energy and Africa Oil Corporation. These contracts are expected to further open up the upstream market. Additionally, we have several global energy majors and independents progressing with exploration and are optimistic about these campaigns. The only way to address production declines is to explore, drilling more wells and unlocking the potential of offshore basins.

Equatorial Guinea has recently inked agreements with regional neighbors Nigeria and Cameroon to expand energy cooperation. How is the government strengthening local content within the natural gas industry and how will these agreements help bolster capacity building on a regional scale?

Local content has and will always be a top priority for Equatorial Guinea. In our oil and gas sector, local content is enforced through the National Content Regulation and Hydrocarbons Law as well as additional ministerial decrees, individual production sharing contracts and local labor laws. Through clear regulation and regular engagement with both local and international energy companies, we continue to strengthen our local content and drive capacity building and opportunity.

In addition to policy, the government carries out skills



In order to make energy poverty history, we need to monetize and maximize all of our natural resources, says Antonio Oburu Ondo.

and technology transfer through initiatives and training. We have a number of training and education institutions open and constantly engage our partners about exchange programs and bilateral skills development. Our agreements with neighboring countries fall under these efforts to up-skill and re-skill the workforce. We also believe that regional cooperation will help advance opportunities for oil and gas entrepreneurs. Our partnerships with other West African countries aim to increase trade, commerce and collaboration between Equatorial Guinea and its regional counterparts. These efforts are introducing opportunities for domestic and regional market growth as well as bilateral knowledge sharing.

African Energy Week 2023 takes place under a mandate to make energy poverty history by 2030. How does Equatorial

Guinea plan to leverage its resources to achieve this objective and what messages will you be driving during this year's conference?

Equatorial Guinea, like many other African countries, believes that in order to make energy poverty history, we need to monetize and maximize all of our natural resources. Our efforts to increase investment and bolster development across the entire energy value chain has already been instrumental in alleviating energy poverty. Equatorial Guinea has a wealth of natural gas resources and we are making progress to leverage these resources for domestic power generation. The Bioko Turbogas thermal power plant provides reliable power to the population and as the GMH expands, so will opportunities for gas-to-power.

The country is also capitalizing on its renewable energy wealth,

and invites investors and project developers to invest in the country's green energy sector. We are also working with other countries in Africa to expand trade and regional connectivity.

This year, I am looking forward to participating in a number of panel discussions, investor summits and ministerial forums, and will drive the message that gas is good for Africa. Equatorial Guinea has made significant progress to monetize both domestic and regional gas but a lot more needs to be done to maximize resources and drive industrialization and economic growth. Gas, as a clean and readily available resource, is the best way for Africa to achieve energy security while facilitating a just energy transition.

*Africa Energy Chamber



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From Yaoundé With Fresh Hope For Central African Think Tanks

By Synthia Lateu & Boris Esono Nwenfor

Over 25 Think Tanks in Central Africa, alongside other experts, have charted the way forward for Think Tanks in this part of the African continent. This was during the first forum organised in Yaoundé, Cameroon's political Capital from September 20 to September 21, 2023.

The 2-day Central Africa Think Tank Forum which featured funders and international organizations, was a unique opportunity for think tanks in Central Africa to relate with stakeholders of the research community across the globe, pitch their projects, focus attention, and develop the much-needed networks that would give their activities visibility and help build a democratic and freer society.

Talking about health, think tankers specialized in this domain decried a huge gap between healthcare providers and the patients which they said had led to the loss of credibility in services delivered to those who need the care. «They prefer to seek health care assistance abroad.»

The health socialists explained

that the situation results from the low healthcare financing that most African countries allocate to their national budget for health. They further called on African countries in the region to meet their agreement to allocate 50 % of the national budgets to the health care system. Governments were urged to build mechanisms that reduce brain drain, encourage universal health care in the sub-region, and on Think tanks to create divisions of health between their organizations amongst others solutions.

On issues concerning governance and security, think tankers in this domain pointed out hate speech, gender-based violence, bad governance, electoral issues, bad governance of natural resources, and many more. They highlighted the need to develop monitoring tools for election programs, to involve women and youths in the electoral process, and to share dividends between the government and the population, all to counter the cankerworm.

Participating in the session, funders raised challenges faced concerning



Participants and panelists pose for a picture after the first day of the Central Africa Think Tank Forum in Yaoundé.



The two-day session was held under the theme Optimizing the impact of Think Tanks in the Central Africa Region

economic-related issues involving poverty which they said could be solved by creating opportunities for the youth as their absence also accounted for recent military coups on the continent. They added that regional integration and reliance on external debt remained a problem in the subregion.

Hence, they proposed that think tanks could advocate for the implementation of the policy-free movement of goods, promote economic freedom, and better fiscal management and transformation of economic resources. The Funders explained that encouraging public-private sector partnerships and the development of a value chain could tackle the Informal sector dominance in the region just like women's economic empowerment could



Professor Uphie Chinje, former Rector, University of Ngaoundere, Cameroon, was one of the resource persons at the Forum.

resolve the inequality and human rights challenges faced.

Speaking on behalf of the Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation and the Nkafu Policy Institute at the close of the Conference, Jean Blaise Nkonga noted the need for central African think tanks to build trust with governments, so they accept and implement the policies proposed by the former.

He said: «Think tanks in Central Africa have the responsibility to foster open and democratic societies. Think tanks in Central Africa should not only aim to replicate what think tanks in other countries have done, but they can also learn from their experiences on how to apply for funding, manage their resources, and build trust with governments,» Jean Blaise Nkonga added and stressed the need for Central African Think Tanks to be stronger.

«We envisage creating a network of think tanks from the Central African Region for enhanced cooperation as a sustainable mechanism to concretely optimize the impact of think tanks in

the Sub-region» He further revealed.

To Jean Blaise Nkonga, the maiden forum «is a strong signal sent to the world which demonstrates that Central Africa is determined to move the lines. We must build the Africa we want by moving away from epistemological dependence as known until now.»

2nd edition billed for October next year.

Dr Denis Foretia, co-chair of the Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation and the Executive Chairman of the Nkafu Policy Institute said: «As you heard, all the actors present at this meeting, including yourself, found this Forum to be important and very useful. This is the conviction that we also have at the Nkafu Policy Institute, and we are organizing ourselves so that this meeting can be held every year. It should be clarified that 2023 and 2024 are already provisioned. We can therefore say that the second Central African Think Tank Forum will be organized in October 2024.»

«Among the major challenges faced

by Central African Think Tanks is the issue related to finance. Do you think that the Central African Think Tanks would be able to easily finance a trip to another country, that is to say, plane tickets, accommodation, nutrition etc.?»

Think tanks have become key players in policymaking and the promotion of socio-economic development. They play a critical role in promoting open and transparent governance, the rule of law, respect for fundamental human rights, inclusive and sustainable conflict resolution and many more.

Think tanks in Central Africa remain institutionally fragile and are yet to exert a real influence in fostering the emergence of an open society in the Central Africa subregion. To maximize their impact, think tanks must constantly optimize their strategies to strengthen their capacities.

«It should be added that regardless of the Continent in which we find ourselves, such meetings are always supported by sponsors, so the

support of donors for this initiative has been crucial. You also allow me to express our gratitude to the Open Society Foundation which supports this initiative,» Dr Foretia added.

Think Tanks vital for policy Recommendations.

The Central Africa Think Tank Forum which brought together think tankers, policymakers, renowned researchers, and diplomatic missions, amongst others was an occasion to brainstorm and map out best strategies, share experiences and good practices on how think tanks enhance their capacities to exert real influence in shaping policies and carrying out quality research for improved efficiency and a more visible impact within the continent and globally.

Professor Uphie Chinje, former Rector of the University of Ngaoundere, Cameroon said: «Almost everything we do in society needs some method of studying it. With the evidence uptake, it is going to improve everything that researchers do.»

«Research is not all about laboratory research, if not, it is a wasted resource. Some research you carry out today might be useful decades later. The ecosystem needs to be put in place to make sure everything moves on smoothly which involves bringing in the government, users, and others.»

Today, things seem to be changing in the right direction with products made in Cameroon being given some level of priority. «Things are moving, it might be very slow, but things are going in the right direction,» Professor Uphie Chinje added.

«The Central Africa Think Tank Forum is very great, and I applaud the think tanks. As I advised, they just need to continue reflecting and finding new ways on how the information they produce can be carried to decision-makers. The problem is the policymakers, they need to come closer to the think tanks for us to be able to work as a team. It is a team effort for such documents to be produced,» Prof Uphie Chinje said.

A stylized map of Africa is the central element, rendered in two shades of green. The top half is a lighter green and contains silhouettes of three wind turbines and two solar panels. The bottom half is a darker green and contains a silhouette of a large cargo ship. The map is set against a light gray background with some faint, abstract green shapes. The title "A JUST TRANSITION" is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the map.

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N J A Y U K

For Think Tanks In Central Africa A New Dawn Beckons-Dr Denis Foretia

By Boris Esono Nwenfor

BUEA, September 30, 2023 – For Think Tanks in Central Africa, a new dawn beckons following the success of a recent forum in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Organized by the Nkafu Policy Institute of the Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation, the maiden edition of the Central African Think Tank Forum was heavily attended by partners from the region and beyond with far reaching resolutions taken to jolt things around a sub region known for its lethargy.

The 2-day Central Africa Think Tank Forum which featured funders and international organizations, was a unique opportunity for think tanks in Central Africa to relate with stakeholders of the research community across the globe, pitch their projects, focus attention, and develop the much-needed networks that would give their activities visibility and help build a democratic and freer society.

Buoyed by the resounding success of the maiden edition which ran from September 20-21, Dr. Denis Foretia, co-chair of the Denis and Lenora Foretia Foundation and the Executive Chairman of the Nkafu Policy Institute announced that participants were unanimous on the creation of a network or alliance of Central African Think Tanks. He also announced that the Forum will now be held annually with plans already afoot for the second edition in October 2024.

You have just organized the first edition of the Central African Think Tank Forum here in Yaoundé from September 20 to 21, 2023. What is a Think Tank?

Dr Denis Foretia: The term Think Tank is an Anglicism which refers to a group of thinkers or private laboratory of ideas which produces studies or research on social themes for the benefit of decision-makers who may or may not be political.

On a purely institutional level, the



The Forum resolved to create a platform called the Network or Alliance of Central African Think Tanks, says Dr Denis Foretia.

expression Think Tank designates a private law institution that is essentially independent, and non-profit, which brings together experts or professionals responsible for addressing questions in the political, economic, social, and technological fields.

What were the objectives of such a Forum?

Dr Denis Foretia: The main objective of this Think Tank Forum was to strengthen the capacities of Central African Think Tanks to produce relevant and quality research and to influence policies at regional and continental levels.

The specific objectives were to: Establish a platform for the exchange of knowledge and shared experiences between the different Think Tanks in the Central African region and to analyse the specific challenges faced by Think Tanks in the region and opportunities for improvement.

It also centred on exploring best practices and effective strategies

for building Think Tank capacity; Identifying priority research areas for Think Tanks in the region, based on local needs and challenges and promoting collaboration and partnerships between Think Tanks in the region and other key stakeholders, such as universities, governments, and the private sector.

Which Central Africa is this? Cemac or ECCAS?

Dr Denis Foretia: This is the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)

Does it mean that such a meeting will be held every year?

Dr Denis Foretia: As you heard, all the actors present at this meeting, including yourself, found this Forum to be important and very useful. This is the conviction that we also have at the Nkafu Policy Institute, and we are organizing ourselves so that this meeting can be held every year. It should be clarified that 2023 and 2024 are already provisioned. We can therefore say that the second Central

African Think Tank Forum will be organized in October 2024.

What about the donors in such an initiative?

