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Ngannou's African Fury

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Tough he is, very tough with rock solid credentials with iconic status within the realms of the MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) his original sports. Still, his heroics against Tyson Fury in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia was the stuff of legends. Making his foray into the world of boxing, it was gutsy of him to take on the reigning Heavy Weight World Champion Tyson Fury of Britain. For all his pre-match taunts and bravado, Fury got more than what he bargained for. Ngannou stunned pundits with an epic performance. He punched and made Fury look ridiculous in the ring. Not only did he brave the ten rounds, but the iconic picture of the night was one of Fury languishing on the carpet from a knockout blow with Ngannou standing majestic over him.

For his epic performance, the Judges somehow ruled that Tyson Fury was the winner on points. Humbled as he was, Fury was gracious in victory and conceded that this was one of the toughest fights he had had in a very long time. Ngannou on his part was elegant in defeat. The exponential leap in his fan base probably defied the expectations of his team. From everyday Africans, boxing aficionados, to global sports icons, in defeat, Ngannou came out largely victorious.

The decision from the judges was leveled unfair, some hinted at bias, others rolled in a dice of racism, business calculus trumping merit, the need to prevent an embarrassment of the reigning champion Fury is or the image of the WBA. Still, when you look at the trajectory of Ngannou, where he came from, the odds he has defied, the stoicism with which he has embraced challenges, and the supreme self-confidence he exhibits always are some of the traits that add to his growing stock.

Tyson Fury v Francis Ngannou type decisions are not new to Africans. In other sports there have been times when decisions against African countries have been controversial. In the continent itself, in Nigeria, in Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Malawi, and others, controversial decisions that



Ajong Mbapndah L, Managing Editor

mirror Fury v Ngannou are rightly or wrongly heavily laced in the outcomes of Presidential elections. The opposition always claims it was robbed of victory...

Floating by the ringside and in some of the photos taken were the green, red, and yellow flag of his native Cameroon. For the curious, Ngannou's exploits may have pushed them to do closer research or take a closer look at the origin of this modern-day Samson with the discovery of the incredible odds he went through in his journey to fame. From working in a sand quarry when he was younger, to the unorthodox means used to get to Europe, to imprisonment for illegal crossing into Spain, to homelessness in Paris, Ngannou's tale of glory and riches is laced with a painful and tortuous path.

Indeed, Ngannou's home country of Cameroon holds some of the most mind-boggling oddities that can be found anywhere in the world. A country endowed with incredible human and natural resources; it is led by a leader in his 90's who got to power in 1982---that's some four years before Ngannou was born. A country where partisans of the President are urging him to seek another term in 2025!! A country that has produced legends in all categories---from iconic sportsmen like Roger Milla and Samuel Eto'o Fils in soccer, to the likes of Joel Embid in basketball, Manu Dibango and Richard Bona in music, to serving Biden Administration cabinet Ministers like Dr John Nkengasong, the potential of Cameroon is in stark contrast to its current state and development fortunes.

From the sorry state of road infrastructure right from the capital

city of Yaounde, to the scary nature of politics, and a simmering crisis in the English speaking parts of the country, tales of epic corruption, a constitution whose clauses are still to go fully operational almost thirty years after it was passed, to natural calamities that pop in here and there, to many, it is a miracle that Cameroon has continued to stay afloat.

It is a country with some very inconvenient realities. On the 6th of November 2023 when the President clocked 41 years in power, gun men claimed the lives of over 30 people with several homes razed in Mamfe, a town around the Cameroon-Nigerian border. About a month before that, a landslide claimed over thirty lives in a neighborhood of the capital city Yaoundé. The landslide was caused by torrential rains which led to the collapse of a century-old colonial-era dam located in Mbangkomo hills in Yaoundé. The wave of water released from a human made lake, flattened buildings, uprooted trees and swept away dozens of people. For all its potential, Cameroon today gives the uncanny impression of a country in permanent wait of the next natural or man-made disaster.

Heroic feats like that of Ngannou are the soothing balm for the pain and daily tribulations of a dynamic but heavily challenged people. In Ngannou's tale of resilience and defying the odds, one can get insights into the survival instincts of Cameroonians. If going through the Sahara, crossing the Mediterranean, or navigating complicated and treacherous jungles in South America is what it takes to survive, Ngannou's compatriots will do. Walking long distances to school, studying under challenging circumstances, hardship is what has defined the lives of many, and in Ngannou's case it is his own tales of hardship that forged the legend he is today.

In a country with the potential that Cameroon has, in a continent with kind of immense potential that Africa has, rather than accepting to live in bondage and misery, rather than let the mountain of challenges and tales of hardship define

us, the inner Ngannou spirit must be channeled. It is this inner spirit that we see in the dynamic leadership of Africans like NJ Ayuk at the African Energy Chamber-AEC. In a continent that has to deal with 600 million people without electricity and 900 million without clean cooking technologies, NJ Ayuk and his team have embarked on a mission to make energy poverty history by 2030. Beyond mere slogans, the AEC has toiled hard, and its efforts are part of the reason the energy debate and stakes for Africa have grown in scope and depth. In the African Energy Week, that takes place annually in Cape Town, South Africa, the AEC has succeeded in building a movement hell bent on changing the energy fortunes of the continent.

Beyond resilience, the inner Ngannou spirit must make all Africans step up demands for better leadership. It is in the demands that we see leaders like William Ruto in Kenya, and Paul Kagame in Rwanda getting more vocal and serious about easing visa requirements for Africans into their countries. For all the talk about integration, it is common knowledge that Africans have a very hard time traveling from one country to another. If business heavy weights like Aliko Dangote complain about the hassles of intra African travel for themselves, then what everyday Africans go through can be anyone's guess. Yet, we have forgotten so fast that some years back, the African Union pompously launched the AU passport.

Leadership features prominently in this issues of PAV magazine. From former President of Malawi Prof Peter Mutharika who is rightly or wrongly been imputed with plans to rerun for office following the rather abysmal score card that citizens have for his successor President Chakwera. The issue takes a look at how Tinubu survived the supreme court scare, and the latest spat between President Tshisekedi of the DR. Congo, and Kagame of Rwanda. The 2023 edition of the African Energy Week is put on the scanner with incisive interviews and photo news of some of the most iconic moments of the event. Happy Reading!!



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Nigeria: Apex Court Upholds Tinubu Election.

**-PDP Insist S/Court Failed Nigerians, Says Judgment Disappointing
- The Labour Party Moves On From Judgment**

The seven-man panel of Nigeria's apex court led by Justice Inyang Okoro, in unanimous judgment, resolved the seven issues for determination in the appeals filed by the Presidential Candidate of the People's Democratic Party, PDP, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, and his Labour Party, LP, counterpart, Mr. Peter Obi, in favour of Tinubu. Party, LP, counterpart, Mr. Peter Obi, in favour of Tinubu.

By Ajayi Olayinka

The Supreme Court, while reaffirming President Bola Tinubu as the winner of February's presidential election, dismissed challenges brought by his political opposition, which cited flaws in the voting system and said Tinubu lacked qualifications.

The court said that the challenges were «devoid of merit.» The ruling follows a decision in which two other candidates saw their petitions rejected by an appeals court last month, clearing the way for Tinubu's presidency.

The candidates who appealed the election results, Atiku Abubakar of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Peter Obi of the Labour Party, stated that the electoral commission failed to electronically transmit results from polling units to an online portal. Abubakar and Obi came in second and third, respectively, in the February vote.

They also argued that Tinubu had won less than 25% of the vote in the federal capital, Abuja, short of the legal threshold to become president.

Abubakar's lawyers tried to submit evidence that Tinubu had forged academic credentials from an American university, but the court denied this, stating that it was not reflected in the original petition within the time frame provided by the Nigerian Constitution.

«Facts and documents that were not pleaded in the petition have no place in deciding the dispute between the parties,» Justice Inyang Okoro said.

The court's ruling follows a trend in which several other Nigerian elections have been challenged for



*The verdict has laid to rest the agitating discourse over who truly won, says President Tinubu.
Photo credit Presidency.*

alleged ballot-tampering and fraud, but none have been overturned.

Tinubu's reaction to the S/Court verdict

President Bola Tinubu, while welcoming the Supreme Court verdict, which upheld his electoral victory at the February 25 Presidential Election, noted that the Justice John Okoro-led Panel of the Supreme Court on the Presidential Election petitions filed by the candidates of the Peoples Democratic Party and the

Labour Party, challenging the ruling of the Presidential Election Petition Tribunal, did justice to all issues put up for consideration in the petitions on the merits of the law, without fear or favour.

«There is no doubt, with this profound judgment, that our electoral jurisprudence and constitutional democracy are further consolidated and embedded more indelibly in our national identity because of the diligence and undaunted professionalism of the Honourable

Justices who presided over the matter.

«While the verdict has laid to rest the agitating discourse over who truly won the 2023 presidential election and met the constitutional requirements as laid out by law, I want to reiterate that my faith in our nation's judiciary has never been shaken, not even for a moment, because I know that our hallowed courts of law will not fail to administer justice to all Nigerians in all matters and at all times. Despite the fusillade of pressure and attempts

at intimidation by some political actors, the judiciary demonstrated its unequivocal commitment to upholding the rule of law for the upliftment and defense of humanity.

It was affirmed that my party, the All-Progressives Congress, had freely and fairly won the popular mandate of Nigerians, which has since given rise to my leadership of this great nation in a tumultuous period of unprecedented reforms in our history as a nation.

"With deep gratitude to God Almighty, I solemnly and humbly accept the judicial victory with an intense sense of responsibility and a burning desire to meet the great challenges confronting our people.

"The victory has further energised and strengthened my commitment to continue to serve all Nigerians of all political persuasions, tribes, and faiths with honour and total respect for the diverse opinions and uniting values of our citizens.

"Our renewed hope agenda for a greater and more prosperous Nigeria has further gained momentum, and I will continue to work from morning to night, every single day, to build a country that meets our collective yearnings and aspirations.

"We are all members of one household, and this moment demands that we continue to work and build our country together. The strength of our diversity and the great citizenship that binds us must now compel us forward in directing the energy of our people toward building a virile, stronger, united, and more prosperous country.

In the days and months ahead, I trust that the spirit of patriotism will be elevated into supporting our administration to improve the living conditions of Nigerians. I am prepared to welcome the contributions of all Nigerians to foster and strengthen our collective progress.

"I send my immense gratitude to all Nigerians for the mandate to serve our country. I promise again to meet and exceed your expectations in service delivery and good governance, working with my team, and trusting



in the grace of God".

S/Court failed Nigerians; judgment disappointing—PDP.

Meanwhile, the Peoples Democratic Party described the Supreme Court judgment as disappointing.

The apex court upheld the judgment of the Presidential Election Petitions Tribunal affirming the victory of the All Progressives Congress presidential candidate, Bola Tinubu, as declared by the Independent National Electoral Commission.

The PDP presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, and the Labour Party candidate, Peter Obi, had filed petitions challenging the victory of President Tinubu as the winner of the presidential election announced by INEC on March 1.

However, a five-man panel of the Tribunal led by Justice Haruna Tsammani in September agreed that the petitions accordingly lacked merit and affirmed the return of President Tinubu.

Dissatisfied with the tribunal's judgment, the LP presidential candidate and his counterpart in

the PDP filed 86 grounds of appeal at the Supreme Court to nullify the judgment.

In a statement, PDP National Publicity Secretary, Debo Ologunagba, said they are alarmed by the reasoning of the apex court.

"It is indeed a sad commentary for our democracy that the Supreme Court failed to uphold the provisions of the law. Instead, it trashed the expectation of the majority of Nigerians who looked up to it as a Temple of Impartiality to deliver substantial justice in the matter regarding the case's laws and facts.

"Nigerians earnestly expected the Supreme Court to uphold and defend the clear provisions of the 1999 Constitution in terms of qualification and minimum requirement for a winner to be declared in a presidential election in Nigeria, especially with regards to the required statutory 25 percent of votes in the FCT as well as issues of violation of electoral rules and guidelines, brazen manipulations, and alterations of election results by the APC. Ologunagba added.

The opposition party publicity

scribe said Nigerians are still at a loss as to how the Supreme Court condoned the serious issues of alleged forgery, falsehood, and perjury on the altar of technicalities.

He said, "The general gloom, melancholy, and sense of despondency across the country upon the delivery of the judgment is an ominous sign of an eerie situation that portends grave consequences because of the disappointment embedded in the judgment."

Ologunagba said the apex court's judgment has shaken Nigerians' confidence in the judiciary, especially the Supreme Court, as the last hope of the common man.

The PDP national publicity secretary, who said their party remains undeterred, charged Nigerians not to be discouraged or allow the judgment to detract them from their collective quest to entrench a credible electoral system that can guarantee a government that truly derives its legitimacy from the people.

Following the judgment affirming President Bola Tinubu's victory in the presidential election, the Labour

Party (LP) has announced its decision to move on.

Accusing the Supreme Court of shredding the fabric of justice and good conscience in its verdicts, LP National Chairman Julius Abure made this remark.

The Labour Party moves on from judgment.

In the last presidential election, LP presidential candidate Peter Obi appealed against Tinubu's victory, calling for the disqualification of Vice President Kashim Shettima due to his double nomination.

Justice John Okoro, leading a five-man panel of justices, dismissed Obi's appeal, stating that the matter of double nomination cannot be resolved. Justice Okoro reminded us that the apex court had already issued a judgment on the matter when it was before a lower court.



For Atiku Abubakar and the PDP, the apex court's judgment has shaken the confidence of Nigerians in the judiciary.

In a similar vein, the Supreme Court (PDP) presidential candidate, Atiku Abubakar, challenging Tinubu's victory.

Abure criticized the Supreme Court judgment as disappointing but expressed hope for the future.

A statement by Abure reads partly: "The leadership of the Labour Party watched as the sacred fabric of justice and good conscience was shredded today at the Supreme Court as it delivered its verdict in the case between our party, the presidential candidate, and the APC presidential candidate.

"Having conclusively exercised our fundamental rights as gifted to us by the laws of the land, we have no other choice but to move on. We may be disappointed and dismayed by the outcome of the exercise, but we have chosen to trudge on and to remain optimistic about what the future holds for the nation.

"We weep for our institutions that cannot rise to the occasion and courageously defend democracy and the voices of our people."



Having conclusively exercised our fundamental rights as gifted to us by the laws of the land, we have no other choice but to move on, says Peter Obi's Labour Party.

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President Tshisekedi Accuses Rwanda of Invading DRC Territory .

By Jean d'Amour Mugabo

President Felix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has once again accused Rwanda of waging war in the eastern of his country, consequently damaging the Africa's richest biodiverse national park.

"The conservation of our biodiversity and our forests in Virunga Park is currently the subject of armed activism that is damaging and destroying this ecosystem. This was not decided in Washington, Paris, Brussels or London. It was decided in Africa, in Kigali to be precise. It is the work of an African brother," Tshisekedi told the Three Basins climate summit convening at least 10 Heads of State in Brazzaville, the Republic of Congo on October 28. Our sources reveal that Rwanda's President Paul Kagame was invited but did not attend the summit.

Kinshasa has, on several occasions, accused Kigali of supporting the M23 rebel group, accusations that Kigali has always rejected, calling them a scapegoat of the DRC's government for failing to address internal conflicts. The United Nations and western powers including the United States of America have also accused Rwanda of supporting M23.

Addressing the summit in Brazzaville, President Tshisekedi recalled that one of the most precious reserves of biodiversity in the world, Virunga National Park in the East of DRC, was being damaged through the continued conflict in the east of DRC.

Virunga National Park is Africa's most biodiverse protected area, home to over a thousand species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, as well as a third of the world's endangered mountain gorillas.

"This is to tell you that we must banish the hypocrisy that exists between us. We must banish



President Felix Tshisekedi of the DRC speaks at the Three Basins climate summit in Brazzaville .
Photo courtesy.

scourges such as tribalism and hatred of others. And that's when we could talk about breaking down our barriers, removing customs tariffs, etc," President Tshisekedi said; however, he continued "We must have the courage to look each other in the eye, Africans to Africans. And tell ourselves that we cannot call each other brother and stab each other in the back at the same time."

Our efforts to have the government of Rwanda's comments on Tshisekedi's accusations were fruitless by press time.

DRC and Rwanda at the Brink of Direct Confrontation

Rwanda and DRC have been at loggerheads since the resurgence of the M23 rebellion in late 2021, but the tensions have heightened recently, making the United Nations (UN)

warn that a direct war is imminent.

Speaking at the UN Security Council meeting on October 17, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres mentioned the risk of a direct confrontation between the two neighbour countries, referring to a recent report by his special envoy to the Great Lakes region, Huang Xia.

"The risk of a direct confrontation between the DRC and Rwanda, who continue to accuse each other of supporting armed groups is very real," declared Mr. Xia, citing signs indicating that the situation on the security and humanitarian levels has worsened in the last six months.

The cited signs of an imminent war include the military reinforcement of the DRC and Rwanda, the absence of a direct high-level dialogue and the persistence of hate. Various representatives of

Security Council member countries called for restraint, dialogue and a political solution. At the meeting, the representative of Rwanda accused Kinshasa of "the lack of political will" while the DRC's accused Kigali of "aggression."

After six months of precarious calm imposed by the Luanda and Nairobi talks, intense fighting resumed in North Kivu at the beginning of October between M23 rebels and pro-government militia groups presented as patriots widely known as Wazalendo.

The DRC government released, on October 25, drone images it claimed that show the Rwandan army troops have recently crossed the border to reinforce M23 positions in North Kivu.

"The military governor of North Kivu, Maj Gen Cirimwami Peter, has referred the matter to the

joint verification mechanism set up as part of the Luanda process, in agreement with Rwanda and under the mediation of President Lourenço,” said Christophe Lutundula, deputy Prime Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs.

In March this year, DRC also claimed that Rwanda had sent reinforcements in the form of troops and equipment to the M23 in DRC.

Rwanda hasn't commented yet on the fresh reports but often times in the past rejected any involvement in the ongoing fighting in the Eastern DRC.