Dr Denis Foretia: Among the major challenges faced by Central African Think Tanks is the issue related to finance. Do you think that the Central African Think Tanks would be able to easily finance a trip to another country, that is to say, plane tickets, accommodation, nutrition etc.? We will be tempted to give a negative response. It should be added that regardless of the Continent in which we find ourselves, such meetings are always supported by sponsors, so the support of donors for this initiative has been crucial. You also allow me to express our gratitude to the Open Society Foundation which supports this initiative.

At the end of this meeting, what are the major resolutions that were adopted?

Dr Denis Foretia: This Forum is a

strong signal sent to the world which demonstrates that Central Africa is determined to progress. The main resolution of this Forum is that the Think Tanks unanimously decided to set up a platform in Central Africa which could be called the Network or Alliance of Central African Think Tanks.

It was agreed to strengthen collaborative research mechanisms on public policies between Central African Think Tanks as well as to strengthen the communication capacity of Think Tanks. Central African Think Tanks are also committed to improving their computerized accounting, and financial management systems as potential donors conduct due diligence to mitigate any risks related to mismanagement of resources before they arise.

The Denis & Lenora Foretia Foundation and the Nkafu Policy Institute were in charge of organizing this first Think Tank Forum in Central Africa. Can we find out more about these two institutions?

Dr Denis Foretia: The Denis & Lenora Foretia Foundation is



The Forum was a strong signal sent to the world that Central Africa is determined to make progress, says Dr Foretia.

a non-profit, non-governmental organization with the mission of promoting the transformation and sustainable development of African economies and the Cameroonian economy, to catalyze the economic transformation of Africa by emphasizing social entrepreneurship, science and technology, innovation, public health and the implementation

of progressive policies that together create economic opportunities for all. The foundation relies on three (3) pillars to achieve its mission through three departments: The Nkafu Policy Institute, a Think Tank, to conduct independent, in-depth and insightful research analyses and provide evidence-based policy recommendations for the socio-

economic transformation and development of Cameroon and Africa.

The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Center (SBEC), established to provide tools to train, create and grow businesses in the private sector to stimulate economic growth.

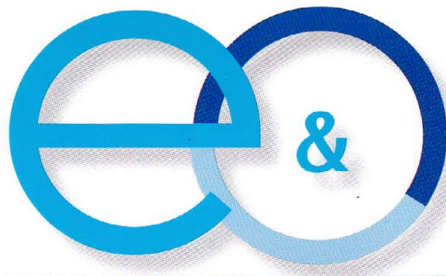
The Sustainable Development Agenda addresses issues and policies that ensure equitable economic growth today and for future generations. The programme addresses the building blocks of the economy, including but not limited to education, leadership, public health, private sector growth as well as government policies aimed at stimulating economic growth in Cameroon and Africa.

A final word?

Dr Denis Foretia: We want to thank you for approaching us, we also want to thank all our experts, Think Tanks, and partners who honoured us with their presence and made this Forum a great success. Let's make an appointment for October 2024 for the 2024 Central African Think Tanks Forum.

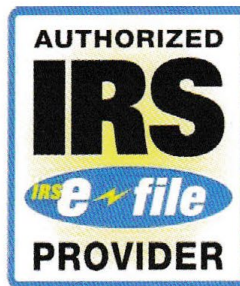


Participants left Yaounde with hope for a stronger role for Think Tanks in changing the development fortunes of the Central African Sub Region.



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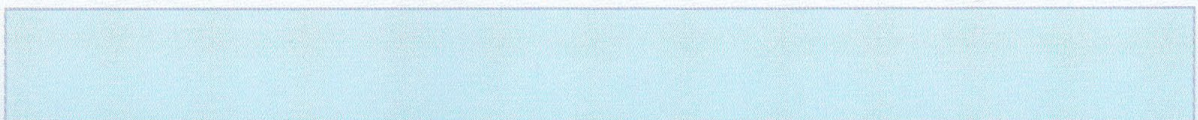
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Nigeria-Tinubu's Diplomatic Shuttle

By Prince Kurupati

The first 100 days in office for President Bola Tinubu and his Vice President Kashim Shettima have come and gone. One thing that the first 100 days have shown is that President Tinubu has prioritised foreign affairs over domestic affairs. To many diplomacy scholars as relayed by Dakuku Peterside in the Vanguard, Nigeria newspaper, “the President’s diplomatic shuttle” is a way of “generating economic growth through foreign policy”.

Demonstrating the fact that President Bola Tinubu in his first 100 days has prioritised foreign affairs over domestic affairs is him breaking the fortunate or unfortunate record for travelling the most among all new Nigerian presidents since 1990.

Dakuku perfectly summarised all of the president’s travels saying, “The President’s first trip abroad was to France to participate in the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact. Next was attending the ECOWAS Summit in Guinea Bissau, then the AU meeting in Kenya and the G-20 Summit in India quickly followed. His biggest on the global stage was at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) last week in New York. These exclude



President Tinubu and President Biden of the USA in discussions on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in India. Photo courtesy.

stopovers in Benin Republic, London and the UAE. Vice President Kashim Shettima, on his part, has represented the President in Italy, Russia and at the G77 Summit in Cuba.”

The president’s foreign shuttles have won the hearts of many. Those

who support the prioritisation of foreign policy as a way of generating economic growth say that attracting foreign capital and investments opens the way for drastic and wholesome economic change. With Nigeria’s economy in need of rejuvenation,

attracting foreign capital is just the right ingredient to propel the country to the right development trajectory.

In his foreign travels including at the UN General Assembly, President Tinubu is bullishly reminding the world of Nigeria’s potential both human resources and natural resources. By sharing with the entire world all the potential that Nigeria has, President Tinubu is at the same time reinforcing the fact that Nigeria is open for business and has investor-friendly policies. The president believes attracting foreign capital and investments will help re-establish Nigeria “as the premium economic powerhouse in Africa”.

There are some actors however who feel that the right path to take in re-establishing Nigeria’s economic prowess on the continent is to prioritise domestic affairs first. They view economic diplomacy and the prioritisation of foreign affairs as short-sighted. Rather, they prefer the president to embark first on tackling foundational issues which include



President Tinubu on arrival in Guinea Bissau for an extraordinary summit of ECOWAS to discuss the coup in Niger. Photo courtesy.

“insecurity, decrepit infrastructure, poor governance and inefficient institutions”.

Analysing these two schools of thought, Peterside concluded that the two ideas aren't dichotomous. Rather they can and must complement each other if all of Nigeria's plans are to come to fruition. “A comprehensive economic plan that combines economic diplomacy's merits revitalises domestic structural and economic systems by tackling fundamental local problems is needed and must be implemented efficiently... economic diplomacy can be woven together with domestic improvements so that both work together and reify each other to produce more remarkable results,” Peterside said.

Caution however is needed in balancing the economy-centric foreign policy with domestic policies. Peterside said failing to strike the right balance will most likely lead to counterproductive results. To address the balance issue, Peterside called for the government to “match its extensive travels with articulating an overarching economic agenda”.

Also critical at this stage as Nigeria is looking to improve her economic fortunes is to change the country's



Tinubu's first trip abroad was to France to participate in the New Global Financing Pact Summit. Photo credit State House.

image both locally and internationally. Many people including those at home and those beyond Nigeria's borders when it comes to Nigeria's economy hold the perception of a failing economy. Whether at the present moment that perception is right or wrong, what's needed in the near future is a total change as confidence in the economy will only come if the economy is perceived to be on the rebound. So, whether it's to encourage more entrepreneurial spirit and endeavour among local Nigerians or to win foreign capital and investments from external actors,

President Tinubu needs to sell the vision of an economy that's on the rebound.

Besides changing the perceptions that people have about the Nigerian economy, Peterside also called upon President Tinubu during his frequent foreign shuttles to prioritise marketing new opportunities in the country. “Global capital goes where there are clear opportunities that are unencumbered. These opportunities must exist in a context of manageable risk and good returns on investment,” Peterside said. He went on to state that if this is done,

then the probability of attracting foreign capital and investments will be significantly enhanced as “The Tinubu administration is gradually providing the enabling environment for FDI when it pledged to allow companies to repatriate revenue through an open and robust exchange system.”

As Tinubu is just in his infancy in the presidency, Peterside said he has ample time to win the hearts of many Nigerians while at the same time breaking his predecessors' curse. Peterside said in the past, all Nigerian presidents who adopted and prioritised a bullish foreign policy always found it difficult to tackle domestic issues. It's against this background that the country has been bedevilled by many challenges which include political instability, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, a struggling healthcare system, a poorly performing education system, high poverty levels, unemployment, and insecurity.

Striking the right balance as such when it comes to the “homegrown economic agenda, structural reforms and foreign policy can provide a message of economic renaissance that the Administration carries on its extensive travels.”

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Is This the End of French Neo-Colonialism in Africa?

By Zoe Alexandra and Vijay Prashad*

In Bamako, Mali, on September 16, the governments of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger created the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). On X, the social media platform formerly known as Twitter, Colonel Assimi Goïta, the head of the transitional government of Mali, wrote that the Liptako-Gourma Charter which created the AES would establish “an architecture of collective defense and mutual assistance for the benefit of our populations.” The hunger for such regional cooperation goes back to the period when France ended its colonial rule. Between 1958 and 1963, Ghana and Guinea were part of the Union of African States, which was to have been the seed for wider pan-African unity. Mali was a member as well between 1961 and 1963.

But, more recently, these three countries—and others in the Sahel region such as Niger—have struggled with common problems, such as the downward sweep of radical Islamic forces unleashed by the 2011 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) war on Libya. The anger against the French has been so intense that it has provoked at least seven coups in Africa (two in Burkina Faso, two in Mali, one in Guinea, one in Niger, and one in Gabon) and unleashed mass demonstrations from Algeria to the Congo and most recently in Benin. The depth of frustration with France is such that its troops have been ejected from the Sahel, Mali demoted French from its official language status, and France’s ambassador in Niger (Sylvain Itté) was effectively held “hostage”—as French President Emmanuel Macron said—by people deeply upset by French behavior in the region.

Philippe Toyo Noudjenoume, the President of the West Africa Peoples’ Organization, explained the basis of this cascading anti-French sentiment in the region. French colonialism, he said, “has remained in place since 1960.” France holds the revenues of its former colonies in the Banque de France in Paris. The French policy—



French President Emmanuel Macron welcomes Nigerien President Mohamed Bazoum during a 2022 visit. The coup has damaged relations between the two countries. Photo AFP, Francois Mori.

known as *Françafrique*—included the presence of French military bases from Djibouti to Senegal, from Côte d’Ivoire to Gabon. “Of all the former colonial powers in Africa,” Noudjenoume told us, “it is France that has intervened militarily at least sixty times to overthrow governments, such as [that of] Modibo Keita in Mali (1968), or assassinate patriotic leaders, such as Félix-Roland Moumié (1960) and Ernest Ouandié (1971) in Cameroon, Sylvanus Olympio in Togo in 1963, Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso in 1987 and others.” Between 1997 and 2002, during the presidency of Jacques Chirac, France intervened militarily 33 times on the African continent (by comparison, between 1962 and 1995, France intervened militarily 19 times in African states). France never really suspended its colonial grip or its colonial ambitions.

Breaking the Camel’s Back

Two events in the past decade “broke the camel’s back,” Noudjenoume said: the NATO war

in Libya, led by France, in March 2011, and the French intervention to remove Koudou Gbagbo Laurent from the presidency of Côte d’Ivoire in April 2011. “For years,” he said, “these events have forced a strong anti-French sentiment, particularly among young people. It is not just in the Sahel that this feeling has developed but throughout French-speaking Africa. It is true that it is in the Sahel that it is currently expressed most openly. But throughout French-speaking Africa, this feeling is strong.”