In his October briefing to the foreign diplomats in Kigali, Rwanda's Foreign Affairs Minister Vincent Biruta expressed concerns about renewed fighting in DRC and the presence of mercenaries from Eastern Europe. Biruta who chaired the meeting said more than 2,000 mercenaries from Eastern Europe backed by Kinshasa pose a security threat to Rwanda. He also said the collaboration of the DRC army and FDLR genocidal militia is worrisome.

UN Group of Experts Report Backs Accusations

The UN Group of Experts report on the DRC, released in June, claims that Rwanda offers support to M23 through troop reinforcement, equipment and command, and names at least five top commanders of the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) as coordinators.

The report also faults the DRC army on collaborating with Rwandan FDLR militia and other local armed groups by providing them with logistics, military equipment, and financing. The report to the president of the UN Security Council warns that the deteriorating relations between Kinshasa and Kigali pose a security threat in the region.

“The Group of Experts obtained



Relations between President Kagame and President Tshisekedi have been rife with tensions .Photo courtesy.

further evidence of direct interventions by the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) on DRC territory, either to reinforce M23 combatants or to conduct military operations against the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and local armed groups. The Group identified several RDF commanders and officials coordinating RDF operations in the DR Congo,” the UN said.

The UN also alleges that RDF offered M23 uniforms and advanced weaponry including various types of assault rifles, heavy and light machine guns, various types of rocket-propelled grenade launchers, rockets, grenade launchers and grenades, recoilless guns, mortar shells, and boxes of ammunition.

Quoting sources, including two RDF intelligence personnel, the UN said that the objective of the RDF military actions on DRC territory

was to reinforce M23 by providing troops and material and to use them to secure control over mine sites, gain political influence in the DRC and decimate the FDLR.

Kigali rubbished the report; however, the European Union and the US welcomed the report and called on Rwanda to stop supporting M23, the UN-sanctioned rebel group.

Rwanda's President Paul Kagame early this year said Congo's situation was getting worse after the recruitment of mercenaries in preparation for war, although President Tshisekedi dismissed the allegations as baseless. But the UN report cited the presence of Romanians, Bulgarians, Georgians, and Belarusians. The presence of Caucasian, armed men in Goma, the capital city of North Kivu province, sparked rumours that Russian mercenaries were also present in town.

Created in April 2012 claiming

the implementation of the peace agreement which saw the rebel group Congres National pour la Defense du Peuple (CNDP) lay down arms on 23 March 2009, the Mouvement du Mars 23 (M23) also claims to defend the rights of the Congolese Tutsi and Kinyarwanda-speaking minorities.

M23 shot into the international spotlight when it captured and occupied the North Kivu capital city of Goma for 10 days in November 2012. The joint military action by the UN and DRC army FARDC defeated the M23 combatants who fled to Rwanda and Uganda in 2013.

The group launched fresh attacks in North Kivu in late 2021 and captured the swathes of territory which they partly occupy presently while they ceded some territories to the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF).

Kalonzo Musyoka: The Savior Kenyans Desperately Need?

By Samuel Ouma

Kenyans went to the polls a year ago to elect new leaders ranging from President to Members of County Assemblies (MCAs), but preparations for the next elections are already in high gear.

Political realignment has already begun with four years till the next election. The ruling party and the opposition are preparing to expand their support bases to carry out the day during the 2027 elections.

Both sides are eyeing the most prestigious office in the country, the Presidency. While President William Ruto will run for re-election, the opposition is working hard to defeat the incumbent.

With some Kenyans already fed up with Ruto's leadership, some Kenyans have suggested former Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka as the best candidate to replace Ruto in the next general elections.

As opposed to his predecessor, Uhuru Kenyatta, many claim that Ruto has failed Kenyans by making life intolerable for millions of people.

For the fiscal year 2023-2024, Ruto's administration increased taxes and levies, including a doubling of VAT on gasoline and a mandatory housing fee for all paid employees. These actions have increased the cost of life, pushing Kenyans into abject



Presidential ambitions remain intact for Kalonzo Musyoka .Photo courtesy.

poverty.

"The government has reversed its position on addressing the high cost of living that has long troubled Kenyans. The cost of living has risen

due to extraordinary increases in taxes rates, including an increase imposed in the Finance Act 2023, in an effort to resuscitate the nation's faltering economy," said Senator Godfrey Osotsi.

Raila Odinga, the opposition leader, also accused the administration of weak economic policies, poor budgetary policies, disdain for opposition leaders, and an inadequate Deputy President.

He also eliminated the fuel subsidy that had helped keep retail prices in control, resulting in an increase in the cost of all products and services that require fuel for manufacturing.

Many people feel that a change in the country's leadership is unavoidable,

given that the Kenyan shilling has been steadily declining under the leadership of Ruto, and economic troubles persist as investors exit the country.

Ruto's present action may come back to haunt him in 2027 when he runs for re-election since some of his followers have expressed regret for voting for him.

«I regret getting up so early to vote for him. Kenyans, we were deceived, and we have learned from our mistakes. Next time, let us put our emotions aside and start utilizing our intellect during elections,» said Ruto's staunch ally, who sought anonymity.

Since Odinga, Ruto's primary opponent, will not be on the ballot after five failed presidential bids, many people feel Kalonzo can fill the former AU envoy's shoes. Kalonzo, who has worked closely with Odinga



The support of Raila Odinga could be instrumental in the political fortunes of Kalonzo Musyoka.Photo courtesy.



President Ruto and former Vice President Musyoka have crossed paths before in the complex web of Kenyan politics.

for decades, is widely regarded as Kenya's long-awaited saviour.

Kalonzo, the leader of the Wiper Party, ran for president in 2007, finishing third behind then-President Mwai Kibaki and Odinga. Between 2008 and 2013, he served as Vice President of the Kibaki government.

He had served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment in a cabinet reshuffle in 2004. He was also the Minister of Education, Information, Communication, and Tourism and the Ministry of Works, Housing and Physical Planning as an assistant minister.

The 69-year-old entered Parliament in 1985 and collaborated closely with Kenya's second President, Daniel Moi, and Kibaki. For decades, he has also been Odinga's close ally.

He worked with the former Prime Minister in the dissolved Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and the two then created the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) with other like-minded politicians. However, Kalonzo eventually left ODM to

establish ODM-Kenya, which he used to run for president in 2007.

Later, he would work alongside Mr Odinga in the 2013 general election as his running mate and again in the 2017 general election. Kalonzo supported Odinga once more in the 2022 elections.

Odinga recently lavished praise on Kalonzo, praising him as a leader with a huge heart. The ODM party chief praised Kalonzo for being a trustworthy and forthright leader, implying that he would back his presidential ambition.

"Kalonzo was on my side twice, and our win was snatched both times. Even though he was not chosen as a running mate in the past election, he supported us," said Odinga.

"We have stood with him from the KANU government, we moved forward with him to NDP, NARC, and even ODM."

"We have stuck with him from the KANU government, and we have proceeded to the NDP, the NARC, and even the ODM. He has courage, he is someone to believe in, he is a

Christian, he is a modest man, and he is caring."

In November 2022, the former vice president announced his presidential bid, pleading for support from Odinga's political base, which includes millions of voters. Odinga boasts of significant support from his home backyard of Nyanza and in areas such as the western coast, sections of the Rift Valley, and the country's northeast.

"This time, nothing can prevent Kalonzo from becoming Kenya's president. Ruto is the lone impediment, and he is well aware of it," said Kalonzo.

A section of Kalonzo's close allies has repeatedly requested Odinga to repay the favour by supporting Kalonzo's presidential run in 2027.

"We have backed Raila three times and believe it is time for him to reconsider his support for Kalonzo. We know where our support will be in 2027 as a region, and we want Raila to reciprocate," said lawmaker David Mboni.

In the unlikely case that opposition

leader Raila Odinga does not run, President Ruto anticipates a showdown with Kalonzo, his major opponent, in the 2027 election.

Even though he has not ruled out running again, Odinga is unlikely to be on the ballot due to his age. He will be 82 years old by 2027.

Both Dr. Ruto and Musyoka will be pleading with Odinga to act as their kingmaker in the event that the 2027 election comes down to a contest between them, citing political debt from previous campaigns.

Early in October, Ruto made a plea to Odinga's supporters of the outgoing prime minister to think about supporting his candidacy for re-election, praising his role in Odinga's 2007 presidential campaign and tenure as prime minister.

"I was a Baba (Raila) passionate admirer, and I and others banded together to support him, but we never obtained the president. I voted for Baba and am asking him to back me in 2027," said President Ruto.



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Malawi: Prof Mutharika's Unfinished Business

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Faced with a groundswell of calls for him to contest for the 2025 elections in Malawi, former President Prof Peter Mutharika says while he is yet to decide, he is giving serious consideration to the idea. Ousted under dramatic circumstances following the nullification of elections that had initially proclaimed him winner in 2020, Mutharika's sense of fair play and statesmanship seem to have endeared him even more to Malawians.

"As you have probably heard, there is an overwhelming demand by the people for me to return to power in 2025. First, people feel I should complete my term that was nullified by the courts in an election that all foreign observers, EU, AU, SADC, Commonwealth, and UN characterized as a "free, fair, and credible." I am consulting with my family, friends and colleagues and will announce my decision in due course," says Prof Mutharika in an interview with PAV.

Prof Mutharika who has maintained leadership of the former ruling Democratic Progressive Party is bracing the party for a stronger showing and possible comeback in 2025. While his fortunes or stock may have grown exponentially since his ouster, his successor President Lazarus Chakwera has found it hard keeping campaign promises.

Painting a dire picture for the country, Prof Mutharika says the economy has collapsed, and the government has absolutely no solutions to the macro-economic instability, high cost of living and growing poverty.

"It is estimated that now 91% of the population is below the poverty line. As a result, there is growing violence, crimes and increasing social disorder. All these have led to a deteriorating security situation in the country. People engaged in peaceful protests have been subjected to imprisonment and physical violence by the state and its agents," Prof Mutharika says.



Increasing calls from Malawians for me to run again are getting due consideration and a decision will be made soon , says Prof Mutharika. Photo courtesy.

In the interview which also talks about the legacy of his first term, ongoing reforms in his party, and the resurgence of military coups across the continent, Prof Mutharika urged African leaders to provide more opportunities for young people, end corruption, and establish economies that serve all its people.

May we know how Prof Mutharika has coped as a private citizen since leaving the Office about three years ago?

President Mutharika: Actually, I am not quite yet a private citizen. I am still President of the former ruling party and now the main opposition party (the Democratic Progressive Party) both in Parliament and outside. I have led a major restructuring of the DPP in preparation for the 2025 elections. So, I am still involved in frontline politics. I also lead a culture group and I am doing a lot of reading and writing.

How can you sum up the current socio economic and political state of Malawi today?

President Mutharika: On the socio-economic front, the situation is worrisome. The economy has collapsed, and the government has absolutely no solutions to the macro-economic instability, high cost of living and growing poverty. It is estimated that now 91% of the population is below the poverty line. As a result, there is growing violence, crimes and increasing social disorder. All these have led to a deteriorating security situation in the country. People engaged in peaceful protests have been subjected to imprisonment and physical violence by the state and its agents.

What is the nature of relations between you and the current administration?

President Mutharika: I would say that the relationship is "polite and correct". There is minimum interaction.

What are some of the things you will consider as lasting legacies of your first term?

President Mutharika: The establishment of Community Technical Colleges to empower the youth in skills. This was a massive program. When I left government, we had built over 20 technical colleges where the youth learn skills like ICT, Welding, Carpentry, tailoring, beauty technology, building etc. Most of the graduates from these colleges have become entrepreneurs and have created jobs for other youth. Second, infrastructural development- roads and public transport. Every country needs good infrastructure to develop. Third, we created an enabling environment for foreign direct investment in key sectors like agriculture, health, and education. For the first time in the history of Malawi we established a National Identity Card and a Credit Reference Bureau.

How is your party doing and what alternative does it offer Malawians in contrast to the current ruling party or coalition?

President Mutharika: We are restructuring the party to bring it in line with the 2063 development goals. We have completed a functional review and in December 2023, the party's National Political Conference will adopt the new rules. At the National Political Conference in July 2024, all party positions will be elected under the new rules. We are creating a party that will manage the emerging political order in Malawi. It will be based on the principles of development, justice, and security.

Will Prof Peter Mutharika be in the running for the next Presidential elections?

President Mutharika: As you have probably heard, there is an overwhelming demand by the people for me to return to power in 2025. First, people feel I should complete my term that was nullified by the courts in an election that all foreign observers, EU, AU, SADC, Commonwealth, and UN characterized as a "free, fair, and credible". My election was nullified in a decision that the court itself accepted that there was no rigging and that the irregularities (which happen in every election everywhere) did not affect the outcome. The court however went on and nullified the



Prof Mutharika is bracing the Democratic Progressive Party for a stronger showing and possible comeback in 2025. Photo credit Getty images.

election in what a distinguished member of the English bar has called "a judicial coup d'état". I am consulting with my family, friends and colleagues and will announce my decision in due course.

There are some Malawians who are anxious about the age factor, what is your response to those who think that someone of your age may not quite be up to the task in meeting pressing

challenges of the times?

President Mutharika: I think they have legitimate concerns. However, I am very fit mentally and physically. On a stress test I took recently, I was told that I have the heart of a nineteen-year-old! You will remember that when Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus was called from retirement to assume complete control of the Roman State, he was in his eighties. He achieved victory for the Roman Republic in sixteen days and returned to his farm

after that.

From your experiences in your first term, and the sober moments you have had out of office, what are some of the things you will do or handle differently if you were to find yourself in power again?

President Mutharika: First the issue of violent demonstrations. I did not use force to stop the demonstrations. With the benefit of hindsight, I believe I should have managed them more forcefully within our democratic legal framework. That way I would have protected innocent victims while at the same time avoiding loss of life and property. I should also have used regional mechanisms to reverse what was clearly an irresponsible, callous, and malicious nullification of my 2019 electoral victory.

May we have your take on resurgence of military coups in some parts of the continent and the popular fervor that Africans are embracing them?

President Mutharika: You will notice that most of these military coups have been initiated by junior officers and seem to enjoy a lot of support from the young people. It may very well be that we, the African leaders, have failed to meet the needs and expectations of our youths who



President Mutharika has been measured in public criticisms of his successor Lazarus Chakwera . Photo courtesy.

form a majority in all our countries. It is the same youths who are crossing the Mediterranean to go to Europe. We have failed to give them education and employment opportunities. We African leaders therefore need to provide opportunities for our young people, end corruption and establish economies that serve all our people.

What do you make of the role and the report of the SADC Observer Mission on the recent elections in Zimbabwe?

President Mutharika: I have not yet read the SADC observer mission report, but I have seen summaries of the report in the social media. It appears that the SADC observer mission concluded that the Zimbabwe elections “violated democratic ideals” This was, of course, the mission’s observations based on the facts on the ground as they saw them. They are, of course, entitled to their conclusions.



Mutharika’s sense of fair play and statesmanship seem to have endeared him even more to Malawians.

Malawians Endure Pain as Cost Of Living Rises

By Prince Kurupati



The realities of governance have eroded the political capital President Chakwera had on his election. Photo Amos Gumulira/Getty Images.

Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera was elected off the back of huge political capital. During his campaign trail leading up to his first days in the presidential office, President Chakwera had the support of millions of Malawians. His reign was expected to inject much-needed relief to Malawians who for so long had endured unbearable pain economically. However, just two

years into his first term in office, it became evident that the more things changed, the more they remained the same. This ultimately led to massive nationwide protests against Chakwera in October of 2022. The

main grievance being the exponential rise in the cost of living.

In response, President Chakwera promised to fix things starting with government procurement policies which were being abused by top administrators. He said that by covering all the potential leakages, Malawi would gain more from her exports. At the same time, the President demonstrated his willingness to address the protester’s concerns by firing then Minister of Agriculture Robin Lowe and his deputy Madalitso Kambauwa Wirima for what he termed “incompetence and gross negligence”.

One year later after President Chakwera implemented the economic alleviation measures, Malawi’s cost of living and inflation figures are skyrocketing. The prices of basic commodities are out of reach for many. For the employed, their portion of disposable income has significantly dwindled – in some cases totally eroded. The self-employed have

seen a reduction in the number of customers they serve. Every aspect of Malawian's economic way of life has just been negatively affected.

Compounding the situation, the government of Malawi in a tone-deaf move gave its blessing for the country's water bodies and the Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi (Escom) to increase their tariffs. This therefore meant Malawians weren't just pressed with purchasing foodstuffs, fuel and medicine among other critical consumables at high prices but they also had to pay for rates at increased tariffs despite their disposable incomes being significantly eroded. For some families, they have chosen to do away with electricity as it's now regarded as a luxury which they can do without.

Demonstrating how dire the situation is, the spokesperson of the Reserve Bank of Malawi Ralph Tseka in June this year said the foreign exchange coffers were "nearly empty". Without foreign currency reserves, Malawi can't import critical commodities which it needs but cannot produce locally such as fertiliser, fuel and medicine. This has in essence led to the spike in prices for the few commodities that are available hence rendering the commodities inaccessible to millions of Malawians.

The rise in the cost of living is not something that Malawians just feel. Rather, it's something that is tangible and can be seen when it comes to numbers and figures. Inflation figures from the Centre for Social Concern (CfSC) shows that inflation has been on an upward spiral for the year ending May 2023. CfSC said from May 2022 to May 2023, Malawi recorded a 46 per cent inflation hike. This severely eroded the disposable incomes of the employed population while making things extremely tough for those in the informal sector.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) had to revise its 2nd Quarter Malawi Country Report inflation figures upwards from an earlier projected 21 per cent to 30.6 per cent for 2023. The forecast is higher than



The prices of basic commodities are out of reach for many in Malawi today. Photo courtesy.

the revised one from the Reserve Bank of Malawi pegged at 24.5 per cent. The Reserve Bank of Malawi at the start of the year predicted the country's inflation for 2023 to peak at 18 per cent but had to revise the figures midway through the year to 24.5 per cent owing to the shortage of foreign currency reserves and the subsequent rise in cost of living.