Mass protest against the French presence is now evident across the former French colonies in Africa. These civilian protests have not been able to result in straight-forward civilian transitions of power, largely because the political apparatus in these countries had been eroded by long-standing, French-backed kleptocracies (illustrated by the Bongo family, which ruled Gabon from 1967 to 2023, and which leeches the oil wealth of Gabon for their own personal gain; when Omar Bongo

died in 2009, French politician Eva Joly said that he ruled on behalf of France and not of his own citizens). Despite the French-backed repression in these countries, trade unions, peasant organizations, and left-wing parties have not been able to drive the upsurge of anti-French patriotism, though they have been able to assert themselves

France intervened militarily in Mali in 2013 to try to control the forces that it had unleashed with NATO’s war in Libya two years previously. These radical Islamist forces captured half of Mali’s territory and then, in 2015, proceeded to assault Burkina Faso. France intervened but then sent the soldiers of the armies of these Sahel countries to die against the radical Islamist forces that it had backed in Libya. This created a great deal of animosity among the soldiers, Noudjenoume told us, and that is why patriotic sections of the soldiers rebelled against the governments and overthrew them.

Anti-Intervention

After the coup in Niger, the West hoped to send in a proxy force—led by the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS)—but the African military leaders demurred. Across the region, people set up solidarity committees to defend the people of Niger from any attack, with the threat provoking “revolt and indignation among the populations,” Noudjenoume explained. Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu was even forced to back down from ECOWAS’s crusade when his country’s Congress rejected the measure and mass protests occurred against militarily intervening in the neighboring country. As ECOWAS’s ultimatums to restore the deposed Nigerien leader Mohamed Bazoum expired, it became clear that its threat was empty.

Meanwhile, not only did it appear that the people of Niger would resist any military intervention, but Burkina Faso and Mali immediately promised to defend Niger against any such intervention. The new AES is a



Anti French protests in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, October 4, 2022.
Photo Issouf Sanogo, AFP, Getty Images

product of this mutual solidarity.

But the AES is not merely a military or security pact. At the signing ceremony, Mali’s Defense Minister Abdoulaye Diop told journalists,

“This alliance will be a combination of military and economic efforts [among]... the three countries.” It will build upon the February 2023 agreement between Burkina Faso,

Guinea, and Mali to collaborate on a fuel and electricity exchange, to build transportation networks, to collaborate on mineral resource sales, to build a regional agricultural development project, and to increase intra-Sahel trade. Whether these countries would be able to develop an economic agenda to benefit their peoples—and therefore guarantee that France would have no means to exert its authority over the region—is to be seen.

*Published in partnership with Globetrotter. This article was produced by Globetrotter. Zoe Alexandra is the co-editor of Dispatch. Vijay Prashad is an Indian historian, editor, and journalist. He is a writing fellow and chief correspondent at Globetrotter. He is an editor of LeftWord Books and the director of Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research. He has written more than 20 books, including *The Darker Nations* and *The Poorer Nations*. His latest books are *Struggle Makes Us Human: Learning from Movements for Socialism* and (with Noam Chomsky) *The Withdrawal: Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and the Fragility of U.S. Power*



A protester holding a placard reading France must go. photo courtesy.

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Edited by Wafula Okumu and Andrews Atta-Asamoah

Burundi - Ndayishimiye Dismisses Coup Rumours

By Maniraguha Ferdinand

Rumours of a possible coup dominated the headlines on most Burundian media outlets this past month. The rumours intensified when President Evariste Ndayishimiye left the country on 12 September to attend the G77+China Summit in Havana. Most media platforms reported that the Army Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Prime Niyongabo is the man seeking to depose the president from his position.

The emergence of the coup rumours was not without cause. Just before he departed to Havana and subsequently New York to attend the 78th United Nations General Assembly, President Ndayishimiye reshuffled the service chiefs' personnel at the national broadcaster in Burundi. The security changes at the national broadcaster which is notoriously known for being under heavy presidential guard ignited the smoulders which eventually resulted in the coup rumours.

Private media houses in Burundi reported that before departing for Cuba, President Evariste Ndayishimiye had signed a letter dismissing Army Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Prime Niyongabo, who had held the position since 2015. The reports say the President entrusted Prime Minister Gervains Ndirakobuca to deliver the letter to Niyongabo but the Prime Minister refused.

Burundi's Ministry of Interior was quick to allay any fears that the public might have and rubbished the coup rumours saying, "Regarding recent rumors, the Ministry of Interior assures all Burundians that there is no cause for concern. Peace and security prevail throughout the country. We urge you to disregard such unfounded claims." The Ministry issued the statement via its official 'X' account (formerly Twitter).

Upon his return to Burundi from New York on September 25, 2023, President Ndayishimiye personally refuted the coup reports.



President Ndayishimiye waves to the crowd in a show of reassurance on his return from New York on 25th September 2023. Photo Burundi Presidency.

"The rumours were disseminated by individual's intent on tarnishing Burundi's international reputation, they seek to propagate baseless information both domestically and abroad. Inciting unnecessary panic among our citizens by peddling falsehoods about our nation... Where there is strength, evil cannot prevail. In the past, Burundi faced international sanctions, and some sought to tarnish its reputation globally. Now, as they witness these journeys that elevate Burundi's standing, they perceive it as a catastrophe. They are the ones responsible for fabricating these rumours in an attempt to incite panic among Burundians" he stated.

The President also went on to issue a stern warning to those peddling the coup rumours saying "Have you ever seen a lion baring its teeth? A lion possesses formidable teeth but never flaunts them. A lion knows it is a lion. Our emblem is the lion, and as such, we do not need to boast. We always know where our strength lies," he remarked.

President Ndayishimiye said that instead of focusing on trivial issues such as rumours, the nation should rather be focused and geared towards working in unison to achieve its goals

which include poverty eradication. "While we have faced coup attempts in the past, today our nation enjoys a state of tranquillity and stability. You can rest assured, carry on with your daily lives, and engage in productive work without concern. Those who prefer rhetoric over action are known for spreading rumours... If you continue to pay heed to rumours, we will remain destitute, eventually reliant on foreign assistance," President Ndayishimiye said.

Coup-related news is not entirely foreign to Burundi, a central African nation that gained independence from Belgium in 1962. The country's history since gaining independence in 1962 has been marred by presidential assassinations, coup attempts, and ethnic violence.

The most recent unsuccessful coup attempt occurred just last year. Following the coup rumours, President Ndayishimiye was forced to dismiss then-Prime Minister Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni. Though he did not explicitly state that the reason behind Bunyoni's dismissal was because of the coup rumours, President Ndayishimiye in his first public address after Bunyoni's dismissal alluded to the rumours.

"Do you think an army general can be threatened by saying they will make a coup? Who is that person? Whoever it is should come and, in the name of God, I will defeat him," the President said.

During his time as the Prime Minister, Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni as described by Africa News was "regarded as the regime's real number two and the leader of the hardliners among the generals working behind the scenes".

Ironically, while President Ndayishimiye was facing renewed coup rumours this time around, the man he dismissed last year for fronting the alleged coup attempts Alain-Guillaume Bunyoni was appearing before the courts of law on allegations of "undermining the smooth running of the national economy, and personal enrichment".

A few years back in 2015, then-former president Pierre Nkurunziza survived a coup after he had attempted to extend his rule by seeking a third term in office. Just like with President Ndayishimiye, the attempted coup on President Nkurunziza occurred when he was out of the country attending an emergency conference in Tanzania.

Diplomatic Row Persists Between Zimbabwe and Zambia

By Johnston Moyo



SADC Election Observer Mission Chairman Dr. Nevers Mumba and his report are at the core of friction between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Things have not been all rosy between Zimbabwe and Zambia ever since the 23 August harmonised elections in Zimbabwe. The two neighbouring countries have been engaged in an unofficial but intense diplomatic spat.

Acting as the spark igniting the diplomatic row was the preliminary SEOM (SADC Election Observer Mission) report. In an unprecedented move, SADC for the first time stated that the Zimbabwean elections were marred with irregularities and that affected its credibility.

Zanu PF, the party which emerged victorious in the presidential race and garnered more parliamentary seats did not take lightly to the SEOM report. Zanu PF in condemning the SEOM report attacked more the person rather than the substance contained in the report. The person who received the barrage of criticism from the Zanu PF quarters was Dr. Nevers Mumba, the head of the SEOM Mission in Zimbabwe.

Nevers Mumba is a former Zambian Vice President who only served for a short term before he was dismissed by then-Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa. Mumba was fired for insubordination after he according to the late Mwanawasa

“failed to retract his recent allegations that the Democratic Republic of Congo was harbouring individuals who were working against the Zambian government”. Mumba’s pronouncements at the time put Zambia at loggerheads with the DRC. To quell the diplomatic tensions, President Mwanawasa decided to fire his Vice President.

Dismayed by the SEOM report, many in the Zanu PF quarters especially those officially and unofficially involved in the party’s information department including the presidential spokesperson Nick Mangwana used Mumba’s dismissal from the vice presidency post as a good reason why he shouldn’t have been appointed the head of the SEOM Mission. They said that his questionable nature as evidenced by his dismissal shows that he lacks the diplomatic etiquette required to oversee a huge task such as an electoral observation mission.

“Mumba is a complete disgrace and an embarrassment to the region and the African continent as a whole. It was very unwise and unpolitic for President Hichilema as head of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security to appoint Mumba, a lackey of imperialism and neo-

colonialism with a known regime change background (against Zanu PF), to come and observe Zimbabwe’s harmonised elections,” said Patrick Chinamasa, the Zanu PF Secretary for Finance.

Patrick Chinamasa went somewhat overboard when he also boldly claimed that Nevers Mumba was involved in the death of Levy Mwanawasa in August 2008. He said that since his dismissal from the vice presidency post at the hands of Mwanawasa, Mumba developed a long-standing grudge which ultimately led him to play a hand in the sudden death of Mwanawasa. President Mwanawasa died in August 2008 two months after he had suffered a stroke during an African Union conference. Chinamasa went even further stating that Mumba was currently in the process of plotting an assassination attempt on current Zambian president Hakainde Hichilema.

Dr Mumba himself came out to defend himself saying, “So I can only speak as having been part of his (President Hichilema) team. But he never shared with us that he was involved in any desire for a regime change. So, it’s very unfair to accuse a man who is not with us... And to connect me with the president to any

plan of regime change is childish. I think they are just sensitive.”

The claims by the Zanu PF Secretary for Finance were not taken lightly by scores of Zambians back home. Soon after Chinamasa’s pronouncements, thousands of Zambians took to the streets in Zambia’s third largest city Ndola calling for Chinamasa to be apprehended for his utterances. In one of the protest videos shared by the spokesperson of the ruling party (United Party for National Development) in Zambia Joseph Kalimbwe, a banner read, “We want to know why you want to kill President Hakainde Hichilema as alleged in your statement”.

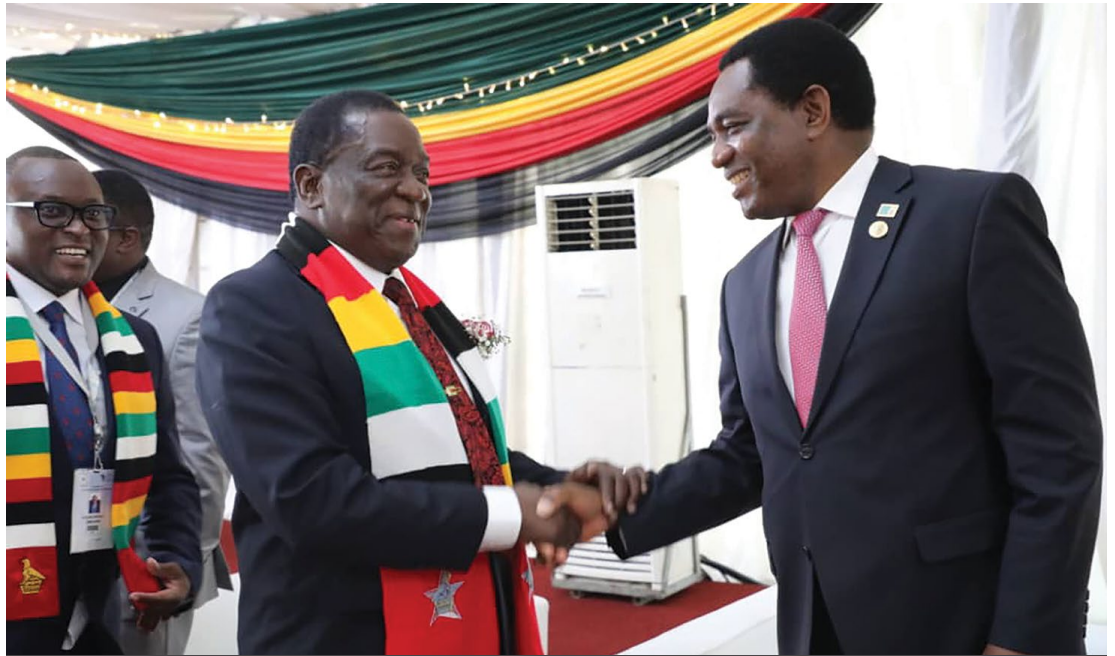
During the protest, Elisha Matambo the provincial minister for Copperbelt said he had received the message from the protesters and would take the message to relevant international and regional bodies to look into the threat to Hichilema’s life. “I have received the petitions on the threats on the life of President Hichilema by Chinamasa and Rutendo Matinyarare... I will deliver your petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that it can be taken to SADC, AU, and UN. Chinamasa has confessed that he killed President Mwanawasa and is now planning to tamper with the life of President Hichilema” Matambo said.