The EIU in its country report was however optimistic that Malawi can quickly turn around the economic situation if they implement the right measures which include lowering input costs and increasing fiscal discipline which will in turn reduce deficit financing through money printing. The resolutions forwarded by EIU align with the measures that the Reserve Bank proposed in May 2023 in its Market Intelligence Report.

"The slow progress on inflation means that monetary policy may be needed to remain tight for an extended period of time. The RBM will therefore continue to monitor developments closely and stand ready to act, as and when appropriate," the central bank said in its Market Intelligence report for May.

Fred Kantande, a physiotherapist operating in Lilongwe said there is a need for the authorities to quickly combat the situation not just to relieve Malawians from the pain

they are enduring but also to save people from losing their sanity. Kantande said the prevailing tough economic situation is pushing many over the edge and there is a real good possibility that a portion of the population will succumb to mental health-related challenges. "Such pressures are hugely contributing to increased mental health cases leading to more suicide cases which is common nowadays among the youth and young adults," Kantande said.

The sentiments by Kantande were also echoed by CfSC project officer Kondwani Hara who said the government should quickly look for solutions and implement them but in doing so, they should draft both short-term measures and long-term measures. Hara said doing this will bring much-needed relief to the millions of Malawians who want relief right away. Among the short-term measures he proposed are tax reduction, provision of subsidies and price controls on essential goods and services such as food, fuel and electricity while for the long term, he proposed that the government should "increase agricultural productivity". He said, "Malawi relies heavily on agriculture. So, improving agricultural productivity can help lower food prices".

Charles Kajoloweka the executive director of Youth And Society

also weighed in support of Hara's proposals saying "It will be important that the government invests in social protection programmes for the most vulnerable groups. In this case, we are talking about the marginalised and the poor who will have to benefit from these social protection programmes... Because it's about giving people the basic needs that they cannot really meet at the moment. So, broadening the social protection programmes targeting the most vulnerable is the way to go".

John Kapito, the executive director of the Consumers Association of Malawi was less optimistic however that the situation will be remedied in the near future saying, "For a long time, the country has failed to balance its imports against exports and has relied heavily on donors for its forex reserves. Our government is in no position where it can cushion anyone. Its revenue collection has drastically gone down as a result of the market in activity and (it) is currently struggling to pay its oversize civil service... Donors will demand a huge devaluation of the Kwacha before any support is provided. Therefore, it is wishful thinking to expect this government to come up with any cushioning mechanisms considering that the government is already too broke."



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Mali: Military Postpones Elections

By Prince Kurupati

The hopes for a quick return to civilian rule in Mali were dampened when the junta postponed the presidential election originally scheduled for February 2024 to a later date. The junta cited technical reasons linked to the new Constitution as well as a dispute with Idemia, a French company involved in the country's census process.

The news on the postponement of the presidential election for 2024 was announced by Abdoulaye Maiga, the government spokesperson in a statement read out to reporters. In his statement, Maiga said the scheduled elections for February 4 and 18, 2024 "will be slightly postponed for technical reasons". Maiga didn't clarify how long the 'slight postponement' will take.

The vagueness in Maiga's statement has instilled fears in most Malians who are now yearning for a quick return to civilian rule. Adding to the citizens' fear is the fact that the junta has recused itself from organising and conducting the legislative elections which were earmarked for the end of 2023. In his statement, Maiga said the junta "has decided to organise, exclusively the presidential election" while all other elections will be "established by the new authorities, under the directives of the new president."

Having suffered multiple coups in recent times with the latest coming in 2021, the current junta government is already two years behind schedule in its plans to return the levers of power to civilian leaders. By postponing the next scheduled election indefinitely albeit saying it's just a 'slight' postponement, fears are rising that another year or more may pass with the junta still in charge.

Cited as the main contributing factors behind the postponement of the elections are technical issues linked to the new Constitution as well as a dispute with the company which handled Mali's census. The West African nation held a referendum in



Transitional leader Colonel Assimi Goita speaks at a ceremony marking the 60th anniversary of Mali's independence in Bamako in 2020. Photo Michele Cattani/Getty Images.

June 2023. Among other things, the new constitution strengthens the president's powers and also grants pride of place to the country's military. The Malian nation resoundingly voted for the draft constitution as 96.91 percent of the votes backed the Constitution.

The new Constitution does have a provision that would delay the second round of the presidential vote according to Maiga hence the reason the junta government wants to iron that issue out before announcing the dates for the election.

Maiga went on to state that IDEMIA, the French-based international tech company which was contracted by the Mali government to conduct the census has been withholding its database since March. This owing to an outstanding balance. The absence of the database according to Maiga makes it impossible to register newly eligible voters and update the voter registry. Moreover, without the database, it becomes difficult to roll out the new biometric identity card.

A spokesperson for IDEMIA corroborated Maiga's statement that the Mali government owes the French

company. The spokesperson however said there isn't a binding contract between the junta and IDEMIA hence suggesting that IDEMIA might have agreed with the civilian government that was in charge before the 2020 coup.

Going into the future, Maiga said the junta government will work around the issue of IDEMIA by migrating the current civil identification data to a new system "exclusively under Malian control". This move will in turn allow Mali to independently finish the census process hence proceed to design the new biometric identity cards.

The decision taken by the Mali junta has been largely condemned both locally and internationally. Locally, various opposition parties have expressed their disappointment at the postponement of the elections. One of the leading opposition coalitions the M5 – RFP said it's dismayed and called upon the junta to "respect its commitments" to allow the country to return to civilian rule.

The President of Mali's Yeleen-Kura Socialist Party Amadou Koita said, "Nothing explains the

postponement of the presidential election". Opposition party Parena said holding elections is a matter of «political will» and that some of the technical reasons cited by the junta could have been «avoided».

As reported by Africa News, Mali's former Justice minister Mamadou Ismaila Konaté accused the junta on social media of «trying to make up for its fault and inability to settle public affairs» by blaming the postponement mainly on a French company providing civil identity services.

ECOWAS which has a zero tolerance to coups policy finds itself at the centre of the stage once again. Earlier on, ECOWAS reprimanded and sanctioned Mali after the junta had reneged on its commitment to conduct elections and cede the levers of power to civilian leaders in 2022. The sanctions were however shortlived as the Mali junta quickly outlined plans to schedule another round of elections for early 2024. Now with those elections also postponed albeit with some reasons cited, it's to be seen how ECOWAS responds.

Zambia: Wisdom From The First Independence

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

Our founding fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, around midnight on 24th October 1964, watched the Zambian flag hoisted in the sky clustered with sparkling stars.

As it's decades later we are celebrating the 59th independence anniversary we may wonder what they thought and felt witnessing the historic moment of the birth of Zambia.

Perhaps they saw in the hoisting of the flag their aspirations, dreams, hopes, and vision for a better life filling each with boisterous joy.

For the struggle for independence was about uplifting the lives of the Zambian people.

The hoisted flag signaled the birth of a free democratic and prosperous Zambia, where people from all walks of life would live in peace and harmony regardless of their political, economic, social and religious beliefs.

The hoisted flag also signaled challenges ahead.

In his brilliant book, *Zambia: The First 50 Years*, Andrew Sardanis writes that "waking up on the morning of 24th October 1964, as masters of our own destiny, there was only one Zambian engineer, three Zambian doctors, three Zambian lawyers and some 90 other Zambian graduates." That was Zambia.

Zambia on 24th October 1964 embraced its people's aspirations, dreams, hopes, and vision of a better life, as well as, the challenges.

It's prudent for us 59 years later to pause, reflect, and contemplate whether the vision of a better life for Zambians has been realised. The answer lies in the wisdom of the first independence celebration.

Nations are the souls of its citizens. A nation that treasures the aspirations, talents, and possibilities of its citizens and boldness to its challenges is



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Musonda Trevor Selwyn Mwamba is President of the United National Independence Party (UNIP).

wholesome to fulfilling its purpose of nationhood.

By Divine Providence at independence Zambia was blessed with leaders from all the provinces and races endowed with vision.

The leaders cognisant of the challenges Zambia faced had the intelligence to perceive that she could not develop without peace and unity.

So, the chief cornerstone of Zambia became One Zambia One Nation which was brilliantly epitomised in the first cabinet.

The motto One Zambia One Nation originates from the UNIP Constitution under the Fundamental Principles and Objectives:

Article 2(1) says:

The motto of the Party shall be, 'One Zambia One Nation'.

The motto of UNIP then became the motto of the nation though many people today are not aware of it.

The motto is always displayed on the ZNBC news broadcasts: One Zambia One Nation.

One Zambia One Nation is a prayer, a vow, a mantra, a vision of uniting the different ethnic, races, creed, religions, as one people in Zambia. It's about Zambia being inclusive not exclusive and that nobody should ever feel left out. We are all one.

The UNIP government made this motto a reality by abhorring tribalism.

President Kaunda had a carefully crafted tribal balancing system in the cabinet, in the civil service, in the parastatals, and in all the appointments he made across the country so that not one tribe or tribes was left out or dominated.

President Kaunda further created a system where students were moved from their provinces of origin to other provinces as part of his plan to create a nation that was One Zambia One Nation.

Economically the promotion of One Zambia One Nation was done by ensuring that each of the provinces in Zambia had an industry to propel its development. For example, the pineapple industry in Mwinilunga

, the Battery factory in Mansa, the car assembly plant in Livingstone, and the glass factory in Kapiri Mposhi.

One Zambia One Nation is every Zambians calling and responsibility to build a wholistic united nation where everybody feels significant and included.

UNIP 59 years ago at Independence planted a seed of inclusivity for Zambians to pursue a policy of love, equality, truth, justice, fairness, liberty, solidarity, peace, political, economic and social development for all.

Given this spirit the present trend of tribalism sown as wind in the PF administration as become a whirlwind in the UPND administration. This is contrary to the spirit of Independence and the motto of One Zambia One Nation our forebears bequeathed us.

Accordingly, the 59th independence celebrations is a clarion call for us to pause and reflect critically as we are veering dangerously off course and need to get back quickly on track to the noble values enshrined in the motto One Zambia One Nation.

The visionary leaders of Independence coined this motto



Bishop Trevor Mwamba believes it is critical for Zambians to emulate the kind of integrity that graced the life of late President Kenneth Kaunda.

as a blessing to every Zambian to be peace and unity as only together can we realise a great country of One Zambia One Nation.

Our forebears understand well that peace and unity were indispensable to the development of Zambia. This is wisdom for all times to inspire and guide present and future leaders.

This wisdom should be the desire of political parties to work closer together in promoting peace and unity. This is possible by accentuating what they have in common and narrowing their differences by constructive criticism and providing solutions which benefits the country rather than recklessly insulting each other and pursuing selfish and personal ambitions.

Accordingly, the first wisdom we glean from the first independence is: One Zambia One Nation. The national interest is above all.

The second wisdom we glean from the first independence is the leaders' belief in God as their inspirer in the task of building a nation.

Mr Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe the second vice president of Zambia was a wise man. In 1958 he named Zambia - Zambia flowing from the Zambezi river.

He took pride in our culture and identity and through his leadership and writings sought to help us preserve our heritage.

In One of his books Shalapo Canicandala - he instructs us to know God.

In 1991 Zambia as a Christian nation was enshrined in the Constitution and most Zambians think that the originator was President Frederick Chiluba.

On the contrary, historically, the founding father of the nation President Kenneth David Kaunda, after Independence conceived of Zambia as a Christian nation.

He said so in messages at the first and second anniversaries of Zambia's independence.

He reminded Zambians that our aim was to remain as always 'One Zambia - One Nation' ... that we could '...show the world that as a Christian nation God is all - powerful in our



As a historic party within and outside, UNIP cannot be erased from the consciousness of the Zambian people, Bishop Mvumba has maintained.

family life.' And wherever Zambians we're to let God help them to help our country.

This was in 1966.

President Kaunda's faith made him respect and appreciate other religions. He felt equally at home in a cathedral, synagogue, temple or mosque.

And for this reason, given Zambia has many religions, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Jainism, and others, President Kaunda did not think it was right to declare this religion or that 'official'.

President Kaunda did not play politics with religion. Each religion had the right to exist, so his desire was that all believers of all faiths should live together in harmony for we are all human beings.

President Kaunda believed, envisioned, and lived out his faith and encouraged Zambian citizens to live likewise.

The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation in 1991 did not necessarily make it Christian. As we think of the corruption in our Christian nation it needs a lot of prayers and salvation!

The vital truth for Zambians to know is that the Christian Faith like any other Faith must be lived out to be real not imagined. It's only the

living out of the faith of a believer, which were activated focused on the living out of love, of compassion, of forgiveness, of reconciliation that makes a believer Christian; and with a critical mass a Christian nation - not a political declaration.

Belief in God exemplified the leadership of the first independence informing their political and economic actions.

This is the foundation of morality and values in a nation it's the indispensable moral compass that engenders development and progress in society.

The third wisdom we glean from the first independence is the focus on the wellbeing of the people. Its imperative leaders know that their primary task is to uplift the welfare of their people, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Under UNIP it was articulated under the philosophy of Humanism which advocated all developments to be for the benefit of people.

An apt example is the Mulungushi Reforms.

The government acted to remedy the greed of foreign companies in Zambia. It saw as unfair allowing companies making off with the jam and butter and leaving the crumbs of dry bread to Zambians.

Accordingly the economic measures

which were activated focused on uplifting Zambian entrepreneur by kick-starting Zambian participation in business.

It was economic nationalism which proved quite successful.

Another example was the a tug of war between the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over the poor and vulnerable in 1986.

The background was that the country's economic troubles rooted in a string of global crises: specifically the oil crisis of the 1970s and the steep drop in copper prices, made them turn to the IMF who prescribed some bitter economic packages to them to implement.

The action led to Zambia's worst civil unrest in 1986 as President Kaunda was forced to implement the IMF inspired increase in the price of Zambia's staple food, maize meal, by removing the subsidies. This was an issue of survival for Zambia's poorest people.

So the poor went on rampage to force the Government to bring the price down.

They targeted state-owned properties as a public statement of indignation against the Government.

The rioting was so severe that on the second day President Kaunda imposed a curfew and closed all of

Zambia's borders.

The protests against subsidy removal caused the government to back down. Government was sympathetic to the plight of the poor.

Accordingly Zambia's relationship with the IMF and the World Bank ceased as the economic packages prescribed by these organizations were abandoned.

The technicalities of Zambia's international debt meant little to the poorest trying to survive. What mattered was the affordability of maize meal.

As a lesson from the past the present rising cost of living and price of maize meal which has affected Zambians, especially the poor, needs to be addressed with urgency and sensitivity by President Hakainde Hichilema intervening and imposing subsidies to lower the price of maize meal.

Maize meal an essential food for the majority of Zambians its not a luxury but life itself. Many Zambians are struggling to survive so maize meal as to be made affordable.

In such situations a government must be very empathetic by buffering the suffering of its people lest we have an explosive repeat of the 1986 food riots.

The focus on uplifting the poor 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 if not to help the poor.

The final fourth wisdom we glean from the first independence is our identity and sovereignty in a global world.

The guiding policy the visionary leadership of the UNIP government formulated was that of Non-alignment. It advocated the right of a nation to make informed choices on the basis of each issues merits regardless of the interests of the global powers. Zambia assumed political independence in foreign policy that has to be guarded jealously.



One examples shall suffice in the light of the Israeli - Palestinian conflict. The Zambian Government developed and initiated a foreign policy which addressed Middle East issues, such as the right of Israel to live within secure and recognised boundaries and the right of the Palestinian people to live in a free and independent state.

In the present conflict and being consistent with our past policy Zambia condemns all violence and unnecessary loss of hundreds of innocent civilian lives on both sides and the destruction of properties.

Zambia should strongly advocate negotiations towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in line with the previously adopted UN resolutions recognising the existence of the two states.

Zambia's non-alignment has ensured an environment of peace in which Zambia can promote a life of dignity and creativity for their citizens. And provide a positive influence in the world not as a sterile neutralism.

The wise leaders of our first independence saw Zambia as a place of peace, hope and reconciliation. A place where Zambia planned, consciously and unconsciously, an equitable world order, by promoting anti-colonial principles. A haven for refugees and unflinching partner of

those who fight for justice, human rights and peaceful coexistence.

So the policy of non aligned in the light of Zambia's independence holds to the rights of all peoples to freedom and self - determination.

Zambia's independence signaled opposition to economic and political domination of one people by another or compromising itself as a base of war games.

The hoisting of the Zambian flag on 24 October, 1964 was about pursuing wholesome values that are very important in life.

It's these values over the past 30 years we lost and as we celebrate our 59th independence celebration remember and rekindle in our lives and nation.

Zambia can enter a new future only by reconnecting with the wisdom of the first independence and adapting it to our times.

Sir Shridath Ramphal the former Secretary General of the Commonwealth reflected on values when he turned 91.

In his memoirs Glimpses of a Global Life, he wrote of how his life had been driven by values which he tried hard to respect; sometimes failing, but sometimes coming close.

He had a habit for making difficult choices. He asked himself - when the pros and cons were exhausted- what was the choice that more closely

conformed to his values; in other words the path of principle. And he always felt assured that his decision was right when he found that path.

Values should be rooted in morality, this is the path of principle. The path to do the right thing, to enoble us, that is, make us better people and nation.

Values are a moral compass which we ignore at our peril as individuals or as a nation.

The British writer and Anglican lay theologian

C.S. Lewis wisely said, <Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil.>

To be educated without values is to be an educated fool.

Values are the richest inheritance a person or nation can have.

The wisdom from the first Independence are the values we need to build a prosperous Zambia that is able to uplift our people and create a better life for them.

To guarantee a better Zambia for generations to come we need to go back to the future. In others words as Marcus Garvey wisely wrote:

"A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots".

We learn from the past to build the future. We learn of One Zambia One Nation; belief in God; the well-being of people; identity and sovereignty.

These lessons of wisdom are values passed on to us to guide us by our founding visionary leaders.

They lived them and these values can transform us if they inform our own lives. And as stewards acting on them we too can pass them on to the next generation.

On this 59th Independence celebration: God bless Zambia; God bless her leaders with wisdom; God bless her peoples with peace and unity and a prosperous future.

* The Rt. Rev. Dr. Musonda Trevor Selwyn Mwamba is President of the United National Independence Party (UNIP).



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South Sudan: Rethinking A Counter Productive U.S. Foreign Policy

By Justin Thomas Russell

As our world becomes increasingly intertwined and interdependent, it is more important than ever to get the international diplomatic gears turning in the right direction. Nowhere is this truer than in Africa, where American foreign policy has failed to help the world's newest constitutional republic, where the government is facing challenges directly involving its future, from a slippery slope of economic and diplomatic disaster. South Sudan's current situation has been exacerbated at every turn by U.S. policy decisions that have forced the young nation into the arms of enemies we should be holding accountable for their own terrible actions; China and Russia. It's time that we take a hard look at how our policies can best support economic growth and stability in South Sudan — beginning with recognizing them not as pawns or commodities but as equals on the global stage worthy of respect like any other nation.

In the years leading up to South Sudanese independence, the U.S. was supportive of the establishment of a constitutional republic in the region. President George W. Bush was the biggest advocate of these efforts and viewed the creation of the South Sudanese state as a positive impact on the region and the African continent. It was the U.S. that helped put South Sudan on the map, if you will.

However, for too long, U.S. foreign policy has been doomed to failure in South Sudan due to a lack of clear, consistent action and an unwillingness to commit the necessary diplomatic, economic, or strategic resources. As a result of this inaction, South Sudan's progress towards stability and democracy is being slowly eroded by our adversaries in the region, who

are actively contributing to growing insecurity and violence. It was not so long ago that hopes were high for the promise of peace that had been achieved after decades of civil war; now it seems as if we have replaced one tragedy with another - an all-too familiar reality for many countries in Africa's east central region.

The West continues to chide South Sudan's Government and thinks that South Sudan's failure to adopt a democratic form of government is a reason for its lackluster cooperation with the world's youngest country. In hindsight, this is not how countries such as Chile, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore, and Botswana transitioned to democracy. These countries first required visionary leadership and decisive political authority to set the tone for that vision. It is that vision that led these countries to more viable economic development before they became democracies. South Sudan, as such, cannot invent the wheel. It can only become democratic through

measured stages of economic and political development.

This point was highlighted by an analogy presented by a senior member of the South Sudanese Government during a meeting between the New York Center For Foreign Policy Affairs and South Sudanese government leaders in Juba back in 2022. In this meeting, one of the Ministers present made the following statement:

"The United States has been a constitutional republic for over two hundred years. (South Sudan) has been a constitutional republic for ten years. If the United States is dealing with the challenges of democratic rule after two hundred years...I give you January 6th...how can they expect South Sudan to get it exactly right after ten years?"

It is a fair question.

With the questionable U.S. commitment to South Sudan and other emerging democracies in Africa, Russia, China, and other adversaries have found a golden opportunity to

exploit and manipulate the United States with their selfish greed in South Sudan. These countries have stepped in to take advantage and advance their own interests, leaving South Sudan vulnerable to their influence. The situation has allowed Russia and China to increase their economic and political foothold in the region, furthering their own gains. In recent years, Russia has been actively working to expand its influence in Africa, aiming to regain a foothold on the continent reminiscent of the Cold War era. The Kremlin has pursued military, economic, and diplomatic ties with various African nations, offering arms sales, investment, and political support.

It is essential to note that allowing South Sudan and other countries in the region to align with Russia could provide Moscow with a strategic gateway into Central and East Africa, potentially jeopardizing American interests in the region. Despite the U.S.'s efforts to promote peace and democracy, these adversaries have managed to establish themselves as key players in regional affairs. We already know that Moscow has been eager to provide mercenary support for different parties on the African continent by utilizing the resources of The Wagner Group.

An example of this is the recent announcement of a growing alliance between Moscow and Juba. On September 29th, to garner support for its illegal war in Ukraine and gain a strategic foothold on the African continent, Russian President Vladimir Putin invited South Sudanese President Salva Kiir to the Kremlin for bi-lateral talks involving trade, energy, mineral exploitation, and most importantly...oil. The natural



U.S. foreign policy has been doomed to failure in South Sudan due to a lack of clear, consistent action, says Justin Thomas Russell.

resources that South Sudan possesses but is not able to fully exploit to its benefit, is well known. Russia also knows Western sanctions in place are preventing local petroleum and energy companies from engaging with western oil companies to partner with to create a solid economic base for this emerging constitutional republic.

This agreement between Juba and Moscow clearly confirms that the U.S.'s approach to foreign policy in South Sudan (and the region) should be heavily scrutinized as it seems to have provided an opening for these countries to fulfill their ambitions, potentially at the cost of their future in the global community. During the meeting between Presidents Kiir and Putin, Kiir stated that "The world dictates that no one can survive or succeed alone". The President Kiir must think that the United States left them alone, because he ended his thoughts by saying South Sudan needs "strong friends". He also said of Putin and Russia "you are one of them...I DON'T SEE ANY ALTERNATIVE". He said it all. He was invited several times to visit Moscow in past.

The logical question then arises... how does the United States stop the hemorrhaging of allied support in places like South Sudan and the African continent? What steps

can Washington do to stop having our friends make deals that are in direct conflict with U.S. security and diplomatic interests?

One key step is to develop a comprehensive and coherent strategy for Africa that addresses the economic, security, and diplomatic concerns of our partners on the continent. This means engaging with African countries, like South Sudan, in a more consistent and proactive manner, and investing in projects that are seen as valuable by these countries. It also means focusing on building long-term relationships based on trust and mutual interests, rather than short-term gains. We need to show African countries that we are committed to helping them address their challenges and opportunities, while also promoting democracy, human rights, and good governance. This means working with African leaders as partners, rather than dictating solutions from afar in a vacuum.

The situation here is quite simple and quite clear. U.S. foreign policy in Africa needs to change if we want to retain our strategic partners on the continent. We need to invest in Africa's economic and social development and engage with African countries in a more coherent

and consistent manner. Instead of sanctions, warnings, and advisories... implement economic development and trade programs that make sense. Replace the 'bags of rice' diplomacy currently used in Africa, bring opportunities for business partners to increase and enhance their presence in country without the threat of punitive actions from our own government. We also need to be more assertive in promoting our own values and interests, while maintaining a balanced approach to diplomacy. Failure to do so risks losing ground to our adversaries, and missing out on the immense potential that Africa offers.

While the situation in places like Sudan, Central African Republic, Darfur, and Gabon continue to deteriorate, this is not the time to have the United States invoke an ad hoc foreign policy that is not realistic in Africa. While autocrats such as Patrice Talon in Benin and Paul Kagame in Rwanda continue to strangle democratic rule on the continent, the United States does not have the luxury of time or clout to push a foreign policy that shoves American ideals down the throats of those we are hoping to support.

The bottom line is that the recent deal between Russia and South Sudan

is in direct violation of U.S. foreign policy interests in the region and has worrying implications for regional security and stability. The U.S must assess how our own strategies have created an environment where South Sudan is more likely to seek out strategic partners such as Russia and China. It is essential to create a proactive approach to preventing further deals like this from happening again, possibly through shifting sanctions policies to encourage trade with South Sudan, as a form of diplomatic measure to alleviate tensions between the two countries. Going forward, it will be key for the U.S foreign policy agenda towards South Sudan and other allies in Africa to promote security and stability, while simultaneously recognizing the legitimate needs of their people. Ultimately, by taking decisive action on these issues and reassessing current sanctions policies to facilitate better communication channels between the two countries, the U.S will be able to mitigate any further hostile deals in the region, thus protecting its own interests abroad as well as ensuring greater security for all parties involved in this complex geopolitical situation.

Bags of rice with American flags on them just is not cutting it anymore.

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Consensus On Just Transition At AEW 2023

By Ajong Mbapndah L



We are going to strive to keep our narrative that Africa deserves to produce energy in a sustainable and better way, says NJ Ayuk.

From African Energy Week 2023, it was another resounding message on the firm resolution of Africa to stay the course in the pursuit of solutions that mirror the local challenges, realities, and potentials in addressing the energy stakes for the continent.

In its third year, the AEW 23 exceeded expectations on many counts. From the number of delegates to the caliber of energy stakeholders present, the quality of debates and the overall level of organization, there were palpable signs of progress for the African Energy Chamber led crusade to make energy poverty history by 2030.

"This year's AEW was by far the best and most consequential. I say that from the standpoint of a few measurements of this conference. First, the number of delegates and the sizes of key and powerful

delegations is unmatched. It's an indication that the very consistent messages of the organizers, the Africa Energy Chamber and its international partners has resonated deeply into the energy sectors across the globe. Second, the key messages of the primary sponsor, the Africa Energy Chamber, which seemed possibly contrarian in the past, have become the common language about the best ways for Africa to utilize its energy resources. Finally, without naming them, categories stakeholders in the global energy ecosystem were historically timid about attending AEW. There were no substantive categories of energy sector stakeholders absent from this year's events," said Jude Kearney Managing Partner of the Global Corporate and Legal Advisory Firm ASAFO & CO Int'l.

The assessment of Jude Kearney

encapsulates the popular fervor that graced a conference week with solid panel discussions, a series of billion-dollar deals, and several exciting networking functions that laid the foundation for new partnerships and collaborations. Under the theme "The African Energy Renaissance: Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization and Free Markets," high-level executives and government representatives from both the African and global energy space united in Cape Town under a mandate to make energy poverty history.

Speaking at the AEW, former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria noted that the developed nations used oil and gas to attain their development aspirations and turned back to condemn after achieving their targets.

"They said we cannot use our oil

and gas resources. But these are the same resources they used to develop their economies. They want to keep us perpetually underdeveloped. We reject it," said the elder statesman whose presence added pomp to the event.

"The developed nations need to grant us energy justice. We in Africa need energy justice to decide how and when to implement our independent energy transition plans," Obasanjo charged.

When you use what is available to [developed nations], which is now available to us, and yet state there will be no investment for us to be able to explore and exploit for our development, you show that you want us to stay in poverty. Energy security, energy sustainability and energy stability have to be ensured for growth and justice, Obasanjo said.

In Namibia, the Government is



Deal Signings featured prominently at AEW 2023.

working alongside foreign partners to develop a variety of energy resources. According to President Hage Geingob, “We pursue these efforts concurrently. Access to reliable and quality energy supply is the lifeblood of economic development of any country. Energy drives industrialization, boosts productivity and economic growth. It is crucial for us to reach the goals of Agenda 63 – the Africa we want.”

“For the African energy renaissance to be meaningful, Africa should be permitted to explore and exploit its natural endowments for the good of the continent. It should not be for the export to other countries but the benefit of African people,” said the Namibian President who was later honoured with the 2023 AEC Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his exceptional leadership, innovation, and impact in Africa.

Home to over 125 billion barrels of crude oil reserves, and 620 trillion cubic feet of gas, and large-scale hydrocarbon projects on the horizon, Africa sees strong potential in these

resources to meet its development needs. Speaking on behalf of Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Ruth Nankabirwa Ssentamu, Minister of Energy and Mineral Development, stated that, “Energy is central to the socioeconomic transformation of any society. Africa needs to take deliberate steps to ensure energy security. You cannot have a constructive discussion without underlying the importance of energy security.”

For Minister Ssentamu, developing oil and gas will not only enable African countries to develop but use hydrocarbon-generated revenue to grow other industries such as renewables. Minister Ssentamu stated that, “We are cognizant of the ongoing debate of climate change. However, Uganda is lucky in that its energy mix is dominated by renewables. Our strategy, therefore, is to continue developing renewables while developing oil and gas, which will help provide the much-needed revenue to improve the life of our people.”

Opening AEW 2023, NJ Ayuk Executive Chairman of the African Energy Chamber declared that Africa’s time was now. According to NJ Ayuk, African countries need to explore and produce their energy resources, including crude oil, gas, and coal in order to generate adequate revenue for development. We need revenue for sustainable development and implementation of our energy transition plans, he said.

“This is bigger than a conference: it is a movement. We are seeing new discoveries in countries no one would have thought: in Namibia, in South Africa and across the continent. That tells you, Africa’s time is now. As we have discussions about the transition, we mustn’t forget that it is about people. Select Africa, choose Africa, invest in Africa. Be bold and don’t back down on this industry,” Ayuk stated.

For Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General of the African Petroleum Organization-APPO, Africa has always moved with the

flow despite it having its own energy issues which are distinct from those experienced by other global nations. He said that despite contributing an insignificant number of megatons of emissions into the atmosphere in the past 150 years, Africa owing to its herd mentality has been forced to embrace and adopt energy policies dictated to it by the global superpowers – the same nations whose industrialisation policies of the past 150 years have greatly contributed to climate change issues.

Referencing the upcoming COP28, Dr Farouk said, “As we prepare to go to Dubai for COP28, it is important that we go with our home-grown agenda, not to continue with a herd mentality that has largely characterised our negotiation process”. Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim challenged African leaders to be more discerning and critical of advisers and foreign experts who influence policy direction in African governments.

Representing the Biden Administration, Joshua Volz, Deputy

Assistant Secretary for Africa, Middle East, Europe & Eurasia at the U.S. Department of Energy, emphasized the value of clean energy. "Africa is the future for our energy transition. We acknowledge that the African continent has contributed little to that climate change and are facing the worst impacts from it. With clean energy, we have the solutions that will curb climate change," he said.

African countries must unite to industrialize now, says Sergio Pugliese President of the Angola Chapter of the African Energy Chamber. Pugliese questioned why the continent's growth ambition should be compromised at the expense of people who had harmed the environment. The development interests, priorities, and prosperity of Africa in challenging times should not be impeded by actors most responsible for the ecological issues facing the world, Pugliese said.

Africans need to discuss and develop their own doctrine openly, not behind closed doors. What's interesting here is that everyone is represented, including African countries, multinational corporations, international and African private sectors. OPEC is present, as is the European Union and the USA, said Congo's Hydrocarbons Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua.

"We have faith in this initiative because it is led by young Africans who believe in Africa and are committed to its growth. We can collaborate with others. At a time when Africa is grappling with new ideas, such as the need to transition away from hydrocarbons due to concerns about carbon emissions, Africa needs to have a dialogue," Minister Itoua said in his support of the African Energy Week.

This type of dialogue in the energy sector is crucial for us to align our views and determine the way forward because energy has a direct impact on climate change. It's important that these discussions take place at all levels. And for next year, yes count on us for the African Energy Week, we will be there, Bruno Jean Richard Itoua said.



Justice demands that we too should develop, we should industrialize, says Obasanjo.

The African Energy Week remains the confluence of where the now, tomorrow and the future of Africa's power brokers in the energy sector will sit to continue discussing, proposing, and doing the right transactions that will be to the benefit of this continent, said Kola Karim, Managing Director (MD) of power solutions company Shoreline Energy International. No one is going to do it for us. We as Africans are the only ones who can sit around the table and decide the future of this continent; for good or for worse. We have tried centuries of other people deciding; maybe we should try our century now and add value to the continent and maybe the difference will be clear, said Kola Karim.

"I think the Africa Energy Week 2023 edition was really, really important for Africa. We, the delegates, the government officials, the private sector, and the international community made it very clear that Africa has a right to develop its natural resources for the benefit of

its people," said NJ Ayuk.

We welcome a transition, but it must be a just transition and a just energy transition for Africa has to deal with 600 million people without electricity, 900 million without clean, clean cooking technologies, says Ayuk. Going further, the African Energy Chamber Executive Chairman said Africa cannot meet its sustainable development goals without that and without addressing these issues, but also that before we get to net zero, we need to get first to net energy poverty, because climate change and energy poverty are two sides of the same coin.

"Both energy development and energy growth were at the center of African Energy Week, where you saw new deals being signed for the development of energy, especially LNG, in Congo. We saw the development of new gas projects in Angola, Mozambique, Senegal, and South Africa. So, Africans and the companies were saying that we must develop energy in a low carbon,

cleaner, better, sustainable way to ensure that our people have jobs, have opportunity, and we create millions of dollars in revenue for governments," Ayuk said.

We also must build an enabling environment so that governments don't have to pick winners and losers, Ayuk said, beaming with optimism at the outcome of AEW 2023 while pledging to do more and encouraging participants to do more for the development of Africa.

"As long as the Chamber is here, this industry will be inclusive. We deserve to make this better for you. We will be back next year: we intend to be better. We are going to strive to keep our narrative, that Africa deserves to produce energy in a sustainable and better way. It is about welcoming all forms of energy and being able to make energy poverty history. We will not back down: we will continue driving growth, ensuring that this discussion stays in Africa. Select Africa, let's go bigger and better in 2024," Ayuk concluded.

Congo: Hydrocarbons Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua Touts Investment Opportunities At AEW

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Congo is one of the few countries in the world where exploration investments in the oil and gas sector have increased says Hydrocarbons Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua. Speaking in an interview with PAV on the sidelines of the African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa, Minister Itoua cited the example of Perenco as an example of a company whose exploration activities had met with huge success.

The potential in Congo is enormous and the investment climate is very friendly with incentives for interested companies, Minister Itoua said. A regular presence at the African Energy Week since its inception in 2021, Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua said it was Africa to have a common position in the face of the global debate on energy.

"Africans need to discuss and develop their own doctrine openly, not behind closed doors. What's interesting here is that everyone is represented, including African



The potential in Congo is enormous and the investment climate is very friendly with great incentives for interested companies, says Hydrocarbons Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua

countries, multinational corporations, international and African private sectors. OPEC is present, as is the European Union and the USA," Minister Itoua said in highlighting the merits and success of the African Energy Week.

PAV: Can you sum up the energy landscape in Congo in terms of potential and investment opportunities?