In his response, Chinamasa said he hadn’t confessed to killing anyone and did not know ‘Rutendo Matinyarare’, his co-accused. “The above allegations by Honourable Matambo are false, malicious, and highly defamatory. I, however, agree with Honourable Matambo when he says that ‘Zimbabwe and Zambia are like twin sisters’. In fact, the two countries are more than twin sisters. Zimbabweans will never forget that Zambia along with Tanzania, Mozambique, and other Frontline states, acted as midwives to our freedom, independence, and sovereignty that we fervently cherish and defend... Zimbabweans harbour no ill intent against Zambia or Zambians. As neighbours, we

should not allow agent provocateurs to damage the good relationship that exists between our two countries and peoples.”

When asked for a comment about the prevailing exchange of words between Zanu PF and Zambian officials, Zimbabwe’s Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Livit Mgejo said, “Kindly note that diplomacy is not done through the press, and we will not comment on public statements. There are proper diplomatic channels we communicate with Zambia and any other state... And as far as we are concerned, we are not aware of any collapsed relations.”

Commenting on the whole situation, Olalekan Adigun writing for BNN Network said, “Presently, the diplomatic relations between the two nations remain hanging in the balance. As tensions continue to swell, the prospect of stability remains uncertain. With national



Presidents Mnangagwa and Hichilema in happier times. The ruling Zanu PF has sort to link the actions of Nevers Mumba to the Zambian President. Photo courtesy

sentiments flaring on both sides, it remains to be seen how these nations will navigate the crisis and restore diplomatic equilibrium. An upheaval between these two nations could impact the broader African regional stability, making resolution of these simmering tensions a matter of urgent regional interest.”

Africa Stands As One in Helping Morocco and Libya

By Prince Kurupati

Just three days apart, Africa was hit by two massive tragedies. On 8 September, Morocco recorded its deadliest earthquake (6.8 magnitude) since 1960. The earthquake hit the Atlas Mountains in its wake leaving total destruction, especially in the city of Marrakech. Conservative efforts soon after the earthquake placed the number of fatalities at 3,958 with hundreds of others reported missing – possibly also dead. On 11 September, Storm Daniel made its way into Libya tearing through the eastern region of the country and leaving behind a trail of destruction. The city of Benghazi was totally flooded, and two dams’ walls completely destroyed. First on the ground to offer support was the Red Cross which put the number of missing people at more than 10,000 with most of them feared dead.

Compounding the rescue efforts in both countries is the fact that the tragedies occurred in mountainous regions. Victims even those who if immediate help was rendered could



The devastation from the earthquake in Morocco was unprecedented in the country’s history. Photo courtesy.

survive tragically lost their lives owing to the difficulties in manoeuvring to areas of need. However, knowing how huge both tragedies were and the scale of devastation, a quick response was the only way forward to prevent further unnecessary loss of lives. In a spirit of brotherhood, many African countries as well as regional and continental organisations were quick to offer necessary help for search and rescue efforts.

African countries in the Islamic community which include Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia expressed solidarity with “Libya and its brotherly people, and victims of the floods.” Egyptian president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi declared a 3-day mourning period for both tragedies and “directed military personnel to provide humanitarian aid, including relief teams, rescue equipment and shelter camps for Libya and Morocco,” as reported by Arab News’ Robert Bociaga.

According to a statement released by the Presidency department in Tunisia, President Kais Saied said he had “authorised coordination with the Moroccan authorities to direct urgent aid and send civil protection teams to support the Kingdom’s search and rescue efforts. He also authorised the facilitation of a delegation from the Tunisian Red Crescent to contribute to relief operations and surround the injured.”

Algeria which severed ties a couple of years back with Morocco changed its heart following the natural disaster. Algeria’s Foreign Ministry said that his country had opened its airspace to facilitate aid flights access and scrambled 80 rescue workers to help with search and rescue efforts. Unfortunately, Morocco wasn’t very receptive to the assistance.

Down south, the South African president via his spokesperson Vincent Magwenya said that his country stands with Libya and Morocco. “South Africa shares the pain and loss felt by the people of eastern Libya and Morocco. These disasters highlight once more the



Recent UN reports say at least 3,958 people have died across Libya due to flooding, with close to 10,000 unaccounted for.

frailty of life when confronted with the forces of nature,” Magwenya said.

While many countries have taken steps to offer assistance to both countries both in tangible aid and messages of solidarity, Morocco did take long to officially express its willingness to accept all the help offered. Soon after the earthquake, the country officially accepted assistance from four countries deemed “friendly” namely Qatar, Britain, Spain, and the United Arab Emirates. The country’s interior minister justified this by saying, “a lack of coordination would lead to counterproductive results.”

The stance taken by Morocco has prompted debates as to the nexus between politics and aid. While many people would think that the perfect time to forego any differences is the aftermath of a natural disaster, Morocco viewed humanitarian aid as “tools of foreign policy,” as Geoff

Porter, the president of North Africa Risk Consulting puts it.

Contrary to the position taken by Morocco, Libya from the get-go embraced all assistance rendered even going further to publicly request help. Tamar Ramadan, head of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies delegation in Libya lauded the decision taken by the Tripoli government to seek support. In a statement, Ramadan said, “The humanitarian needs are huge and far beyond the abilities of the Libyan Red Crescent and even beyond the abilities of the government... That’s why the government in the east has issued an international appeal for support.”

Khalifa Haftar, the military leader in charge of a rival faction leading the eastern region including the city of Benghazi worst affected by the flood called upon the Tripoli government

to put in place concerted efforts to help victims. In a televised statement, Haftar said, “We have directed the government to form a specialised committee to assess the damage, instantly begin the reconstruction of roads to facilitate transportation, restore the electricity and take all immediate and needed measures.”

Despite the destruction left behind by Storm Daniel in Libya, survivors are still resilient, hopeful, and committed to rebuilding their country. Mohammed Thabit, a Tripoli-based citizen journalist said, “Libya’s situation is a roller coaster. We’ve been through so much – conflicts, political ups and downs, and now these floods adding to the chaos... But remember, we’re a resilient bunch. We’ve faced worse, and we’ll keep pushing for a brighter tomorrow, no matter the challenges.”

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Tanzania: Samia And Opposition At Odds Over Constitutional Review

By Adonis Byemelwa*

Since the third move of democratization in the early 1990s, more than 25 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania inclusive, have radically amended their constitution or adopted a new one.

These new constitutions represent a symbolic turn towards democracy and initiate formal measures to break with authoritarian pasts.

But Tanzania President Samia Suluhu Hassan has gestured, once again, her reluctance to give a green light for changes to the mother law, until, at most, after the next elections.

When the Head of State assumed office in March 2021 after the death of President John Magufuli, she made it clear that a new constitution was not her priority.

However, she has since introduced reformist policies leading both to an opening of the country and a reversal of her earlier stance on the constitution.

"It will take time to write and endorse the new constitution. We are going to start with awareness and education campaigns to the people of Tanzania to make them know what the constitution is before we sit down to write a new constitution," she said in Dar es Salaam recently, speaking to a gathering of political parties.

The head of State's remarks came a week after the former Minister of Constitutions and Legal Affairs Damas Ndumbaro was quoted as saying that, educating the masses about the constitution should take at least three years.

The opposition and members of the public have not been happy with the minister's statement, citing the cost incurred to review the same document under the retired Judge Joseph Warioba, which cost multibillion shillings, all to end up in vain.

Speaking vehemently at a gathering of opposition leaders, the United Democratic Party (UDP)



It will take time to write and endorse the new constitution, says President Samia.

national chairman, John Cheyo expressed misgivings on the stalled constitutional change before the 2024 civic elections.

"I am not happy with a three-year period of educating the citizens about the new constitution. Tanzanians had provided their views and opinions during the Judge Joseph Warioba Constitutional Review Commission. Frankly, the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) is playing dirty cards to remain at the helm. We should not accept this to happen," said Mr. Cheyo amid applause.

Tanzania is headed for civic elections in 2024, alongside later Parliamentary and Presidential elections in 2025. But President Samia Suluhu Hassan has faced increasing demands to change the constitution passed in 1997, with the opposition and a sizeable number of critics arguing the law is too archaic for today's use.

Tanzanians want the new constitutions mainly to at least reduce the powers of the President, who had since been accused of increasing the size of her government in total disregard of the biting high cost of living caused by dollar shortage and fuel prices.

The head of state's decision to break up the Ministry of Works and Transport and create two different ministries has displeased others, who interpreted the change as unnecessary, eventually affecting Tanzania's taxpayers.

This is the second ministry for President Samia to break up, the first being the Ministry of Finance and Planning, whose dissolving led to the formation of two different ministries, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

Stedius Kazinduki, a tutor-cum-activist, at Katoke Teacher's College, told the author of this think piece that such decisions reflect the extent to which the government ignores people's hardships as they succumb to the skyrocketing cost of living.

"We nonchalantly enlarge the size of our government. The one who will bear the brunt here is the common citizen, who continues to struggle single-handedly with a biting cost of living conundrum. What is needed is an accountable government, not a bigger one," he said.

President Samia had also revived an old contradictory title, which was also seen during the second phase

of government, the Deputy Prime Minister. Debates have been swirling around the constitutionality of the title, with some arguing there was a breach of the constitution.

However legal experts from both sides have had a consensus that, as per Article 36(1) of the Tanzania Constitution, the President has the power to change the establishment, not just to fill in roles. With some highlighting that this is one of the examples of the excessive power that the President has, explaining that this needs to be addressed with the new constitution. The persistent questions remain about the role of the Prime Minister going forward, the new position is noted as a clear reduction of his mandate.

Nevertheless, former Ambassador Dr. Wilbroad Slaa was against the stance of his colleagues saying that Article 36 (1) of the Tanzania Constitution gives powers to the President to make changes but to establish a new title, in what he says that Article 46 (1) and 52 (1) of the same Mother Law states categorically the duties of the Prime Minister and powers of the President without allowing the head of state to bring in the outdated and uncalled for deputy prime minister title.

The Tanzania's President had in the recent past lifted a five-year ban on political rallies imposed illegally by her predecessor. But last month, she lashed out at politicians who, she considered were abusing the very freedom she had given by insulting her, instead of propelling their political grassroots support.

On a lighter note, Article 20 (1) of the constitution of Tanzania allows for public assembly. Other laws, such as the Political Parties Act, and the Parliamentary Immunities, Powers and Privilege Act, give political parties and politicians the right to conduct rallies.

Despite these laws, it took another Presidential statement in January

2023 to unban rallies. This illustrates the powers of the president over the Constitution.

In their letter dated July 18, 2023, which has been circulating online, police told Mr Lissu it wants him to finalize the investigation into the remarks it described as "indecent."

Police did not specify what exactly these remarks were. However, in a separate discussion the Minister of Information, Communication, and Information Technology, Nape Nnauye quoted Tundu Lissu's remarks, "In one of the discussions the opposition leaders said that the President's proposal of recruiting critics in the new Ministry of Planning is presidential rubbish," dismayed by Lissu's statement Mr Nnauye cautioned that this is not a way for building a society.

In Dar es Salaam the President underscored the need to apply her 4R's Philosophy that would guide her to embrace political reconciliation.

The 4Rs stand for Reconciliation, Resilience, Reforms, and Rebuilding in addressing the contemporary issues affecting Tanzania's social, political, and economic systems.

In 2021 President Samia revived the push for constitutional reforms and set up a 23-member task force that would advise her government on new



I am not happy with a three-year period of educating the citizens about the new constitution, says UDP national chairman, John Cheyo.

constitutional requirements. The task force returned a recommendation for awareness first, and amendments later.

The former constitution review proposal included the formation of three governments made up of two semi-autonomous governments of Tanganyika and Zanzibar under the federal government of the United Republic of Tanzania. The proposal was opposed in the Tanzania Parliament, however.

The genuine steps to amend the constitution were actually begun by

former President Jakaya Kikwete in 2012. His review commission was, at the time, chaired by former Attorney General and Prime Minister (former), Retired Judge Joseph Warioba but it ended up in vain.

In Tanzania, unfree and fair elections began after the constitution was amended in 1992 to allow for multi-party elections. Since then, there have been six general elections. Each has been marred by accusations of an unlevel playing field, rigging, and violence.

The 2020 general election was

especially violent, with many opposition contestants for civic elections crying foul after being found ineligible to vie for posts in what returning officers said they failed to spell their names properly while filing registration forms.

"During the 2020 Civic polls I was dumbfounded to learn that at one of the polling centers in Mbagala Ward, the number of votes announced to have been cast was more than the people we were told to have registered to vote. It was such unfair that even the wife of the contestant did not vote for her husband. The CCM councilor garnered 100 percent of the total votes," said Prof Ibrahim Lipumba, the Civic United Front Chairman.

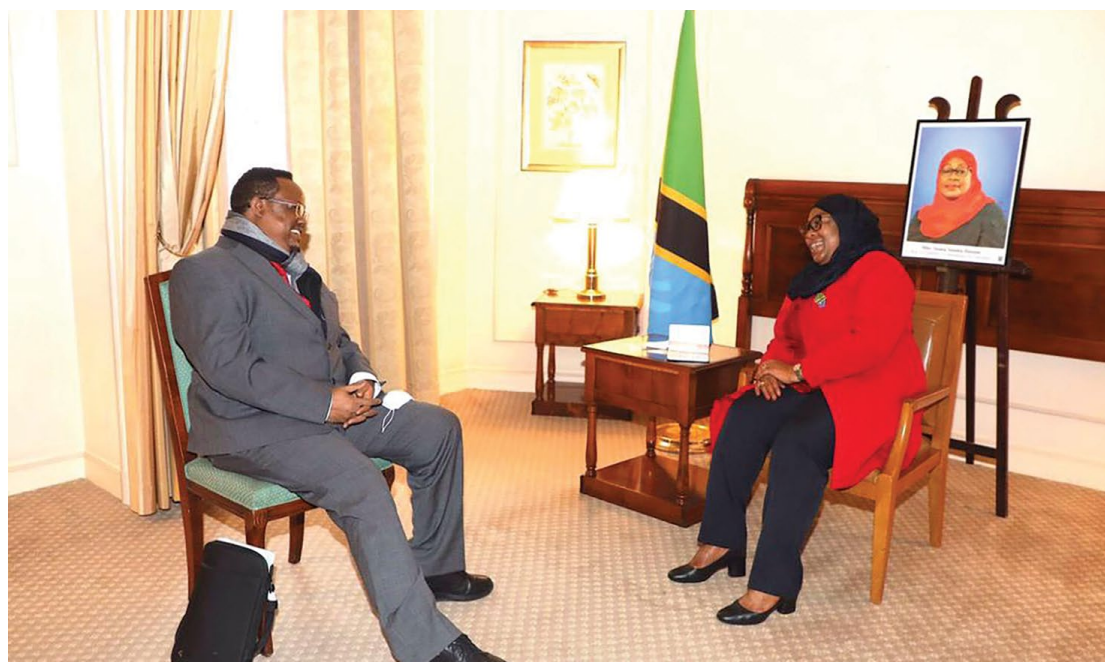
The opposition and members of the public say constitutional reform is particularly important before the 2024 civic elections because the composition of the electoral commission as provided for by the constitution is bound to be biased.

The President who is often the incumbent candidate and the chairperson of the ruling party is responsible for appointing the executive director and commissioner of the electoral commission. All election returning officers at the constituency level are also presidential appointees.

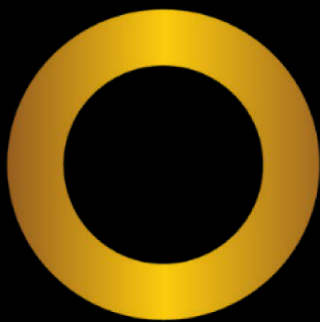
The consequence is that electoral officials are likely to be loyal to their appointing authority rather than to the ideals of free and fair elections.

Additionally, once the presidential vote has been announced, the Constitution does not allow for it to be challenged in court. Therefore, waiting for three years to educate the masses before writing the new Mother Law, as President Samia Suluhu Hasan and her cohorts want, is akin to endorsing the illegal. This should not be allowed to happen in a democratic country like Tanzania.

*Adonis Byemelwa is a Master's in International Relations Graduate, teacher, author, and columnist and was formerly a sub-editor with Tanzania's English Newspaper, The Citizen. Hyperlink, adonisbyeme@yahoo.com. +2555884436



President Samia in face-to-face talks with opposition leader Tundu Lissu has opened up on some political freedoms in the country.



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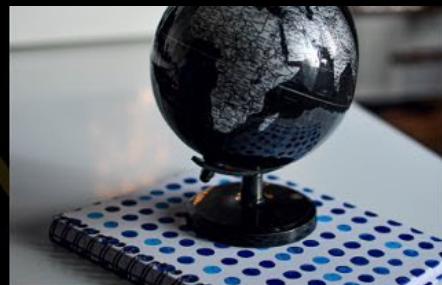
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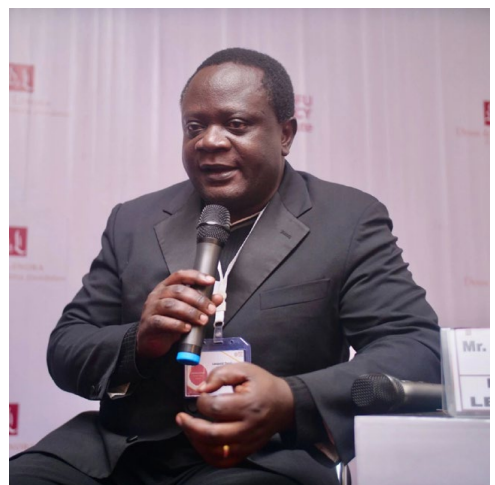
From Yaoundé With Fresh Hope For Central African Think Tanks

Known to be one of the most challenged sub regions of the continent, Think Tanks could play a leading role in promoting open and transparent governance, the rule of law, respect for fundamental human rights, inclusive and sustainable conflict resolution, and more in changing the fortunes of Central Africa.

However, think tanks in Central Africa remain institutionally fragile and are yet to exert a real influence in fostering the emergence of an open society in this region, and to maximize their impact, they must constantly optimize their strategies to strengthen their capacities. The Nkafu Policy Institute of the Denis and Lenora

Foretia Foundation recently hosted Think tanks from Central Africa in Yaoundé, Cameroon, to chart a new path forward. From the forum emerged the Network or Alliance of Central African Think Tanks. PAV was there and brings you photo news of the forum.





A Reflection on BRICS

By The Rt. Rev. Dr. Musonda Trevor Selwyn Mwamba*



Bishop Trevor Mwamba is President of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), Zambia.

People Matter

The German word, *Zeitgeist*, aptly describes the emergence of BRICS grouping of nations. *Zeitgeist* encapsulates the spirit or mood of a particular period of history rooted in the ideas and beliefs of the time.

BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.

The genesis of BRICS is in the banking crisis of 2007-08 when the G20 asked countries such as China, India, and Indonesia to provide liquidity to the Global North's collapsing banking system.

Global North's banking crisis created an opportunity to rethink the global financial system.

For decades, the Global South has been concerned about the unfair trade practices of the North. These practices include the imposition of credit conditions that in many cases do little to ease the financial burden of so-called developing countries. Indeed, the conditions attached to

loans secured from institutions in the Global North often leave the indebted country worse off than it was prior to execution of the loan agreement.

Formalization of what the 1991 South Commission report dubbed "the locomotives of the South" created an opportunity to challenge Global North financial hegemony.

After all, it was now clear that economic development in the Global South had not been helped by the Bretton Woods institutions whose governance is tightly controlled by Europe and the United States.

It's this reality that has made BRICS an attractive alternative in the eyes of many Southern nations.

As was clear at the 15th BRICS Summit recently held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 22-24th August 2023, countries impatient with the current international financial system are looking to BRICS for fairer and more respectful financial agreements with real potential for economic growth.

The Summit in a sense brought back memories of the core purpose of the 1970s clarion call by the Group

of 77 and Non-Aligned countries (plus China) to establish a New International Economic Order.

The highlight of the 15th BRICS summit was its transformation from BRICS to BRICS+, with the admission of Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates. The six countries will officially join the group in January, 2024.

The new members will add their voices to the call for a more equitable global governance system, including reforming the UN Security Council with a view to making it more globally relevant and accountable.

A wind of change is blowing as nations representing the majority of the world's population endeavour to create an economic system that respects their sovereignty and maximizes opportunities for equitable global prosperity.

If British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan were alive today, he would probably have recognized another "Wind of Change" and talked about BRICS as a political and economic reality we had to live with, whether

we liked it or not.

This wind of change is evident in a report released on July 20, 2023 by the United Nations titled "A New Agenda for Peace" in which the U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres says:

"We are now at an inflection point. The post-Cold War period is over. A transition is under way to a new global order. While its contours remain to be defined, leaders around the world have referred to multipolarity as one of its defining traits."

The wind of change is blowing the world away from the post-Cold War era, where the United States and its close allies, Europe and Japan, exerted their unipolar power over the rest of the world, to a "multipolarity" era.

The UN report rightly perceives the ending of the unipolar world and emergence of a multipolar world.

Whilst the neo-colonial structure of the world system remains largely intact the rise of BRICS is offering alternative options to the established order. This is its appeal.

In 2015, the New Development Bank (NDB) or BRICS Development Bank - as it was then - was founded and headquartered in Shanghai, China, to give the BRICS nations more control of development financing and an alternative to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

BRICS nations have also been building a "BRICS Pay" payment system for transactions among the BRICS nations without having to convert local currency into dollars.

The de-dollarisation initiative of the BRICS nations is not aimed at replacing the dollar but rather offering alternatives to facilitate bilateral trade in local currencies. This is currency democracy.

The benefit to nations wishing to join BRICS is its complementarity when deciding around development financing and the role of the IMF.

BRICS does not pose a danger to the global power becoming more

fragmented and widely dispersed on the contrary it's the West refusing to come to terms with the wind of change and adapting to the new reality by taking into account the new developments and interests of all nations.

The genesis of the wind of change springs from the spirit of the United Nations Charter of which BRICS is a catalyst.

BRICS is committed to a world of peace and stability and supports the central role of the United Nations, its purposes and principles, as enshrined in the UN Charter and respect for an equitable application of international law.