Bruno Jean Richard Itoua: It's a significant question, but we can summarize it in three categories. First, regarding crude oil, Congo currently produces about 300,000 barrels per day, but we envision that in the next three years, we will exceed that capacity. There is remarkable progress in terms of oil production, which can be seen in the production levels achieved by international companies.

We are one of the few countries in the world where exploration investments have increased. Globally, there has been a decrease in exploration due to financial pressures on banks and other financial institutions that have hampered oil production. However, in Congo, we are witnessing an increase in exploration activities. An example is Perenco, a company that had never undertaken explorations anywhere else. Their first attempt was a success



Africans need to discuss and develop their own doctrine openly, not behind closed doors, says Minister Bruno Jean Richard Itoua seen here with African Energy Chamber Chair NJ Ayuk at the AEW.

in Congo, and they subsequently expanded to Gabon.

We invite companies that believe in the future of fossil fuels, even though we have obligations to reduce carbon emissions, to consider investing in Congo. There are significant potentials here. We have three basins to explore, including the Southern basin and the Northern one, which is yet to be explored, though we know there is oil there. In terms of crude oil, we offer free permits and additional incentives to attract international investors.

The second opportunity is in the field of gas. We have an extraction project that began in December, and we anticipate producing 600,000 metric tons in the first year, with a target of three million metric tons per year over the next five years. There are other gas projects in the pipeline that will be explored for the first time.

Opportunities for exploration continue to arise, where companies compete to discover gas reserves. We can also talk about associated gas that can be transformed. We aim to improve access to gas for our Congolese citizens, which presents a new challenge. That's why we are establishing a ministerial directorate in charge of gas. We are also working on a gas master plan that will determine our country's strategy in the coming years.

The third theme is Marginal Fields. It is essential for us to mention this because they are very accessible for SMEs, local, and African companies. We even encourage international companies to explore these marginal fields because it requires advanced technology, which opens up additional opportunities. We believe that there are more opportunities in this area for investment in Congo.

PAV: What assurances does Congo provide for companies ready to invest?

Bruno Jean Richard Itoua: We have a hydrocarbons law in place that was revised in 2016. Our objective was to make it more attractive in terms of justice. We understand that most companies are concerned about fiscal



We have faith in the African Energy Week because it is led by young Africans who believe in Africa and are committed to its growth, says Bruno Jean Richard Itoua

stability, and in this regard, they are covered based on sharing contracts... Currently, sharing contracts are assessed to ensure they are favorable, and we negotiate them case by case while respecting general regulations. Additionally, as I mentioned earlier, we have gas. Companies stand to benefit from various incentives, tax advantages, and exemptions for exports. There are also facilitations in terms of installations. In terms of laws, Congo is very attractive.

PAV: What is your take on the 2023 African Energy Week, and

will you be in Cape Town next year for the fourth edition?

Bruno Jean Richard Itoua: We have faith in this initiative because it is led by young Africans who believe in Africa and are committed to its growth. We can collaborate with others. At a time when Africa is grappling with new ideas, such as the need to transition away from hydrocarbons due to concerns about carbon emissions, Africa needs to have a dialogue.

Africans need to discuss and develop their own doctrine openly, not behind closed doors. What's

interesting here is that everyone is represented, including African countries, multinational corporations, international and African private sectors. OPEC is present, as is the European Union and the USA.

This type of dialogue in the energy sector is crucial for us to align our views and determine the way forward because energy has a direct impact on climate change. It's important that these discussions take place at all levels. And for next year, yes count on us for the African Energy Week, we will be there.

A stylized map of Africa is the central element, colored in a vibrant green. The map is decorated with various symbols representing energy and industry: three wind turbines are positioned in the upper left, three solar panels are in the upper right, and a black silhouette of a cargo ship is on the left side. The title 'A JUST TRANSITION' is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the middle of the map. Below the title, the subtitle 'MAKING ENERGY POVERTY HISTORY WITH AN ENERGY MIX' is written in smaller, bold, white capital letters. At the bottom of the map, there is a black silhouette of a power plant or refinery. The entire graphic is set against a light beige background.

A JUST TRANSITION

MAKING ENERGY
POVERTY
HISTORY WITH
AN ENERGY
MIX

N J A Y U K

Count On Perenco In Making Energy Poverty History Crusade- Benoît de la Fouchardiere.

By Ajong Mbatndah L

We totally adhere to the African Energy Week moto of “making energy poverty history by 2030” and we work to that goal, says Perenco Group General Manager Benoît de la Fouchardiere. Speaking to PAV at the end of the recent AEW in Cape Town, South Africa, where Perenco scooped the Operational Excellence Leader Award for 2023, Benoît de la Fouchardiere highlighted the sustained and significant contribution that his company was making in helping the continent meet its energy priorities.

“For over two decades, Perenco has been a significant developer of natural gas in Africa and today, gas accounts for one quarter of our overall production. The gas we produce is making a meaningful contribution across the continent, as it is developed firstly to generate electricity, then to power developing industrial economies, to feed the market with LPG and when possible, to transition vehicles and small diesel generators to this lower carbon emission product,” Benoît de la Fouchardiere said.

While Perenco understands the need to decarbonise and has been playing its part in energy transition and helping host countries fulfil their climate change pledges, Benoît de la Fouchardiere also expresses the strong believe that Africa has the right to develop and prosper through this period of transition.

“We are working to help African countries balance the very real energy and economic development needs with their climate change objectives,” says Benoît de la Fouchardiere in the interview which gives insights into diverse facets of Perenco’s operations in Africa.

May we start with an introduction to Perenco



We totally adhere to the AEW motto “making energy poverty history by 2030” and we work to that goal, says Benoît de la Fouchardiere, CEO of Perenco

and its operational presence in Africa?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: We are an independent, innovative oil and gas producer, and are involved in the entire lifecycle of projects, from exploration to decommissioning. We have recently celebrated our

thirtieth anniversary in Gabon, which was a key milestone. Today we produce 500,000 BOE of oil and gas per day and have a team of about 7,000 employees delivering safe and environmentally aware solutions to oil and gas fields in 14 countries around the world. We are based in

the UK. Africa is at the heart of our operations with more than 300,000 BOE of oil and gas per day produced there. We are present in Tunisia, Chad, Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, and DRC.

Perenco had a strong presence at the African Energy Week 2023. What message did you seek to highlight and what major points did you take from the event?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: Perenco took the opportunity of the African Energy Week 2023 to highlight our key projects which are ongoing in Central Africa in the shape of the further development of our gas strategy. We totally adhere to the AEW motto “making energy poverty history by 2030” and we work to that goal.

For over two decades Perenco, has been a significant developer of natural gas in Africa and today, gas accounts for one quarter of our overall production. The gas we produce is making a meaningful contribution across the continent, as it is developed firstly to generate electricity, then to power developing industrial economies, to feed the market with

LPG and when possible, to transition vehicles and small diesel generators to this lower carbon emission product. We play a key role in helping our host countries achieve their energy goals, driving forward a gas strategy that facilitates industrial development and the associated economic and social benefits. We export gas only when the local market is saturated, enabling increased State revenues and extracting more LPG for the country.

Perhaps the best-case study is Cameroon where in 2013 we initially powered the 230MW KPDC power plant (30% of



Benoît de la Fouchardiere and his team celebrating the Operational Excellence Leader Award for 2023 given to Perenco at the AEW.

the national grid) and then, in 2018, as part of a gas liquefaction plan, we brought into production the first floating liquefaction plant in Africa, the FLNG Hilli Episeyo, a converted LNG carrier now installed off Kribi. We have just announced the unloading of the 100th cargo of liquefied natural gas since it began operations five years ago. The project has helped Cameroon to reduce its LPG imports by almost 40%.

We have extended our gas expertise to other African countries and are delivering significant Gas to Power (GTP) and Gas to Industry (GTI) developments like Chad and DRC, supporting countries in their drive for energy independence while reducing carbon emissions.

The Operational Excellence Leader Award for 2023 was given to Perenco at AEW, what did this award mean to you and your team?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: We were very proud and honoured to have received the "Leader in Operational Excellence Award" at African Energy Week, for the second year running. The award is in recognition of our outstanding achievements in Central Africa, in terms of operational performance and support for the development of the countries in which we operate. In particular, the organisers were eager to highlight our involvement in "taking major projects from the local to the international level." The award is down to our bold and committed employees who have made this success possible.

Perenco has a lot of projects in the Central Africa Sub Region. How is the investment climate there and any recommendations to make it better?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: We have been in the region for many years and as a result have a good understanding of the investment climate. I would encourage other independents to



invest in projects and support the important task of providing energy for the economic and social development of these countries. They need more investment to achieve the goal of eliminating energy poverty.

What is the position of Perenco when it comes to the debate on fossil fuels?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: The need to decarbonise is clear, and we are playing our part in the energy transition, helping our host countries fulfil their climate change pledges. We also believe that Africa has the right to develop and prosper through this period of transition. We are working to help African countries balance the very real energy and economic development needs with their climate change objectives. In practical terms, we are actively supporting the switch from fuel to gas for many power plants, including in Tunisia, Cameroon, Chad, DRC and Gabon. It is also beyond Africa as we are playing a leading role in ensuring energy security with ambitious gas developments in countries including, the UK, Trinidad & Tobago and Vietnam.

How has the military coup or change of leadership in Gabon affected your operations in the country?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: We do not get drawn into the politics

of our host countries, but work as a partner, making significant and regular investment, as well as being a key employer. In Gabon, Perenco has reached FID on a \$1B LNG project at Cap Lopez that will be accompanied by a massive gas flaring reduction project. This is fundamental to the country's future, generating extra revenues and resulting in much lower emissions from current and future Oil & gas projects operated by Perenco in Gabon.

In the face of competition from rival companies or competing interests, what makes Perenco stand out? How do you make the case for African countries to keep faith with Perenco?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: First and foremost, I am an engineer and I think it is our innovative solutions that make me most proud. For example, for operations offshore DRC we developed a special platform called the "Fololo", which comprises lightweight 22m x 22m floating pontoons and legs that can be self-elevated to the required height in a super simple, genuine and smart concept developed in-house, removing the need for a drilling rig or Heavy Lift Barge. It's more cost effective and lower impact from design to execution and ensures better maintenance of the wells later on as we continue to create reserves from what already exists. It allows us to drill new exploration prospects

nearby that would not have been economic otherwise, like the promising Hylia SW discovery we just made in Gabon. This is just one example of a disruptive technology. It's these innovative solutions that in my mind make Perenco stand out.

I believe our host countries see us as a responsible and committed partner, working together to achieve their energy needs in today's world. If you deliver what you say will, safely and responsibly, as we do, people will not lose their faith in you.

May we know how Perenco gives back to the community?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: Making a positive contribution where you operate is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. We take our corporate social responsibility very seriously and commit a significant amount of resource to intelligent and sustainable, far reaching community programmes. These involve supplying local communities, in a tripartite relationship with the authorities, with some of the tools they need to create development opportunities. Those include, but are not limited to: access to energy, healthcare, and larger scale projects such as fish farming or agroforestry, as well as offering support to local entrepreneurs. For example, we have just received the «exemplary» award from Ending Workplace TB (EWTB). The award recognises a company's «outstanding performance» in implementing workplace TB programmes that help protect workers, their families and their communities.

The dates of the 2024 African Energy Week have already been announced. Will Perenco attend?

Benoît de la Fouchardiere: We look forward to it. We want the prize for a third time in a row! We will work hard for that.

Ditch the Herd Mentality and Embrace Home-Grown Agendas - Dr Farouk At AEW 23

By Simnikiwe Hlatshaneni

Leading actors in the global energy industry, African leaders, captains of industry, policymakers and business leaders gathered in Cape Town, South Africa from the 17th of October for the African Energy Week 2023 (AEW). This year's Africa Energy Week ran under the theme, The African Energy Renaissance: Prioritizing Energy Poverty, People, the Planet, Industrialization, and Free Markets.

Among the many distinguished high-profile actors who took to the podium to address the AEW attendees was Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim, Secretary General of the African Petroleum Producers Organization-APPO who sought to outline a pathway on how Africa should move forward as a whole when deliberating energy issues on the global stage.

Dr Farouk stated that for long, Africa has always moved with the flow despite having its own energy issues which are distinct from those experienced by other global nations. He said that despite contributing an insignificant amount of megatons of emissions into the atmosphere in the past 150 years, Africa owing to its herd mentality has been forced to embrace and adopt energy policies dictated to it by the global superpowers – the same nations whose industrialisation policies of the past 150 years have greatly contributed to climate change issues.

Africa thanks to its rich human resource base which is bulging each day does possess the capability of formulating its home-grown solutions to current energy challenges. Dr Farouk said that the critical thing that African leaders and energy experts need to do is to just ditch the herd mentality and stand by their home-grown solutions.

Referencing the upcoming COP28, Dr Farouk said, "As we prepare to go to Dubai for COP28, it is important that we go with our home-grown agenda, not to continue with a herd mentality



Nobody comes to a discussion on the international scene without an agenda, says APPO Secretary General Dr Omar Farouk Ibrahim.

that has largely characterised our negotiation process".

The added motivation for ditching herd mentality and embracing Africa's home-grown agenda as relayed by Dr Farouk is that the developed nations have always and are still displaying gross selfishness and greed. The APPO Secretary General said despite knowing about the dangers caused by emissions since many years ago, developed nations continued with their industrialisation plans. Only now that they have fully industrialised and moved to "the production of services and artificial intelligence" are they advising all other nations to join them in condemning fossil fuels as dangerous to humanity.

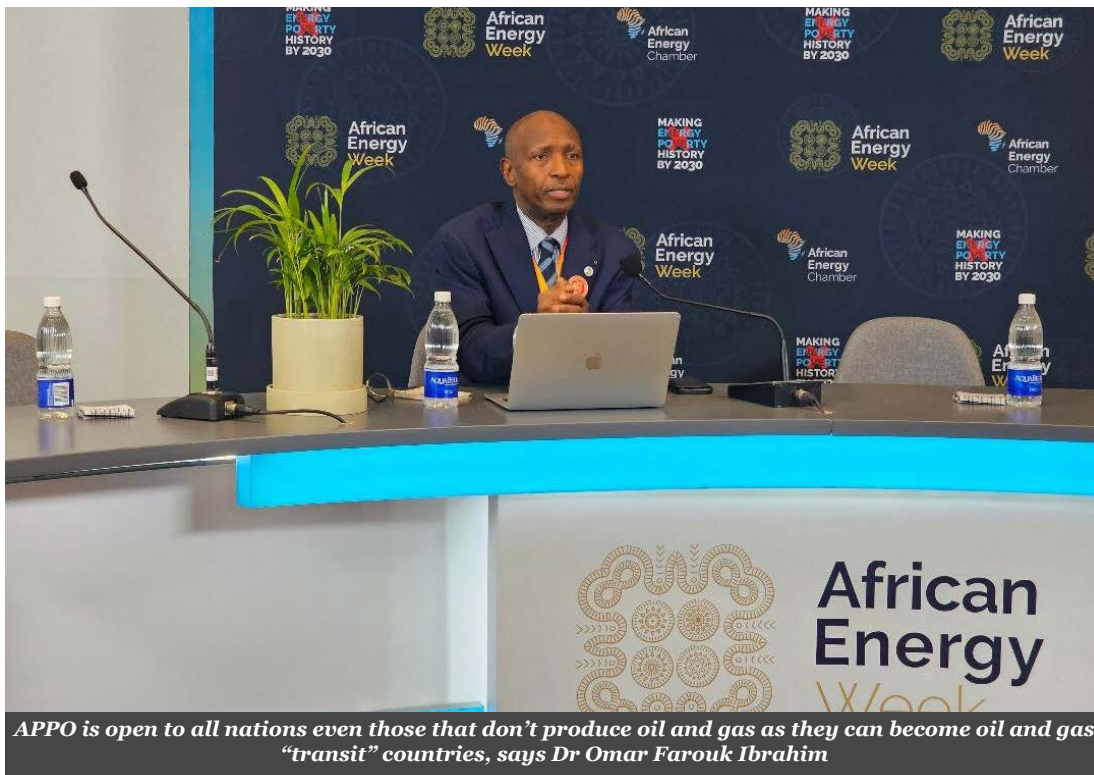
"I say selfish economic activities decidedly because today's industrialised countries did not stumble on the knowledge of the dangers of burning fossil fuels to

the atmosphere in the last 50 years. As far back as 1896, a Swedish climate scientist Svante Arrhenius had established a link between carbon dioxide emissions and rising atmospheric temperatures. Before him, John Tyndall, an Irish physicist had in 1859 discovered the Green House effect, which is the process of atmospheric gasses trapping heat down to earth... But because these countries and their leaders were determined to industrialise, to make the living conditions of their people better, these studies were carefully hidden away from the public," Dr Farouk said.

Moving into the future, Dr Farouk said that the developed nations must keep their "money" and commit to cleaning up the "mess" they created. The mess that he was referring to are the megatons of emissions which the industrialised nations have put into

the atmosphere. If the developed nations manage to remove just a portion of the mess they created, Africa can use the same source of energy the developed nations used in industrialising to also industrialise. Dr Farouk added that Africa will however not need to emit as much as the developed nations emit to reach the same level of industrialisation.

When the developed nations in the next 15 to 25 years succeed "in removing from the atmosphere just 500 megatons or 20% of the 2,500 megatons of emissions that was added to the atmosphere in the last 150 years, primarily by the industrialised countries, that will allow Africa to industrialise using what is today, the most reliable, affordable and accessible form of energy, the same energy form that the developed countries used to get where they are today. Africa shall not



put back 500 megatons before it gets industrialised. Even 50% of that shall suffice. And the world will be better for it. there will be less inequality and less envy. And more important the atmosphere would be 250 megatons less saturated with emissions,” Dr Farouk said.

Secondly, Dr Farouk said instead of the developed nations dangling funds before poor countries in the name of climate adaptation, mitigation, loss or damage funds, they should rather take the lead in investing funds to further develop and deploy CDR technologies.