The zeitgeist in relation to the United Nations is reform.

Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley of Barbados' voice of wisdom makes a case for the reform of the United Nations as well the Bretton Woods Institutions, viz the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

In 2022 at the Caribbean Nations Security Conference, she advocated the need for transparency and sincerity in today's world, saying:

"Territorial integrity must mean territorial integrity for all. Non-incursion must also mean non-incursion for all. Non-interference must also mean non-interference for all. And, it is to those high and lofty goals established in the United Nations charter that we must continue to work for."

She then questioned whether the UN formed 78 years ago can continue to function the same way it has given the fact that at its formation only 50 countries participated.

The majority of the subsequent member states did not even exist when the United Nations was formed. Accordingly, the role of the permanent five in the Security Council raises fundamental questions of whether we could have "first-class and second-class nations."

A Security Council with the power of veto in the hands of five nations is unacceptable and therefore the reform has to be not only in its composition but also the removal of the veto.



Stronger relations with other countries, manifested through investment and trade relations can grow our economy, create more opportunities, says President Ramaphosa. Photo SA Presidency.

So commitment to international policy and stability must be reviewed to be inclusive of all nations.

The reform of the United Nations as well as the Bretton Woods institutions is critical to go forward with credibility and stability in our world. The spirit of fairness and togetherness are needed to bring about peace, love and prosperity in the world. This is the hard reality on which decisions must be made rooted in equity.

Such was the hard reality on which decisions that framed the adoption of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 were made.

On 18th July, 2023, I attended the meeting of the BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development and Inclusive Multilateralism held in Boksburg, South Africa.

It was telling that this meeting and the fifteenth Summit in August took place in the 75th year anniversary of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The importance of the anniversary must not be lost on us. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 as a consequence of the horrors of the Second World War.

The document elegantly crafted, movingly inspirational and visionary, honours and protects the sanctity and rights of all peoples.

The drafters representing various political, cultural and religious backgrounds reverently animated on the document a rich global diversity and profundity.

Women from various countries played a key role in crafting the Declaration by ensuring women's rights were included.

One such delegate was Hansa Mehta of India credited with changing the phrase «All men are born free and equal» to «All human beings are born free and equal» in Article 1.

The drafting committee was chaired by Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of the American President Franklin Roosevelt.

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly, meeting in Paris, adopted resolution 217 A (III) famously known as The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A Chilean member of the drafting sub-Committee Hernán Santa Cruz described it as a "truly significant historic event in which a consensus had been reached as to the supreme value of the human person, a value that did not originate in the decision of a worldly power, but rather in the

fact of existing—which gave rise to the inalienable right to live free from want and oppression and to fully develop one's personality."

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is sacrosanct embodying what is taught in all Faiths viz the supreme value of the human being.

The document has inspired the adoption of over seventy human rights treaties, applied today on a permanent basis at global and regional levels with references to it in their preamble.

The 75th year anniversary of the adoption of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights invites us to pause, to reflect, on the world as it was 75 years ago. It invites us to contemplate and appreciate deeply what inspired the drafters to produce a magnificent document of genius and wisdom.

75 years ago the world was divided between the Eastern and Western blocs. It was an era of the Cold War and in this Cold War the warm Universal Declaration of Human Rights was crafted.

How was this possible? The drafters simply focused on what matters, and unifies, that is, people matter. This is the inalienable gift of humanity which the drafters recognized and we must not forget, people matter.

They saw a person, irrespective of religion, colour, creed, gender, tribe, nationality, or political ideology, as endowed with an inalienable gift of humanity made in the divine image.

Concisely summed up The Universal Declaration of Human Rights obligates us to:

«Do unto others as you would have them do unto you». (Matthew 7:12).

This is the bulwark against peoples inhumanity to others, imperialism, greed, arrogance, neo-colonialism, hatred, exploitation, and all evil beliefs and ideologies that seek to demean people and polarise our world.

Serendipitously President Nelson Mandela's birthday (July 18) was on the opening of the BRICS Political Parties Plus Dialogue. This great statesman's life exemplified the spirit of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

His life was dedicated to fighting all forms of white or black domination and nurturing democracy, peace, human rights, and social justice.

President Mandela placed human solidarity, the concern for the other at the centre of the values by which he lived. This for him defined a meaningful life.

In our world of division, conflict and violence, he sought to build bridges of love, friendship, solidarity, and hope.

Its the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights President Mandela lived.

75 years ago a divided world traumatized by the horrors of the Second World War II grappled to steer a course towards values that unite people and nations. It inched towards wholistic world but fail short.

75 years later our divided world needs to remember and reboot to steer the same course and not fall short towards a wholistic world.

Our world faces a plethora of challenges that transcend national boundaries such as climate change, terrorism, global pandemics,



economic interdependencies, and migration crises.

These challenges need collective action and global solutions. The answer is in multilateralism or multipolarity as a solid foundation for nations coming together, sharing their expertise, and jointly addressing these issues.

Only multilateralism can promote peace and stability by fostering dialogue and encouraging nations to engage in peaceful negotiations to resolve conflicts through peaceful means, and finding common grounds for mutual benefit.

We need to rediscover the values enshrined in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These values point us to the importance of the well-being of peoples and nations as the essence of life. It's an awareness we need to nurture in global politics.

In 2019 the former First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon delivered a TED Talk explaining the far-reaching implications of a «well-being economy» which embraces factors like equal pay, childcare, and mental health.

For ages the measure of a country's success has been through Gross

Domestic Products (GDP). But this has limitations as a measurement so a much broader definition is needed of what it means to be successful as a country.

So in 2018 Scotland took the initiative

to establish a new network called the Wellbeing Economy Governments group comprising as founding members

the countries of Iceland and New Zealand; with the unforgettable acronym of «SIN»- Scotland, Iceland, and New Zealand.

SIN's focuses on the common good and broadening the definition of GDP in that the objective of economic policy should be collective well-being: how happy and healthy a population is, not just how wealthy a population is.

Sturgeon argues that the focus on well-being stirs up what really matters in our lives, what do we value in the communities we live in, what kind of country, what kind of society, what kind of world, do we really want to be.

This is the Zeitgeist of our time which in a broad context frames the BRICS nations in an alternative pursuit of the well- being of the peoples of the world.

The BRICS objectives are of non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit and its pillars of political and security, economic and financial and cultural and people to people exchanges do not pose a threat to world peace and stability.

BRICS offers us a better chance of creating a more equitable wholesome world than exists now. A world where equal importance is given to leveling inequality as to economic competitiveness.

The zeitgeist of our time is drawing us from a world of greed to one of generosity where we can nurture the spirit of fairness and togetherness bringing about peace, love and prosperity in the world.

BRICS is the vision of a future characterized by a transformed system of global governance, a multipolar world that will contribute to peace and security of all nations, sustainable development and goodwill among nations and peoples of the world.

Let's seize the moment with wisdom.

*President of the United National Independence Party (UNIP)

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South Sudan's Trinity Energy Adopts Zero Tolerance to Corruption Policy

By Prince Kurupati

South Sudan's leading independent energy company Trinity Energy has adopted a zero tolerance to corruption policy. In a press release article titled, "Trinity Energy Renews its Commitment to Transparency and Corporate Compliance Standards" the company's Head of Program Management Miriam Madong Dangasuk said the company is committed to aligning its work "with universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption".

As a way of implementing the zero tolerance to corruption policy, Trinity Energy says it will adhere to the "highest international standards". The company says by the mere virtue of being a signatory to the UN Global Compact, it was its duty to ensure that it promotes good governance principles and helps in fostering a good business environment in South Sudan.

Trinity Energy enhanced its zero tolerance to corruption policy just



Trinity is committed to doing its part to improve the business environment in South Sudan, says CEO Robert Mdeza

a few weeks after the U.S. State Department released a business risk advisory as a result of South Sudan's transitional government's failure to implement faster political and economic reforms, improve transparency and public financial management, and address pervasive, endemic corruption and human rights violations. In the release, it was stated that "The U.S. government

does not seek to curtail or discourage responsible investment or business activities in South Sudan with civilian-owned South Sudanese counterparts that are independent from improper ties to government institutions or officials."

"Trinity is committed to doing its part to improve the business environment in South Sudan by ensuring it has a top-class compliance

program in place. Trinity Energy is operating in a young country that continues to face challenges in a post-war and nation-building environment," says Robert Mdeza CEO of Trinity Energy.

Going further CEO Mdeza said "It is crucial that as we continue to contribute to the economy of South Sudan, and as the company expands across the region, that we apply the highest level of quality services and management standards to create a positive example in South Sudan's nascent and vibrant private sector, and attract international partners to the economy to support job creation."

Trinity is not only South Sudan's leading indigenous company, but has links to the US with membership and participation to several corporate organizations. In addition to the company's own internal review of compliance and governance structures, Trinity Energy is working closely with its outside renowned counsel and advisors, including Dentons and Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP, to conduct a risk assessment of the Trinity Energy operations.

He added "Trinity is committed to constantly improving its compliance practices and the compliance culture in South Sudan more generally and will continue to look for ways to do so".

Trinity Energy limited is South Sudan indigenous integrated energy company. With a proven track record of success and since 2015 until today, it was awarded "Best Petroleum Company of the Year" by the South Sudan Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for its role in contributing towards alleviating the acute shortage of fuel during, Trinity Energy is a UN Global Compact signatory and is ISO 9001:2015 Certified.



The State of Water Security in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities

By Christian B. Jantio*

Water is a precious resource that is essential for all life on Earth. In Africa, a continent known for its diverse ecosystems, rich natural resources, and cultural heritage, water plays a vital role in the well-being of its people, economies, and ecosystems. However, the state of water security in Africa is a complex and multifaceted challenge that requires urgent attention.

The Current State of Water Security

Africa is home to a wide variety of landscapes, from arid deserts to lush rainforests, but water availability is highly uneven across the continent. Some regions, like the Sahel and parts of East Africa, face chronic water scarcity, while others, such as the Congo Basin, have abundant freshwater resources. Despite this diversity, common water security challenges affect many African nations.

Access to Clean Water

Access to safe and clean drinking water is undeniably one of the most critical challenges faced by millions of Africans, particularly those residing in rural areas. This pervasive issue not only jeopardizes the health and well-being of individuals and communities but also suppresses socio-economic development in various ways, such as mortality and child health, education, and other environmental consequences. Efforts to address these challenges must be comprehensive, sustained, and collaborative while focusing on empowering communities and ensuring that safe water becomes a reality for all Africans.

Sanitation

Inadequate sanitation facilities and practices pose a severe and pervasive challenge across many African



countries. This issue extends well beyond the inconvenience of lacking proper toilets or sewage systems; it has far-reaching consequences that impact public health, environmental sustainability, and economic development. Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international partners must collaborate to raise awareness, allocate resources, and implement policies that prioritize sanitation as a fundamental right and a key determinant of public health and well-being, particularly for the most vulnerable part of the population, children, who are affected at disproportional rates.

Climate Change

Africa, a continent renowned for its ecological diversity and vibrant cultures, faces a formidable challenge from climate change. Its vulnerability to climate-related challenges is evident in the altered rainfall patterns, increased frequency of droughts and floods, and the profound impacts these events have

on water availability, agriculture, and food security. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort from governments, international partners, and local communities to build resilience, ensure sustainable water management, and promote agricultural practices that withstand the changing climate.

Infrastructure & Management

Aging and inadequate water infrastructure and management systems pose a significant obstacle to achieving water security in many African countries. These issues encompass a wide range of challenges, from outdated pipes and treatment plants to inefficient distribution networks. Inadequate investment in these critical areas not only affects the quantity and quality of available water, but also poses risks to public health, economic development, and environmental sustainability. Addressing these challenges through sustained investment and modernization efforts is vital for ensuring reliable access to

clean water, protecting public health, fostering economic development, and preserving natural resources.