Dr Farouk invited all African countries both those that produce oil and gas as well as those that don't have these resources to join APPO. He said APPO is open to all nations even those that don't produce oil and gas as they can become oil and gas “transit” countries.

African Energy Sector Deserves Stronger Look From Investors-Jude Kearney

By Ajong Mbandah L

Returns on many investments in Africa have been solid and rewarding, but African institutions need to do more in robustly marketing projects and the region as a whole as if their respective constituencies depend on them, says Jude Kearney, Managing Partner of the Global Corporate and Legal Advisory Firm ASAFO & CO Int'l. The African Energy Week (AEW) Indabas, and many other Africa focused conferences are great opportunities to have multilateral institutions and rating agencies highlight the industries, regions, and specific African countries where the investment environments are stable and encouraging and returns are good, says Jude Kearney.

Fielding questions from PAV after AEW 2023, where he was one of the prominent American faces



leading panels and participating in discussions, Kearney noted with satisfaction that the very consistent messages of the Africa Energy Chamber and its international

Import Bank of the United States spoke glowingly about US Institutional presence at AEW 2023 in the interview which also offered insights into the work of ASAFO & CO and multiple stakes in the African energy landscape.

What is your take on the recent African Energy Week?

Jude Kearney: As I told the organizers of this year's event--while I was still on the ground in Cape Town--this year's AEW was by far the best and most consequential. I say that from the standpoint of a few measurements of this conference. First, the number of delegates and the sizes of key and powerful delegations is unmatched. It's an indication that the very consistent messages of the organizers, the Africa Energy

Chamber and its international partners has resonated deeply into the energy sectors across the globe. Second, the key messages of the primary sponsor, the Africa Energy Chamber, which seemed possibly contrarian in the past, have become the common language about the best ways for Africa to utilize its energy resources. Finally, without naming them, categories stakeholders in the global energy ecosystem were historically timid about attending AEW. There were no substantive categories of energy sector stakeholders absent from this year's events.

This year's AEW has set a very high bar. I can't wait to see what AEW will do next year to match or even outdo this year's event.

You participated in several panel discussions; can you sum up the messages you sort to highlight?

Jude Kearney: I am frequently asked to speak at AEW, with the topics varying depending on the trending topics at any given AEW. This year, I was asked to participate in several discussions at the conference. This year in particular I was asked to speak and or moderate in regards to issues dealing with 1.) the importance of substantive partnership between US energy sector players (public and private) and their African counterparts in regards to very active energy production and energy development initiatives in the various African countries, 2.) the relevance in Africa of the highly publicized global rush among geopolitical superpowers to secure a fair share of what are called "critical minerals", and 3.) broadly speaking, how to secure adequate funding from bilateral governments, multilateral institutions and private sector investors and lenders such that the vast energy investments which are needed in Africa can move forward. There was bold discussion, lots of agreement, some civil disagreement and ultimately a resolution among the participants that Africa's energy resources and its needs for energy development demand that we all



push forward in our respective capacities to improve the chances that these important development initiatives take place—and that Africa and Africans must as a whole be in the driver's seat.

What meaning did you read in the presence of Deputy Assistant Secretary Josh Volz at the AEW?

Jude Kearney: That is an interesting question, and one that is relevant. The conference has not had a lot of US government official participation in the past, but it seemed quite relevant that this year would be the year when some participation seemed timely and relevant. Moreover, as you know, Mr. Volz spoke in a number of panels and presentations at the conference and was exceptionally well received. Moreover, he was a panelist in the panel that I chaired on the issue of the importance of exploring greater US Africa collaboration in the development, production and use of Africa's energy resources and he was again very thoughtful in his remarks. I in fact, on a point of personal privilege as the moderator of the panel, to personally thank Josh for

his presence and his remarks. Indeed, I informed him that one of the first times I ever set foot in South Africa was as a delegate in a trade mission with a predecessor U.S. Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary. Like his presence this year at the conference, in that 1994 visit to South Africa, Secretary O'Leary showed great and timely good will towards South Africa's future energy development and its development overall.

As someone who has attended the AEW before and has a better grasp of African realities, what did you make of the message he presented?

Jude Kearney: I'm actually reluctant to either characterize or second guess the meaning of the clear words that Josh spoke. I have been in his exact shoes before, so I am personally aware of the important objectives of his presence and presentation. (I was, like Josh, a Deputy Assistant Secretary myself many years ago, at the US Department of Commerce.) As representatives of our respective government Agencies, senior representatives are encouraged to show great support for the gathering

and to impart some of the basic goals of their agencies in the industries/sectors being discussed. Josh did a good job on both fronts, and I think he encountered lots of appreciation for his presence.

Considering the importance and investment opportunities in the energy sector, have you been satisfied with the presence or participation of US corporate interests at events like the AEW?

Jude Kearney: I reserve the feeling of being "satisfied" to the absolute highest level of achievement for AEW and the African Energy sector. What I mean is, I don't want any of us who are engaged in this effort of seeking energy access and energy-fueled African development to feel self-satisfied until we have achieved a much greater reduction of energy poverty and a much more flourishing set of economies in Africa brought about by the successful and increasingly climate-friendly use of the continent's natural resources. With that as a constant goal, I do feel tremendous gratitude to the increasing numbers of stakeholders



Projects and transactions worthy of investment and the region as a whole should be robustly marketed, says Jude Kearney.

who are coming to AEW and to those investors who are investing in African energy projects each year.

To investors and corporate interests not familiar with potential and opportunities, how can you make the case for them to take a fresh look at Africa and participate more at signature events like the Africa Energy Week?

Jude Kearney: Very good question, Ajong, and one that I love responding to. Investors the world over, including US and Western investors among others, are frequently inclined to strongly vet the conditions of a proposed investment. Such vetting might involve the engagement of advisors knowledgeable about the target investment or the target jurisdiction, but it might also include searches for open sources of economic statistics and country ratings and the like. In the case of many African countries, the justification for investment exists: empirical data on both corporate and capital markets investments in Africa show greater

than average returns for investors than in many other destinations. So, in my public comments and in the comments made by others focused on the African markets, we state as a matter of investigative fact that returns on many investments in Africa have been solid and rewarding. But Africa and prospective African investment partners know that they shouldn't leave the issue to sporadic online investigations. The projects and transactions that are objectively worthy of investment in Africa should be robustly marketed and the region as a whole should be marketed by African institutions as if their respective constituencies depend on it. AEW, Indabas and many other Africa focused conferences are great opportunities to have multilateral institutions and rating agencies highlight the industries, regions and specific African countries where the investment environments are stable and encouraging and returns are good.

How can ASAFO & CO that you lead help in the building of

corporate bridges between the USA and Africa?

Jude Kearney: Let me brag a bit here. As you know, I have been in the corporate legal arena for decades and have been a senior partner/shareholder in some of the most prominent firms in the world. Each of them had unique specialties that made them quite relevant to the broad requirements of African transactions and Africa's economic development. But ASAFO is arguably the next level of a set of sophisticated advisors in the Africa space: that is, we are a firm of unparalleled corporate and transactional expertise, while also being a truly global AFRICAN lawfirm. Our firm and its practitioners are literally equally at home in the finance, natural resource and mining centers around the world as we are on the ground in ANY African city, town or village. We understand the typical African transaction from every angle. So, we often serve as a natural bridge for our clients (from the US and other non-African jurisdictions) who are not yet as experienced in Africa as others.

You have been one of the most prominent faces at successive editions of the AEW, what changes have you seen, any recommendations for the organizers to work on and is it safe for them to count on your presence for the 2024 edition?

Jude Kearney: As briefly mentioned earlier in this conversation, I have seen phenomenal growth in the size of the conferences (starting with 100s of participants at AEW's predecessor Africa Oil and Power in 2016 to now several thousands) as well as the message. Because the Conference—and its sponsor Africa Energy Chamber—have gained the attention of the entire public and private sector parts of the African energy sector, the requirement to evolve the discourse to be able to speak the entire spectrum of the sector has been fully met by the organizers and their partners. The audience has become more sophisticated and engaged over the years and the messages that emanate from the conferences have become much more global in their application.



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Shoreline Energy International's Trailblazing Path in Addressing Africa's Energy Needs.

By Ajong Mbapndah L

With a remarkable journey spanning an impressive twenty-six years, Kola Karim has been navigating the ship at Shoreline Energy International since January 1997. Renowned for his vast experience in the power solutions realm, Kola Karim founded Shoreline Energy dedicated to power generation and manufacturing of power equipment, operating across sub-Saharan Africa.

Kola believes that Africans should take their destiny into their hands in addressing the energy needs on the continent. «We as Africans are the only ones who can sit around the table and decide the future of this continent; for good or for worse. We have tried centuries of other people deciding; maybe we should try our century now and add value to the continent and maybe the difference will be clear,” Kola Karim says.

Shoreline Energy is recognized for acquiring infrastructure and energy assets and acting as an investor in business and trade. The company encompasses a range of operating businesses including Mota Nigeria Limited, a leading construction company; DBN Energies, specializing in EPC contracts for the oil and gas industry and Shoreline Power Company, a prominent player in power generation.

In an interview with Kola Karim, CEO and Managing Director of Shoreline Energy International, he sheds more light on Shoreline Energy and what it will take to address the energy needs of not just Nigerians but the continent.

May we start with an introduction to Shoreline Energy?

Kola Karim: Shoreline Energy International's focus business is infrastructure, as in construction, building and owning infrastructure,



and oil and gas exploitation. Today, we are producing 49 thousand barrels a day out of Nigeria; we sit on a field of over 1.2 billion barrels of reserves and three and a half TCF of gas in Nigeria. We have some exploratory assets in other parts like in Namibia. But we are focused on the energy sector because energy is life and life is entwined with energy for all.

Shoreline Energy is today one of the prominent companies that we have around, may we know

how this vision was conceived?

Kola Karim: It was conceived in the early 2000s when the Nigerian government started pushing the flag and barrier; the Nigerians must participate in the oil and gas sector. By so doing, the government encouraged, cajoled, and pushed the international oil companies that were operating in Nigeria that they must sell assets to locals, instead of shutting these assets down. Remember that a lot of African governments only make money when the natural resource has come off the

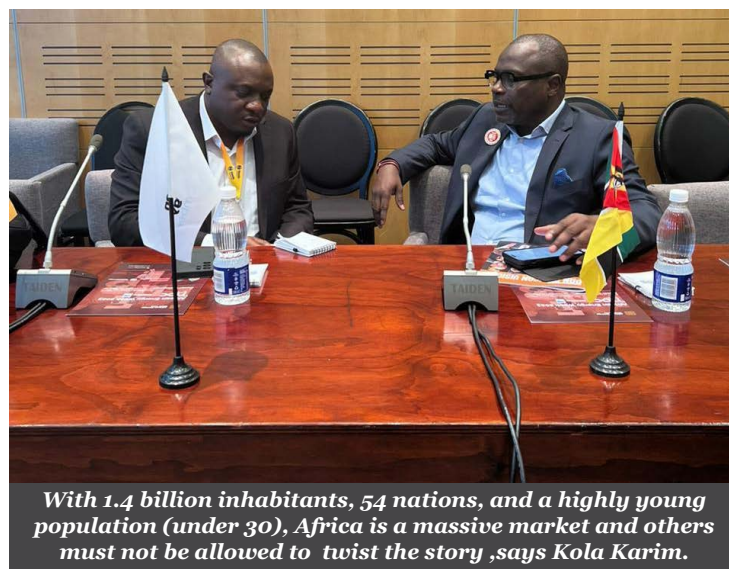
ground by way of either taxes or royalties.

But if the international oil companies discover the resource, they put it on their global balance sheet as part of their reserves. The host country gets nothing and that is unfair. So, the Nigerian government decided that you are not going to shut down an asset; if you shut it down, we are going to take it away from you. So, you should sell it to people who are going to exploit it for the benefit of all, and that is what pushed the local content policy where Nigerian companies have now become intermediate giants in oil production, and this is one of the processes that forced us into the market.

In terms of addressing the energy needs of Nigeria and the continent in general, how will you situate the importance of Shoreline Energy?

Kola Karim: Our main focus is to utilize the gas resource. Since the advent of decarbonization, a lot of the global financial institutions are holding back on capital spending on oil and gas exploration and production. If you look at a country like Nigeria or Senegal, all these countries have huge reserves. Nigeria alone has over 210 TCF of gas reserves found. If we can focus and exploit that and put those into production and the market in various gas forms plus exporting to the world.

With the advent of the problem between Russia and Ukraine, Europe's energy is negative and today they are looking at other sources and that is why you see the new outlook where there is pressure being put on the West African Gas pipeline being extended to Morocco to Spain. You are looking at the Northern AKK pipeline going to the desert into Tunisia and Italy. These are great opportunities for Africa to come and put its natural gas into the global market.



With the pressure that the Western world is putting on the continent about fossils, what is your position at Shoreline Energy?

Kola Karim: Look, the same Europeans have made a U-turn on gas. The focus is for us to double down on our efforts in exploiting our natural gases right across Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Egypt, these are huge gas reserves across, and we can build a very formidable network and become a major exporter of natural gas, in all forms into the world.

There is also the complaint that we often hear about the investment climate, how is it like in Nigeria, and how challenging has it been for you to build Shoreline Energy from scratch to where it is today?

Kola Karim: The investment climate is all about our own story. One thing is clear, global capital is looking for return and there is a lot of global capital. What Africa has done wrong is that Africa has left its stories to be told by other people. If the Africans tell their own stories and the narrative is from our point of view, then the person you are looking at investing on the continent sees it from your point of view. If we leave it to third parties to tell our stories, more so if they are from a competing environment, how do you want them to tell your stories rightly?

Africa has 1.4 billion people, 54 countries, and a very young population; that is a huge market. Yet, if we tell our stories rightly, the economic benefit of investing in such a market is very clear. But what you read about is aid, wars, everything that is negative. So, if you are an investor and all you read about are the negatives, that is not the place where you are going to put your money. The key is Africa is full of opportunities but also if you think about one thing that is crystal clear is that democracy has its roots in Africa, rule of law holds roots in Africa. If we tick the boxes and tell our own stories to the world, then Africa is an obvious advantage destination for investment.

Talking about success, you are



Africans must take a stronger lead in shaping the destiny of its continent, says Kola Karim.

one of the biggest success stories that the continent has today. To the younger generation that looks up to you as a model, what are some success tips you can share with them?

Kola Karim: Be true to yourself. Also, be loyal to your values and never be afraid to work hard. You require luck but be true to yourself. This is the most serious issue confronting Africa's young people. We must be willing to be true to ourselves and our values and have a clear goal in mind. I usually think about Zuckerberg, who founded Facebook. He was loyal to himself because he decided to make it work. As he grew older, he became more aware of his own values and limitations. And we've done the same thing with other business models. We have a lot of young Africans out there, and all they have to do is roll up their sleeves, be true to themselves, be devoted and focused, and the sky is the limit in anything they want to do.

Africa has huge opportunities. Regarding natural resources, Africa has over 30% of the world's natural resources. When it comes to financial services, Africa has the fastest growth in financial services in the world. When it comes to technology, we're talking about payments, mobile telephones, and everything else that's energizing telecommunications.

Then there's food, quick-moving consumer items, and the simple

necessities of life. Since the arrival of mobile telephony, Africans have a better understanding of what's available. So, all we have to do is ignite it and develop and burn our increasing internal market. Consider how you may capture a portion of the 1.4 billion market or become a link in the network. There are so many young, smart, intelligent Africans. All they need is to focus on purpose in making a difference.

Kola Karim is also a product of the African Diaspora. How can African governments leverage the tremendous resources that the Diaspora has to meet their development needs?

Kola Karim: The Diaspora needs to take the initiative also. The Diaspora that knows better, who is most exposed to the Western global norms should take the opportunities and the advantage that wherever we are in the world, when we see gaps in our economy and opportunities, we go and engage the governments. Do not sit in Canada, U.S. UAE, Philippines and think that someone is going to remember me because I am smart, and I am from the Congo. Or I am a very good lawyer, and I am from Nigeria or I am a fantastic engineer and I am from South Africa. The key is that we need to engage and come up with proposals or things that can make a difference. That is where we realize the ambition

of those of the Diaspora that can inter-fit well.

I was just talking to a friend that there's a friend of mine in South Africa who had an idea, and he went and pitched it to the Kenyan government today he is very high up in the Kenyan government. This is because the government said you come and do it. We should continue to stand tall and be proud of what we know and what we think we can add as value to our countries. That is what the Diaspora needs, and it creates only good things as success.

What is your take on the ongoing African Energy Week 2023? Satisfied with the way things have gone so far?

Kola Karim: The African Energy Week is the confluence of where the now, tomorrow and the future of Africa's power brokers in the energy sector will sit to continue discussing, proposing, and doing the right transactions that will be to the benefit of this continent. No one is going to do it for us. We as Africans are the only ones who can sit around the table and decide the future of this continent; for good or for worse. We have tried centuries of other people deciding; maybe we should try our century now and add value to the continent and maybe the difference will be clear.

The African Union at 20

African perspectives on progress,
challenges and prospects



Edited by Wafula Okumu and Andrews Atta-Asamoah

A Paradigm Shift in Infrastructure Investment and Energy Growth- Dietsmann's CEO Cesare Canevese

By Simnikiwe Hlatshaneni

Infrastructure development will serve as the linchpin of Africa's energy sector as the continent embraces the promise of recent oil and gas discoveries in nations like Namibia and Mozambique, while actively pursuing renewable energy opportunities. Cesare Canevese, the Chief Executive Officer of Dietsmann, a maintenance and operations service provider working across six emerging African markets, envisions a renewed energy landscape that not only fuels economic growth but also benefits local companies and workers, ultimately making them the primary beneficiaries of this transformative movement.

In the evolving narrative of African Energy 2023, the focus is on fostering opportunities for individuals to engage in the energy sector, underpinned by a commitment to empower local entities. Canevese emphasizes the need for more significant investments in critical infrastructure, including treatment plants, power generation facilities, and expanded electricity distribution networks, reaching every corner where people require electricity for their homes. Although Africa faces several challenges on the path to comprehensive energy generation and distribution, Canevese believes that the region offers immense potential for growth and development.