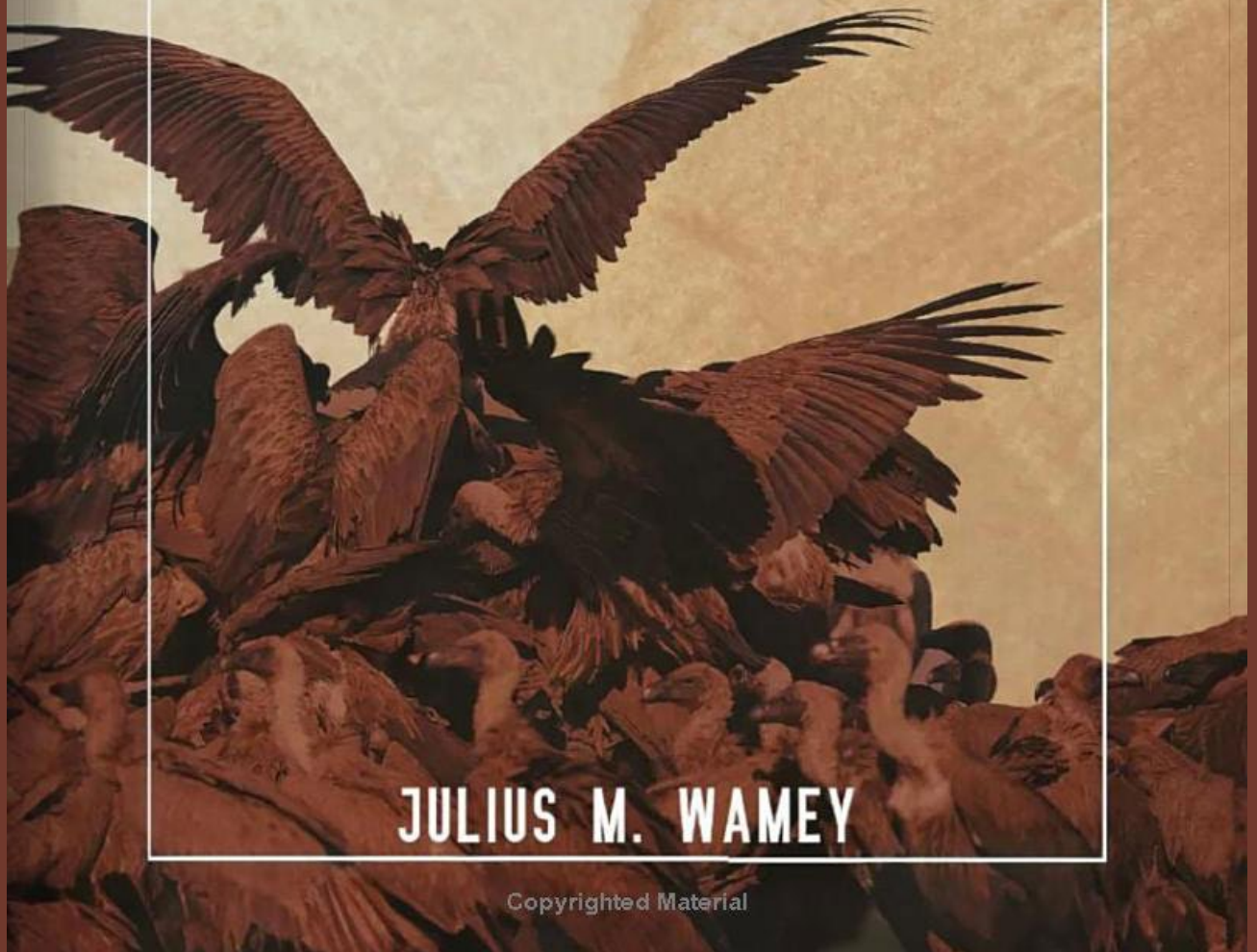
Water security is a critical issue that affects every aspect of life in Africa, from public health to economic development and environmental conservation. While significant challenges exist, there are opportunities for progress through investment, governance, climate-resilient practices, community involvement, innovation, and international cooperation. Achieving water security in Africa requires a concerted effort from governments, organizations, and individuals to ensure that this precious resource is accessible, safe, and sustainable for current and future generations.

*Christian B. Jantio is the President and CEO of Vidagua Foundation, a U.S. based non-profit organization that focuses on delivering clean drinking water to schools, and homeless shelters in the United States and in impoverished communities in developing countries. He is also a Pan African Visions Contributor.

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Why Tanzania Suffers National Power Outages Amid Untapped Potential

By Adonis Byemelwa

Electricity spurs economic development and the evidence is before our eyes every day. Businesses require a steady supply of energy to produce goods and services.

The World Bank Enterprise Survey, 2022 showed that power outages in Tanzania cost businesses about 15% of annual sales. In contrast, a more reliable electricity supply often means higher income and more jobs.

In major cities like Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Mbeya, and Arusha, power outages plunge most people into poverty. Small-scale traders suffer the most due to failure to run their entrepreneurial projects. For example, juice vendors can hardly earn anything without electricity, solons are poised to remain shut, let alone the busy welding projects that depend on energy all the time.

Unfortunately, affordable access to electricity remains an elusive dream to most Tanzanians despite being home to God-endowed natural resources that can easily harness reliable and cheap energy.

A Tanzania's Management Consultant-technologist, Charles Makakala, was quoted as saying that South Korea, a country small enough for one to drive from one point to another within four hours boasts of twice the amount of electricity generated by 48 Sub-Saharan African nations combined.

Apparently, South Korea is a country where the essence of energy is, Tanzania has remained with politicians full of rhetoric devoid of walking the talks aired on the podium.

Yes, let everyone reminisce the scenario: if the late John Pombe Magufuli had to emerge, God forbid, he could smell a rat and take decisive measures against the current Tanzania's power outages.

The former head of state pushed an industrialization drive, the agenda he craftily used, among other things, to win presidential powers, with a key focus on setting up the clear ground



for reliable energy.

Immediately after Magufuli's demise, President Samia Suluhu Hasaan's cabinet reshuffle saw Medard Keleman, who was doing very well to save Tanzanians from the dark ditched out, paving the way for January Makamba, whose two-year stint in the energy docket had poised the country into darkness again, thanks to the other mini-cabinet reordering, that has brought in the Deputy Prime Minister, Dotto Biteko, in charge of the energy ministry.

But things have not been that rosy, power shedding and of course outages still bear its ugly head in a country endowed with untapped energy potentials.

On August, 22, the Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) announced that there was a system error in their gas-fired power plant that could lead to power outages in some parts of the country.

According to a statement

signed by Tanesco's director of communications and public relations, the error has resulted in a shortfall of 268 megawatts of power in the transmission system.

Nonetheless, sources from manufacturing companies say power shortages have been persistent for months, explaining that Tanesco had letters to manufacturers informing them that water levels at most hydropower plants had shrunk and the utility firms were in the process of replacing their machinery.

"This has disrupted our production plans. We cannot afford to use generators for production because of the huge power demands," said one of the manufacturers based in Arusha City.

The utility firm's acting director of customer experience and care, Martin Mwambene said there are 29 regions receiving electricity from Tanesco, noting that all regions served by the national grid have been affected by

the problem.

In a new twist, the former director of Tanzania Electric Supply Company Maharage Chande, was quoted last week as saying power outage is attributed to the population growth and business expansion among Tanzanians, explaining that his office was keen to avert the crisis.

In July, Tanesco boasted of recording Sh109.45 billion profit during the 2021/22 financial year, according to the utility firm's managing director, Maharage Chande.

According to him, the turnaround was attributed to various transformational measures, including the government's decision to assume responsibility for paying Tanesco's debts totaling Sh2.4 trillion by converting them into equity.

"The Sh109.45 billion profit is a record since Tanesco's inception in 1964. This is something worth celebrating," said Mr Chande amid

applause.

TanESCO's power system Master Plan sets out a power generation mix vision consisting of (hydro 28 percent) Natural gas (33), Coal (26), wind (4), solar (4), and geothermal (5) by 2044.

The current development seems to shy away from the two biggest sources i.e., coal and natural gas, which are very reliable for base load capacity instead, they favour temperamental hydro, wind, and solar solutions. The implications should concern all Tanzanians.

There have been no bigger blessings to Tanzania's energy sector in the past 30 years than the introduction of gas-fired power plants, bringing increased reliability and affordability. In fact, all that has gone wrong by someone snubbing natural gas.

The power crisis of the 1990s introduced Songs and IPTL to the Tanzania market. Songs was conceived to run on gas utilizing about half of the gas from Kinyerezi I and II according to the 2021 Wentworth Resources Report, has saved TanESCO \$ 16 billion between 2004 and 2020.

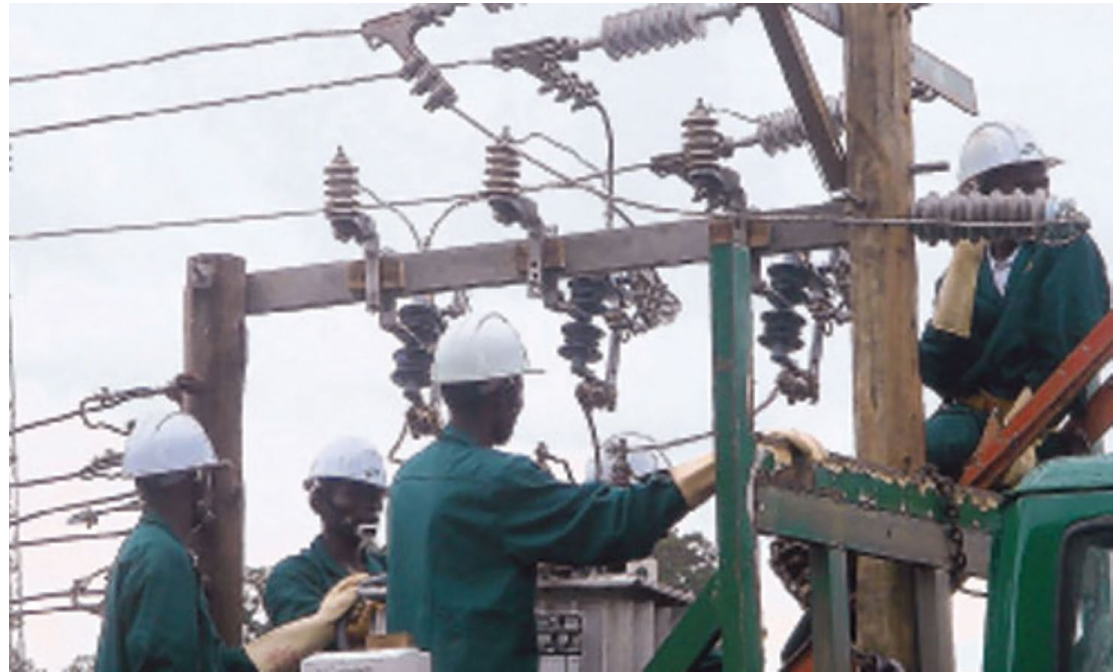
IPTL was conceived as an emergency power solution running on diesel later never happened and TanESCO paid millions of dollars extra every month as a result.

Following the energy conundrum, there is some utilized gas capacity at Ubungu (from Songosongo) more at Kinyerezi (From Mnazi Bay), and much more where the two pipes come from. It goes without saying without saying that gas should take center stage in Tanzania's energy strategy.

When it comes to coal usage some misgivings and dilly-dally are likely to crop up because developed countries like China, Germany, and the UK do not fund coal-based projects over what they call environmental and climate-related reasons.

But the story turns awry as most European countries embark on coal extraction to grapple with chilly seasons while wheedling African countries against investing in the same.

In Tanzania, coal is the key to tapping the southern region's



potential, particularly through investments in railway, iron, mining, and power transmission networks. This is part of the Mtwara corridor project which would spur Tanzania's GDP forward. It is also a viable transmission solution from wood and charcoal, signaling a dire need for coal.

A 2016 World Bank Report highlighted three things that have prevented Tanzania from harnessing its energy resources in the past a lack of coherent planning, two poor allocations of public and private sector investment, and competitive bidding practices.

As a result, there have been quite a number of independent private projects (IPPs), which have been quite overpriced pressing Tanzania to pay six to eight times the best-case scenario.

As such Tanzania needs billions of dollars for new power projects, this painful history should not lead to knee-jerk reactions. Given TanESCO's financial and operational conditions, the solution cannot be more public power projects such as the Julius Nyerere Hydro Power Project (JNHPP), Kinyerezi II, and Makambako.

The solution is in keen deployments of IPPs that is; capacity charges, competitive unit

charges, and sustainable growth. Operative planning and transparent procurement processes are the ways to go to achieve that.

Tanzanians must be tired of incessant rhetoric on solutions to power outages. Social media have been replete with empty promises given by former political leaders about how power blackouts would be a thing of the past. The Fourth Phase President, Jakaya Kikwete was quoted in 2012 as saying: "With the Obama's Millenium Challenge Compact, Tanzania will no longer cry for power outages. Just wait and see. We will soon supply the Noble Energy to other nations," he said amid applause.

Former Minister for energy and minerals Prof Sospeter Muhongo had bragged amid applause that: "I am one of the acclaimed geologists worldwide. Being in charge of the energy docket, I am set to marvel this country. Plans are on the cards that will see Tanzania sell electricity to neighbouring countries before 2020."

Prof Muhongo resigned on January, 24, 2015 after being implicated in the Tegeta Escrow scandal.

"I love Prof Muhongo. He is my friend. But he will have to step down because of this," said the late President Magufuli while delivering an emotional speech as he received

the mineral sand sag report that was delivered by the chairman of the probing committee, Prof Abdulkarim Mruma.

Another former energy minister, January Makamba, who has recently been shifted to the foreign affairs docket in a mini-cabinet reshuffle, was also quoted in Parliament as saying: "The government is really concerned about the incessant power blackouts. Just wait and see in a few months you won't experience such a nuisance. We have good plans to contain the malady once and for all."

Alas! People cannot eat words; they need plates with food on the table to feed the needy. Energy is everything to business life. Tanzania can hardly attract investors in a scenario of unreliable energy.

If politics will not be avoided in the energy sector, poverty is likely to bite even more, bearing in mind the dollar shortage crisis and the hiking fuel prices.

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Snapshot of A Banana Republic

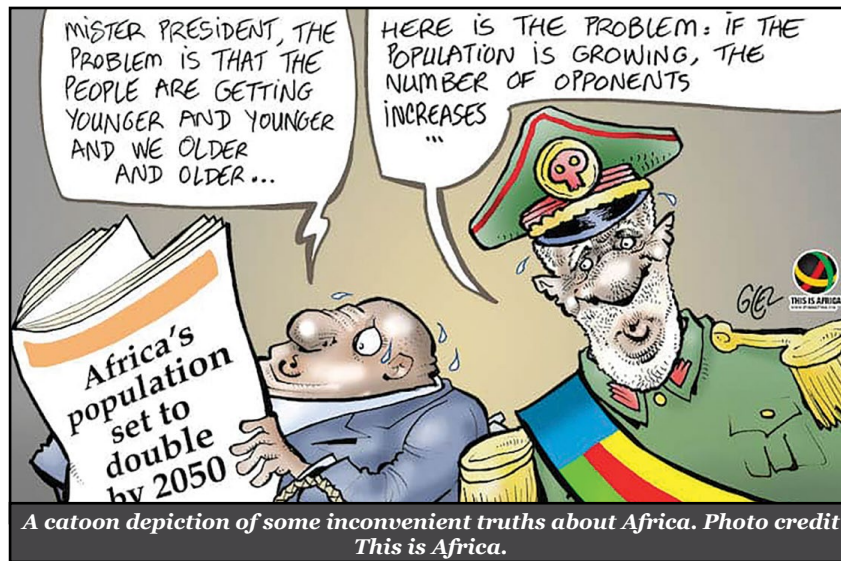
By Yerima Kini Nsom

There are republics and there are republics. One category is made up of banana republics wherein the principles of rule of law, separation of power, checks and balances are trampled upon with impunity.

Here, the obscenely mighty who have put themselves above institutions, twist the law to fit their frames. The banana republic usually has a cabal that is more powerful than republican institutions. Citizens fear government instead of the other way round. Those in charge suppress citizens in the name of maintaining state authority.

In such a situation, there is a tricky mutuality between the state and the ruling party. The harmony between the duo is stronger than a love affair. The twi-light that separates the wallets of the two is so blurred that people believe they have the same purse. The banana republic does not allow any street demonstrationists other than the motion of support caravans organised to sing "hosanna to the highest" Here democracy is just a mutilated version of enlightened despotism. When the leaders rig themselves to power, they become sit tight political Methuselahs who live with the notion of the divine rights of Kings.

Any form of dissention is ruthlessly crushed. Freedom fighters are forced to preside over the funeral of their trade. The banana republic has its own version of multiparty politics with hundreds of political parties that remain in the brief-cases of their owners. They are usually tied to the apron strings as satellite parties of the ruling party. Such parties spring to their feet only when they are doing battle for election money. They pretend to field candidates that would later on declare support for the incumbent of the great national party. Everything will be smooth sailing in such a setting if you continue to pour encomiums by telling a stark-naked



A cartoon depiction of some inconvenient truths about Africa. Photo credit This is Africa.

king that he is well dressed.

It is a kingdom in which pseudo-intellectuals who pass around for the intelligentsia are quick to join the oppressors against the masses. Once appointed into government, the hitherto critical intellectuals who hurled vituperative attacks at the establishment, do an ideological somersault. They quickly metamorphose into song birds of the cabal's belly-aching propaganda.

They are just too happy to abandon the muzzled and emasculated varsity system that can produce only mediocre results. In such a system, excellence is punished, and mediocrity rewarded. Thus, it prides itself with an educational system that has mediocrity as its main achievement. Since names are a marriage of history and geography, certain names are virtually a password to professional schools. People without such names and ethnic affinities are relegated to the back burner. They are dispatched to the dustbin of traditional bend skin or okada riders no matter how intelligent they are.

The Deciders-In-Chief of the cabal set up a chaotic health care system that is known to take more lives than it saves. Doctors and nurses receive patients with hostility while the cost of treatment in the so-called government hospitals is so prohibitive to the poor. Here, the

journey from the hospital ward to the mortuary is alarmingly short. The doctor-patient ratio in such a republic is usually very low. Small wonder that doctors in such republics are trooping into western countries in search of greener pastures. The architects of the chaotic and monstrous health system go to have treatment abroad.

People from the chosen race occupy the big offices. The official Language in such offices is usually their dialect. They hold official meetings in such dialects while those who do not understand such languages become infidels and persona non grata. One of the main characteristics of the banana republic is the Darwinian principle of the survival of the fittest. The wealth of the nation is concentrated in the hands of less than 1 percent of the population. The rest of the people are abandoned to barely exist in penury. While the sharks that maul the communal flesh fester in stolen affluence, the masses bray in the gnawing fangs of poverty.

Such a republic is usually endowed with enormous natural resources, yet wallow in underdevelopment with its citizens having a foretaste of what sinners will have in hell. The resource curse phenomenon and the paradox of poverty are a reality here. Nothing changes even when such a country gets the conformity status of the Extractive Industries, Transparency

initiative, EITI. Old habits here die hard because accountability is considered as the mirror image of weakness.

Many outfits tailored to fight corruption usually imposed a financial asphyxia while the cankerworm continues to strive as a way of life. Anti-corruption outfits are made to target only those who have ruptured their cozy relationship with the government. In such republics, the environment is enabling enough for many individuals to be richer than the state. The yearly take home of some officials, in terms of salaries,

allowances and proceeds shady deals, are many times more than the budget of their constituencies. They stash huge sums of money in foreign banks as the masses yearn for basic necessities. The officials continue to procrastinate on the construction of the narrow and pot-holed and death-trapped stretches which they pompously call roads. Water and electricity are luxuries to the greatest majority of citizens.

In one of such republics, the Prime Minister flew in from the capital with a huge delegation in a plane to inaugurate a six-kilometer stretch which many referred to as a short-cut. Before the people could wink, another politician had flown in with a hired helicopter to inaugurate a wooden bridge. It was the biggest irony because the cost of his trip to the inauguration ceremony was a guargartuan amount of money that could be used to build over 10 of those bridges. In like manner, the cost of the Prime Minister's trip could be used in building many roads.

In banana republic the abuse of human rights is a virtue. The fear of gendarme is the beginning of wisdom. The Judiciary and the Legislative are in the pocket of the all powerful executive. The law is the respecter of the big sharks who are eternalizing their sojourn in power.

TECNO Becomes Official Sponsor of the TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations 2023 with the Confederation of African Football (CAF)

The partnership between TECNO and CAF was officially sealed during a momentous ceremony held in Singapore.

Global innovative technology brand TECNO, today announces its official partnership with the Confederation of African Football («CAF») as the exclusive smartphone sponsor for the TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023.

The partnership between TECNO and CAF was officially sealed during a momentous ceremony held in Singapore, witnessed by esteemed attendees including TECNO General Manager, Jack Guo and CAF General Secretary, Véron Mosengo-Omba. This collaboration marks the beginning of a thrilling new chapter for both sides.

Mr Jack Guo, TECNO General Manager shared his excitement, stating, «This collaboration represents a momentous step for TECNO as we join hands with one of the most prestigious sporting events on the continent. TECNO has always been deeply committed to Africa. We look forward to a dynamic partnership that not only showcases our brand's commitment but also underscores the value and appeal of African football to a wide range of global partners. Together with the African Football Family, we are confident that we will achieve great success and create lasting memories for football and TECNO fans around the world.»

«We are happy to welcome our new partners, TECNO to the African Football Family as the TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023 partner. The AFCON is a global



TECNO X CAF Partnership Signing Ceremony with Jack Guo, TECNO General Manager; Véron Mosengo-Omba, CAF General Secretary.

event attracting hundreds of millions of audiences. The partnership with TECNO is a significant one, as we diversify our base of commercial partners and show African football's viability as an appealing and valuable product for a wide suite of global partners. TECNO has a strong business focus and footprint on the African continent and we look forward to a powerful, impactful partnership with them." Dr. Patrice Motsepe, President of CAF, expressed

his excitement.

Guided by its brand essence of "Stop At Nothing", TECNO is committed to unlocking the best and newest technologies for forward-looking individuals, inspiring them to never stop pursuing their best selves and their best futures.

The brand essence perfectly aligns with TECNO's commitment to the AFCON. AFCON is more than a football tournament; it's a celebration of unity, passion, and the

relentless pursuit of excellence.

TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations Cote d'Ivoire 2023, the most eagerly anticipated sporting spectacle in Africa, will commence on January 13, 2024, in Abidjan. TECNO will bring the spirit of sports and great products to TECNO and football fans through a diverse range of brand experience activities, allowing them to physically and virtually immerse themselves in the excitement of the football match.

About TECNO:

TECNO is an innovative technology brand with operations in over 70 countries and regions across five continents. Since its launch, TECNO has been revolutionizing the digital experience in emerging global markets, relentlessly pushing for the perfect integration of contemporary, aesthetic design with the latest technologies. Today, TECNO has developed into a recognized leader in its target markets, delivering state-

of-the-art innovation through a wide range of smartphones, smart wearables, laptops and tablets, HiOS operating systems and smart home products. Guided by its brand essence of "Stop At Nothing", TECNO is committed to unlocking the best and newest technologies for forward-looking individuals. By creating stylish, intelligent products, TECNO inspires consumers worldwide to never stop pursuing their best selves and their best futures. For more information, please visit TECNO's official site: www.TECNO-mobile.com

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This collaboration represents a momentous step for us, says Jack Guo, TECNO General Manager.



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