The surging populations across African nations amplify the demand for energy to meet domestic needs while addressing historical disparities in access to electricity and modern technology. This growing demand coincides with recent discoveries in the oil and gas industries, sparking a race among both local and international industry giants to become part of a new era in energy production on the continent. According to the African Energy Week (AEW) website, as energy demand escalates, Africa's



There is a critical need for robust infrastructure development to fuel Africa's energy ambitions, says Dietsmann CEO Cesare Canevese.

energy sector is poised to secure a more significant share of the global market. It is projected that global hydrocarbon capital expenditure will reach \$52.27 billion by 2025, facilitating the extraction of over 17 million cubic meters of natural gas.

Canevese anticipates that hydrocarbon production will continue

to dominate energy sector growth on the continent despite mounting pressure on industries to reduce their carbon footprint and transition toward investment in green energy. Nevertheless, local industry players and decision-makers must bolster their expertise and infrastructure to deliver high-quality products that

can compete in both African and international markets. The insufficiency of infrastructure development remains a key obstacle on the path toward universal access to electricity and modern technology.

«In terms of electricity, the construction of more power plants is imperative, and it appears that progress is on the horizon. With substantial investments from national companies and the international community, these objectives are well within reach,» adds Canevese, emphasizing the critical need for robust infrastructure development to fuel Africa's energy ambitions.

The dichotomy between Eastern and Western investment raises the question: is this paradigm shift reminiscent of another «Scramble for Africa»? While Canevese hopes that African countries can attract investments from within the continent to drive much of the activity necessary to meet their energy demands, he recognizes that this alone may not suffice. Investment and partnerships with entities from the Eastern and Western hemispheres are poised to play a pivotal role in realizing the dream of an energy-efficient and sustainable Africa. «We need more investments in infrastructure, treatment plants, and power generation plants,» Canevese affirms.

Canevese explains, «I believe that technology and investment from Europe, America, or the Middle East can facilitate the smooth commencement of production in a safe and efficient manner. Subsequently, African countries can take control and steer the course of their energy destiny.»

African leaders and industry heads have been vocal in their calls for a «just transition» toward robust renewable energy reforms. Despite Africa being



Cesare Canevese anticipates that hydrocarbon production will continue to dominate energy sector growth on the continent despite pressure.

responsible for only approximately 4% of global carbon emissions, a figure dwarfed by Eastern and Western superpowers like China, the United States of America (USA), and the European Union, there is a growing urgency to address climate change.

Barbara Creecy, speaking ahead of the Cop 28 Summit in the Arab

Emirates in November, expressed her concerns that African countries might not meet their climate change goals as stipulated in the Paris Agreement by 2025. The Paris Agreement represents a global pact that commits participating nations to robust reforms aimed at curbing the buildup of greenhouse gas emissions responsible for global warming.

The ongoing discussions on Africa's energy transformation are poised to reshape the continent's economic landscape. Through strategic investments in vital infrastructure, the strengthening of energy generation capacities, and fostering international collaborations, Africa strives not only to meet its escalating energy requirements but also to

establish a substantial presence in the global energy arena. With a two-pronged focus on hydrocarbons and renewable energy, the African Energy Renaissance is undeniably in progress, with a promising future on the horizon.

AEW Ideal To Showcase Mauritius As Gateway to African Investment- Órama's CEO Keseena Chengadu

By Ajong Mbapndah L

In the wake of the resounding success of the 2023 African Energy Week (AEW), PAV caught up with Keseena Chengadu, CEO of Órama, to reflect on their journey and gain insights into the pivotal role Mauritius continues to play as the gateway to African investment. Órama, a management company licensed by the Financial Service Commission (FSC) in Mauritius has earned a solid reputation as a facilitator for businesses seeking to tap into the continent's vast potential.

As we look back at the 2023 African Energy Week, let us revisit Órama's journey. Can you give us a brief introduction to Órama and its mission?

Keseena Chengadu: Certainly. Órama is a management company based in Mauritius, specialized in the incorporation of companies, trust & fund management, asset protection & succession planning, compliance & legal as well as accounting and administration services. While we have been in operation for some time, our recent journey has marked a significant milestone with the acquisition of our license. Our mission at Órama is to provide top-notch professional services to entrepreneurs and investors looking to establish a presence in Mauritius, expand their horizons and tap into the vast wealth of opportunities the island presents including the facilitation of global funds to African business, access to preferential markets, credibility and stability amongst other key indicators



The stability, economic success, and financial achievements over the years have made Mauritius stand out on the global stage, says Keseena Chengadu, CEO of Órama

conducive to attract investments and thrive businesses sustainably.

Órama had a notable presence at the African Energy Week in 2023. Can you tell us about

your experience at the event and how it influenced Órama's trajectory?

Keseena Chengadu: Our experience at the 2023 African Energy Week was truly transformative. It was a fantastic

opportunity to connect with industry stakeholders and showcase our role as a facilitator of access to Mauritius, Africa's reputable financial hub, and the most business-friendly destination in Africa. We were proud to be a prominent player at the event and contribute to the conversations around energy and investment in Africa. AEW allowed us to engage with those interested in doing business in Mauritius and those yet to discover its immense potential. This experience significantly influenced Órama's growth and determination to be a key player in African investment.

The African Energy Week has become a significant annual event. How do you compare the 2022 edition with the 2023 edition in terms of importance for businesses like Órama?

Keseena Chengadu: The AEW has undoubtedly grown in stature and importance. The 2023 edition marked a significant expansion, with triple the participation compared to the previous year. It was evident that substantial effort went into making it a resounding success. It has become an essential rendezvous for businesses like Órama to connect with diverse countries and partake in discussions about Africa's energy sector and broader business landscapes. The AEW continues to provide us with an opportunity to reinforce our commitment to Africa and share our expertise in facilitating investment.

Mauritius has been increasingly recognized as a unique and attractive destination for investment. What, in your view, sets Mauritius apart, and why should it be the preferred choice for businesses seeking African investment?

Keseena Chengadu: Mauritius indeed offers a compelling case for investment. Its stability, economic success, and financial achievements over the years have made it stand out on the global stage. Despite being a small African nation, its government and authorities have adeptly turned its limitations into strengths. We have learned from best practices worldwide and earned international recognition for our stability. Additionally, its robust banking sector and no exchange control makes it easy for businesses to move capital in and out of the country efficiently.

As an example, in his interview published by Investor's Mag issue no. 26 (Oct 23 – Dec 23), Mr. Henry Jardine, the United States Ambassador to Mauritius stated "... in the financial service sector alone, approximately \$70 billion in transactions originate from US business but pass through Mauritius [sic]". This highlights the acknowledgment of Mauritius strategic significance in facilitating business operations across the region.

Mauritius also boasts opportunities in the real estate sector, which has seen remarkable growth in recent years. With a stable economy, favorable weather, and a status as a sought-after destination, Mauritius is the proverbial golden key to unlock the door to African expansion and the turquoise water is a bliss!!

Could you share any success stories or examples of businesses that Órama has brought to Mauritius?

Keseena Chengadu: We collaborate with clients from diverse international jurisdictions, with notable examples including our Nigerian, Ghana, Angola and Zimbabwean partners. In a striking case, we offered valuable guidance to our clients in Nigeria, Ghana and Angola seeking



AEW was a fantastic opportunity to connect with industry stakeholders and showcase our role as a facilitator of access to Mauritius, says Keseena Chengadu.

optimal structures for their global oil and gas trade operations. Given the intricate challenges associated with banking and credit facilities in Nigeria, Angola and Ghana we facilitated the establishment of their company in Mauritius, complete with a local bank account. This strategic move has granted our client access to Mauritius' robust banking

system, opening doors to Standby Letters of Credit (SBLCs) from local banks, ensuring efficient and punctual supplier payments. This, in turn, elevates business associates' confidence, fosters business growth, and bolsters international trade.

In another remarkable instance, a highly regarded Zimbabwean client, envisioning expansion and in need

of capital infusion, turned to Órama. We orchestrated the establishment of their Mauritian company, which makes them eligible for financing through local banks. Furthermore, Mauritius' exceptional reputation within the international financial arena allowed the client to successfully raise capital and attract investments, leveraging the prominence of the Mauritius International Financial Centre.»

Looking ahead to the future, what lies in store for Órama, and how do you envision your role in contributing to the ongoing success of African investment?

Keseena Chengadu: Analyzing Órama's existing client portfolio and the strong, enduring professional rapport we've cultivated with our partners, it becomes abundantly clear that we are poised to evolve into the paramount strategic advisors and partners for businesses and entrepreneurs seeking to invest in Africa. Our overarching objective is to become the primary catalyst for channelling investments into Africa while furnishing clients with expert counsel on the most advantageous structural approaches to leverage Mauritius' extensive network of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAA), Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (IPAA), and trade pacts, not only within the African continent but also on a global scale.

Our extensive proficiency within the energy, mining, and trading sectors equips us with a profound comprehension of the optimal strategies that can be deployed to maximize investment opportunities throughout Africa. With our profound insights and unwavering commitment, we are exceptionally well-positioned to serve as a guiding light for those seeking success in this vibrant and promising market.

For more information about Órama and their services, visit their official website at www.oramacorporate.com or follow them on LinkedIn.



AEW has become an essential rendezvous for businesses like Órama to connect with diverse countries and partake in discussions about Africa's energy sector, says Keseena Chengadu.

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African Countries Must Unite to Industrialize Now- African Energy Chamber Angola Head Sergio Pugliese

By Ajong Mbapndah L

African countries must unite to industrialize now, says Sergio Pugliese President of the Angola Chapter of the African Energy Chamber. In an interview with PAV on the sidelines of the 2023 edition of the African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa, Pugliese questioned why the continent's growth ambition should be compromised at the expense of people who had harmed the environment. The development interests, priorities, and prosperity of Africa in challenging times should not be impeded by actors most responsible for the ecological issues facing the world, said Mr. Pugliese in an interview which also covered energy developments in Angola and the African Energy Week 2023.

PAV: How is the energy landscape in Angola at the moment?

Sergio Pugliese: Angola's power comes mostly from hydro. So, whenever we hear these conversations about energy transition and green energy, Angola has already met its target by having more than 80% of its energy from hydro. However, we cannot ignore the hydrocarbon power source in our energy mix. The oil and gas industry is the primary driver of our economy. We're also producers of diamonds in Angola. At one point, we are the fourth largest producer of diamonds in the world, but we are mainly oil producers. We have data close with Nigeria; sometimes Nigeria is the major producer, and other times, Angola is currently at 1.2 million barrels daily.

Angola's energy production is under a natural decline at the moment. However, initiatives, such as Africa Energy Week and the Angola oil and gas event, take place every year to establish a platform to attract additional investment to try to reverse the production decrease and provide chances for local markets to



The development interests, priorities, and prosperity of Africa should not be impeded by actors most responsible for the ecological issues facing the world, says Sergio Pugliese.

fund themselves.

How are the proceeds from oil and gas that Angola is getting helping to meet the development needs of the country?

Sergio Pugliese: They have started a lot of reforms, which have culminated in a new, friendly, and conducive environment for investment. This allows the government to take the most out of the resources to help diversify the economy. They initiated several changes, culminating in a fresh, friendly, and hospitable investment climate. This enables the government to use available resources to diversify the economy. So, the real benefit comes from optimizing and diversifying Angola's oil and gas economy. At the same time, it is being used to diversify industrial initiatives such as fertilizers. Also, two refineries are under construction, and one refinery has been modified to offer petroleum to the Angolan market. We have solar projects that have come on board, i.e., the Kara Kulu solar project down in the Namib and Huambo provinces. So, there are a lot of other

areas within the energy space that are benefiting from these reforms and increased investment.

How is Angola coping with the energy debate and the push back on fossil fuels?

Sergio Pugliese: Angola is part of the African voice that is fighting together with the 600 million people in the continent who do not have access to electricity and another 900 million people out of the 1.4 billion population who do not have access to clean cooking power sources. We are not polluters since most of Africa's power comes from renewable sources. So, instead of pressing other nations to minimize their carbon footprint, we are being asked not to industrialize and expand our economy.

So, I believe we live in challenging times with dilemmas in our hands. The problem is determining how to ensure economic development. How do we combat energy poverty and other forms of poverty? At the same time, balance the environmental question. We are very pragmatic and practical. We continue to develop our

industry and attract our investment to the oil and gas industry while adding other energy sources into the mix. We are also continuing to invest in hydropower distribution.

The critical point is that there should be equity in developing your economies to provide a future for your population. Governments and their citizens have a social compact. The government's obligation is to give as many opportunities to future generations as possible, and the best way to achieve this is to use the resources available.

What is your impression about the ongoing African Energy Week 2023?

Sergio Pugliese: The Africa Energy Week has been a brilliant event that has brought together the whole continent and world. We have participants from Asia, the United States, South America, the Middle East, and a big Saudi Arabian delegation. I believe that when we have the whole world talking with the Africans with the same voice about energy equity and access to

investment, we can call this a success.

Personally, for the African Energy Chamber, we have put in a lot of effort this year to push the conversation that we live in a world that should be fair to everyone. And I believe we are being heard. We will also be at COP 28 to connect with individuals promoting the opposing agenda. Also, we will continue to speak in unanimity that resource development is the only way for us Africans to experience our own Industrial Revolution. The Western world is going through its fourth industrial revolution, the digital revolution. We are on the brink of our first revolution and should be allowed to industrialize. Why should we not develop our economies for the sake of those who have already damaged the environment? So, these issues and points are being discussed at Africa Energy Week. And I believe that the world is hearing us and will continue to hear us.



We will continue to speak in unanimity that resource development is the only way for Africa's Industrial Revolution, says Pugliese in interactions with participants at the African Energy Week.

Education And Infrastructure Development Game Changers In Ending Africa's Energy Poverty- AGL's Oil & Gas Director Gregory Risterucci.

By Simnikiwe Hlatshaneni

Africa Global Logistics, a leading logistics firm in the energy industrial complex across various African markets, says investment in education and infrastructure development will be game changers in ending Africa's energy poverty and lack of industrialisation, two major hurdles to economic growth on the continent. The company says it recognises the importance of addressing Africa's energy needs and is actively participating in the African energy renaissance. Education and skills transfer are indeed essential for sustainable development and expertise in infrastructure development.

While attracting investment into the development of sophisticated energy production systems is the main priority for stakeholders over the next few years, it's also important



We are very much a part of the African energy renaissance, says Oil & Gas Director Gregory Risterucci with the AGL delegation at the African Energy Week.

to address the glaring skills gap in key areas of the energy supply chain for African countries to realise sustainable energy solutions that don't rely on foreign expertise to run sufficiently.

«The reality in Africa is there are 600 million people without access to sustainable electricity, we have a key role to play in coming up with innovative solutions to make sure that as we deal with climate change, we also address the urgent needs of Africa when it comes to energy and power generation and availability,» says Gregory Risterucci, AGL's Oil & Gas Director.

«We are very much a part of the African energy renaissance, which for us means that Africa will be able to reach its development goals by using the vast resources at its disposal towards eradicating energy poverty and building more sophisticated and

industrialised economies.»

For AGL, a sponsor of Africa Energy Week (AEW) 2023, education and skills transfer are major parts of its short- and medium-term strategy to create more expertise in infrastructure development required to allow energy and power production to expand in the African countries they operate in.

As a sponsor of AEW 2023, AGL presented its solutions for efficient management of complex logistics projects, meeting the highest industry standards. With its extensive African network, AGL positions itself as the leading logistics partner in Africa, offering optimal services that reduce costs and enhance the overall success of energy sector projects.

To ensure a successful strategy for creating more expertise in infrastructure development, AGL suggests that businesses collaborate with educational institutions including universities, technical schools, and vocational training centres to develop specialised curriculum or training programs tailored to infrastructure development. This collaboration can help equip students and professionals with the necessary skills and knowledge.

According to the African Development Bank, Africa may achieve universal access to energy services by 2024 while lowering its carbon intensity of growth and emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2). The continent boasts an abundance of carbon-intensive energy infrastructure as well as renewable and non-renewable energy resources.

However, while Africa is the



The critical importance of logistics for a strong developing energy transition in Africa was highlighted by the AGL at AEW.

continent with the least amount of energy availability and the greatest vulnerability to climate change in the world, energy production is necessary for the continent to develop and for the people's lives to get better. Sixty-five million people in Africa lack access to safe cooking energy, and 700 million people lack access to electricity. Many people rely on non-renewable biomass for cooking, and the ensuing indoor pollution claims the lives of 600,000 people annually.

Establish internships and apprenticeships: Create opportunities for young professionals and students to gain hands-on experience through internships and apprenticeships

within your organisation. This practical experience will enhance their expertise and make them valuable assets in the infrastructure development field.

At AEW 2023, the African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO) recently highlighted the importance of African countries investing in its own research and development activities to encourage innovation and advancements in sustainable energy production and infrastructure development. This was against the backdrop of complaints that African countries' energy production policy direction is largely informed or imposed by

foreign institutions creating gaps in applicability and feasibility of current plans to incorporate climate change objectives into the regulation and planning of energy industries.

Risterucci highlights AGLs intention of involving local communities and stakeholders, taking into account their needs and aspirations when designing education and skills transfer initiatives. By investing in education and skill development, AGL can contribute to the long-term sustainability and transformation of Africa's energy sector, he says.

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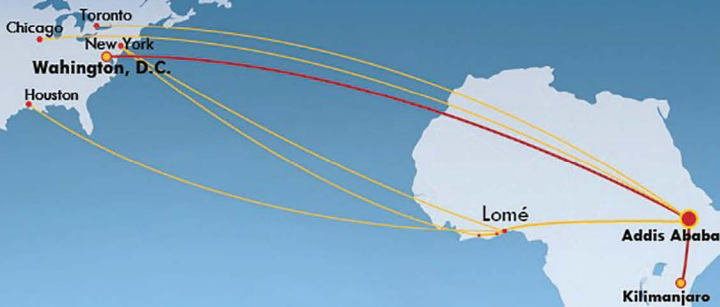
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NJ Ayuk Touts Energy Cooperation and Investment Opportunities In Houston Charm Offensive

By Ajong Mbapndah L

Fresh off another edition of the African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa, the African Energy Chamber (AEC) and its leadership is marching forward in its crusade to make energy poverty history by 2030. Led by Executive Chairman NJ Ayuk, a delegation of the AEC is on a charm offensive to Houston, Texas, USA. The AEC delegation comprising Senior Vice President Verner Ayukeba amongst others held stimulating engagement sessions with key stakeholders in Houston, a city hailed globally for its energy prowess.

The trip to Houston which came on the heels of a similar mission to Guyana where NJ Ayuk participated in the African Caribbean Trade and Investment Forum 2023 is part of a series of high-profile events in line for the AEC to cap off a hectic year.

Speaking to PAV, NJ Ayuk describes the mission to Houston as hugely critical considering strong and growing ties between the AEC and stakeholders in the energy sector across the USA. Discussions with energy actors in Houston were fruitful and more of such engagements will take place in other cities across the USA, Ayuk said.

NJ lauded the record participation of energy actors from the USA, including Senior Officials from the Biden Administration at the recent African Energy Week. The potential is there, the African energy sector is open to investment, and the investment climate is not as bleak as some naysayers may paint it, NJ Ayuk said in a sales pitch to U.S and global investors.

In a continue where the energy needs are dire, the AEC will continue to play a leadership role in speaking



Texas is an amazing opportunity for us to really put Africa and Africa's message at the centre of energy in the world, says NJ Ayuk.

up and rallying vital investments to give hope to hundreds of millions, NJ Ayuk said in the interview which also covered the recent AEW and his mission to Guyana.

What is your take on the African Energy Chamber on the 2023 edition of the African Energy Week?

NJ Ayuk: I think the Africa Energy Week 2023 edition was really, really important for Africa. We, the delegates, the government officials, the private sector and also the international community made it very clear that Africa has a right to develop its natural resources for the benefit of its people. We welcome, we embrace a transition, but it has to be a just transition and a just energy transition for Africa has to deal with 600 million people without electricity, 900

million without clean, clean cooking technologies. We cannot meet our sustainable development goals without that and without addressing these issues, but also that before we get to net zero, we need to get first to net energy poverty, because climate change and energy poverty are two sides of the same coin. Both energy development, energy growth were at the center of African Energy Week, where you saw new deals being signed for the development of energy, especially LNG, in Congo. We saw the development of new gas projects in Angola, Mozambique, Senegal, and South Africa. So, Africans and the companies were saying that we have to develop energy in a low carbon, cleaner, better, sustainable way to ensure that our people have jobs, have opportunity, and we create millions of dollars in revenue for

governments. We also have to build an enabling environment so that we don't have to pick, or governments don't have to pick winners and losers. I think that is what made this African Energy Week so unique. We came out very strong, and I'm excited about the results. I'm really, really excited, given the nature of how people and how the delegates responded and really engaged with one another, and left with a very strong committed spirit to go back and do more to develop our continent, Africa.

From the AEW, you had a working visit to Guyana and participated in the African Caribbean Trade and Investment Forum 2023. What is the message you took there?

NJ Ayuk: Guyana is so important. You know Guyana has gone from zero to hero in energy development and producing oil and natural gas,

which will come up very soon. Guyana is working together with African countries and the Caribbean. It is unique because first, we're going into COP28. From an energy perspective, we need a united voice, a global south voice to unite Africa, the Caribbean, and the African diaspora for trade and business.

As we go to COP28, we must have a solid position to ensure we do not leave one drop of hydrocarbons in the ground while transitioning. Don't forget the wealthy nations; they need to decarbonize while African and Caribbean nations need to industrialize, and we need to do that with baseload heavy industry, baseload energy that can drive heavy industry. What we saw in Guyana was Afreximbank putting out a lot of financing for small and medium enterprises. The majority of our

people in the Caribbean need to be able to access credit lines and financial opportunities to develop and grow their businesses.

And in the case of energy, they can get involved in energy because even when you have local content-driven opportunities, in places like Guyana, Trinidad, you will not be able to move on that without the finances that you need to hire people, import goods, import services, and be able to drive and do local manufacturing. We want to change that.

We had great meetings with the President of Guyana, the President of Barbados, and the Prime minister of St. Lucia. We also had representatives from many Caribbean nations coming together, high-level ministers, and cabinet secretaries. So, it was a very, very successful meeting. On the Chamber side, we participated in roundtables but also engaged in carrying out working visits to various facilities. Exxon Mobile has done an amazing job in really getting the platforms up and running, producing oil in a low-carbon, sustainable way in that country, engaging the communities, hiring new people, continuing to search for Guyanese citizens to see how they can train, hire, and have active recruitment. But also looking at the Guyanese diaspora to bring them right back into the country to join forces and develop the country and really, really drive better campaigns on this. So, Exxon Mobile in Guyana has been a blessing to the country, and a blessing to the people who need so much support more than ever. And we hope to see more of those kind of projects.

There will also be collaboration between Africans and Guyanese, especially on the service side, and investments on key critical issues, especially when it comes to forests, forest management, and the environment.

You're currently part of a high-profile AEC delegation



The AEC delegation had robust discussions with partners and stakeholders like EnerGeo Alliance.

on a working visit to Houston, Texas. May we get insights on some of the meetings and engagements that you've had there?

NJ Ayuk: Texas and the city of Houston is the energy capital of the world. There is no better place

after living in Guyana, being in this hemisphere, without being able to stop in Texas. So, I made a very big decision with the city of Houston's energy officials that are members of the AEC and to come right into Texas to engage with partners and stakeholders. First of all, they're



In the next few weeks, we're going to be announcing some big projects from our engagements in Houston, says NJ Ayuk.

members of the AEC, but also different energy alliances and the corporations that are producing in our continent, to meet with them, understand, listen to them, and understand some of the challenges that they face when it comes to operating in Africa. We also discussed new opportunities that could unleash Africa's energy potential to create jobs and opportunities for our young people.

And my hope is to be able to get some of these investments back into Africa. Investment into exploration for oil and natural gas, training and development of our young people, partnerships that build capacity, and building for governments and national oil companies. Also, investment with service companies to see

how they can do more local content, hire more people, and create more opportunities for Africans to be part of day-to-day energy productions and transparent technologies that we so need to be able to do a lot of work for ourselves.

So being in Texas is an amazing opportunity for us to really put Africa and Africa's message at the centre of energy in the world, but also look at different innovations that we are seeing right now with companies trying to operate in a low carbon environment. And my hope is to be able to get some of these investments back into Africa, investment into exploration for oil and natural gas investments, investment in investments into training and development of our young people, partnerships that build capacity building for governments and national oil companies, but also with service companies to see how they can do more local content. They can hire more people and also create more opportunities for Africans to be part of day-to-day energy productions and transferring technologies that we so need to be able to do a lot of work for ourselves. So, it's been a very, very successful Houston visit.

They have been very open, and their support base and the collaboration has gotten even stronger, met with the geological societies, and they are going to do some really big things. I think in the next few weeks, we're going to be announcing some big projects that are going to have some big-ticket items on some shovel-ready projects that we think could really take off between US companies and African companies. But also, some investment movements that are going to come in from Texas into the continent. And I think that's really critical at this moment.

What appraisal did you make of the American participation at this year's edition of the African Energy Week, and for companies and actors still in doubt, how do you make a serious pitch to them on the opportunities and attractiveness of Africa as an investment destination?

NJ Ayuk: I think Africa, which most of us call home. Is very attractive and it will continue to be attractive as long as we have resources. But then we shouldn't stand idly by and let the above ground risk issues become the biggest problems. We are not short of natural resources, but our above-ground risk issues have become areas of concern. So, we got to deal with the enabling environment issues. We got to deal with permitting issues, we got to deal with governance issues. And those issues are issues that the Chamber is going to be very firm in pushing. When we open up and do better things, it doesn't matter whether it is visas, whether it is other issues, it makes it enabling for companies coming from the US to invest and continue to put more money. And we're going to be drivers of that. African Energy Week was a showcase of that where we had a no-holds-barred conversation with US government officials, African businesses, US businesses with African officials and African businesses really having a strong conversation, very strong conversation on how we're going



The presence of Dep Asst Sec Joshua Volz at the AEW was a strong show of US partnership in working with Africa to improve its energy fortunes, says NJ Ayuk.

to develop the Africa of the future. Houston and the United States had one of the largest delegations coming from oil-producing companies, developers, service companies. They felt at home in Cape Town. They are going to turn back up in 2024. They really were a strong support base too and that is really important. For a lot of years, we have worked very hard to really have a strong courtship of a US investments into Africa and into the African Energy Week and I think it's paying dividends right now, but we must not stop there. There is still a lot of work to do. And we got to continue engaging because when we engage, we work with each other. Then we discover that it is possible to really do amazing things, especially when it comes to energy and Africa.

What did Chairman NJ Ayuk And African Energy Chamber make of the presence and message Of Deputy Assistant Secretary Josh Volz of the U.S. Energy Department?

NJ Ayuk: It was very important. We must be very thankful to the Biden administration for sending him to engage with African leaders, African NOCs, and the international

community at large. Mr. Volz, as the highest representative of the U.S. government, played a very unique role. A message that said they supported Africa with developing energy for the 600 million and more that don't have energy. Bigger than that, they came in, Mr. Volz came in and outlined significant initiatives in Ghana and different African countries that they are investing in clean energy. One of the unique things I felt was he talked to everybody and listened. He listened to a lot of what Africans were thinking. So that was a key part, and most people left very pleased with Mr. Volz being there.

He really was committed to saying, and he sent a very strong message that America is going to be a partner of Africa as it fights energy poverty, as it fights to use its critical minerals to industrialize, and it fights to grow. It was a renewed hope for a feeling that where a marriage was strong, Mr. Volz made the marriage with Africa stronger by being there and really passing a strong message that America is going to be Africa's partner.

America is going to stand shoulder to shoulder with Africa. America will not forget one of its most reliable

allies in our continent. But equally important, he was very candid on issues around governance, that Africa also has to step up. When we step up to do things better, they will meet us on the other side, and there will be American support.

So American support for Africa came out very strong, Mr. Volz and America's commitment will only grow. We in Africa also have an obligation to do some things that are going to really engineer that growth when it comes to creating an enabling environment, good governance, and meeting core values when it comes to issues around the rule of law, human rights, and opening up markets for American products, American business. As you see from that, after Mr. Volz left Cape Town, you also see different discussions around AGOA and extending the partnership even further. So, we were blessed to have him. Africa was blessed to see a strong message and commitment from the United States. It was the right thing to do, and we really welcomed that relationship. He was a strong advocate for Africa.

What next for you and the African Energy Chamber to cap off 2023 and roll out 2024?

NJ Ayuk: You know most people believe that walking this city, Houston, is going to be the end of 2023. No. We're going to have teams in Washington DC, and in New York. We will have teams in different places across the United States working with our members and producers to drive up energy growth energy partnerships, but bigger than that, we're going into COP28.

COP28 is going to be so important in Dubai to be able to drive up a strong African position that comes with partnership, with growth. That's what we're going to do, and we're going to make that happen. And I think that, when we're able to cap that, it will close out 2023 very big. I'm really looking forward to seeing how 2024 would be prosperous for Africa and driving energy across the continent.



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Leading with Vision: The Remarkable Journey of Cesare Canevese, CEO of Dietsmann

By Simnikiwe Hlatshaneni

In the heart of the vibrant African Energy Week, amidst the excitement and anticipation, Cesare Canevese, the CEO of Dietsmann, one of the largest service providers in the mining and energy sector in Africa, stood as a beacon of leadership. Drawing inspiration from a rich tapestry of experiences, family values, and faith, he reflects on the pillars of strong leadership in a multinational organization that profoundly impacts communities across the African continent.

African Energy Week, hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Center, brought together hundreds of delegates, all eager to explore partnership opportunities that could expand Dietsmann's operations into new African markets. With unwavering optimism about the future of energy in Africa, Canevese takes a moment to share the leadership lessons he has cultivated over the course of his three-decade career.

Canevese's journey at Dietsmann began a dozen years ago when he took a surprising turn, transitioning from an engineering background to become a recruiter. Working within Dietsmann's human resources department, Canevese found this experience to be instrumental in shaping his leadership style.

«I commit myself to be the face of the solution, ensuring that my responses are prompt and immediate,» Canevese emphasizes. «This approach is not only crucial for me but also for my team. I leave the irrational and uncontrollable aspects to the side.»

Dietsmann, a 46-year-old company, holds a distinguished position as the leading independent operation and maintenance (O&M) specialist for continuous-production plants in the oil and gas, conventional energy, and nuclear power generation sectors. The company is entrusted with maintaining hundreds of industrial



Cesare Canevese has worked his way through the ranks to the prestigious position of CEO at Dietsmann.

facilities worldwide.

Throughout his tenure at Dietsmann, Canevese has held diverse roles, from branch and regional area management to overseeing complex projects and tendering. The company has consistently prioritized its human capital as the most valuable investment. As a team leader, Canevese has tirelessly worked to create an environment that fosters inclusivity, embraces new ideas, and is sensitive to the unique needs of individuals. Despite his inherently independent spirit, family values remain the cornerstone of his sense of identity.

Canevese's journey into leadership

wasn't just confined to the corporate world. «I left my home at the age of 18 to join the navy, seeking education and a career path,» he recounts. «Fourteen years ago, I transitioned to the private sector after serving as an officer aboard Italian Navy fleet ships. I had the opportunity to travel extensively, although not quite the seven seas, and after several years, I felt the urge to challenge myself with something new. This quest for novelty is yet another aspect of my personality – always seeking new horizons.»

Born and raised in San Remo, Italy, Canevese's upbringing was marked by simplicity and togetherness. «We had just a few things to live by,» he

reflects. «We cherished spending time together. This is a principle I've carried into my current family – my wife and kids. It embodies our lifestyle – finding contentment in what we have, without extravagant desires or unattainable dreams, while always striving to evolve and appreciating the gifts that life bestows upon us.»

As a former Italian Navy officer, Canevese is well-acquainted with the rigors of discipline and routine. However, his mind is a wellspring of creativity. In his leisure hours, he engages in meticulous and technically demanding painting. Additionally, he crafts intricate wooden models, often recreating the navy ships he once served aboard. Despite nearly a decade passing since his last countryside ride on a dirt bike, Canevese remains unwavering in his commitment to self-reinvention and personal growth.

Faith serves as a guiding compass in Canevese's life, allowing him to navigate through challenges that may seem insurmountable. While he identifies as Catholic, he maintains an open-minded perspective toward other belief systems.

«I strongly believe in a higher power,» Canevese asserts. «I believe there is a supernatural element in our lives. While we may exert some control over certain aspects of our existence, there are forces beyond human intervention. My belief in God is the prism through which I understand and make sense of these aspects.»

At the realm of multinational leadership, where the impact radiates far and wide, Cesare Canevese's unique blend of experience, values, and faith stands as a guiding light for those who aspire to lead with resonance and purpose. His journey encapsulates the essence of leadership – being the face of the solution, embracing family values, and having faith in the face of the unknown.

Tanzania: A Competitive Edge In DP World's Port's Deal

By Jean Pierre Afadhali

Global ports operator DP World has recently signed a 30-year concession agreement with Tanzania to manage the Dar Es Salaam port, as it seeks to grow its presence in Africa and boost supply chain.

The latest investments from the UAE firm into the port of Dar Es Salaam could give the East African country a competitive advantage over its neighbor's Kenya as Nairobi hopes to attract more businesses to its Mombasa port that is crucial for many landlocked countries in East and Central Africa.

The DP World's concession was announced as Kenya Ports Authority embarks on plans to lease some of its key assets as part of an ambitious plan by the Kenyan government to revitalize the country's maritime industry through public private partnerships.

Now, it appears the mega investments project to modernize the Dar Es Salaam port will increase competition with the country's Neighbor-Mombasa port and give traders from landlocked countries in the region opportunities for several choices.

"The development will deliver trade opportunities for the region, connecting East Africa and broader



Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan signing deal with DP World. Photo credit DPWorld.

sub-Saharan Africa with global markets, driving economic growth, job creation, enhanced access to products and service, and creating value for all our stakeholders," said Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, DP World Group Chairman and CEO.

According to some observers, "chronic inefficiency, corruption

allegations and competition in freight management by neighbouring Kenya are some of the underlying reasons why Tanzania President Samia Suluhu signed off on the agreement."

UAE is competing with global powers in Africa amid increasing investments in major ports management business.

However, the signed deal had sparked controversy in Tanzania when it was first announced over the lack of enough details. The East African country engaged in what appeared to be a crackdown on critics of the Dar Es Salaam Port's management agreements.

Legal experts, opposition and the catholic church had strongly opposed the deal citing gaps in the contract, but a Tanzanian court thrown out the case challenging the agreement. Tanzania's president Samia Suluhu Hassan vehemently supported the agreement with DP World saying she would not enter in a deal that would not benefit her country.

In the first phase of a multiphase investment plan, DP World will make an initial investment of over \$250 million to upgrade the port as part of the agreement signed with the Tanzania Ports Authority, Dubai-based DP World said on Sunday.

Various observers have said Initial deal announcement did not reveal crucial details which is said to have angered the public and some opinion



The latest investments from the UAE firm into the port of Dar Es Salaam could give the East African country a competitive advantage over its neighbor's Kenya.

leaders in the East African country.

According to Tanzanian economist Beatrice Kimaro, the DP World agreement will create employment opportunities and Tanzania will also raise revenues. They [DP World] have mentioned that the revenue will increase from TZS 7.8 trillion up to TZS 26.5 trillion up to 2032, she said in a recent BBC interview.

“People were asking and lamenting about these issues because it was not mentioned before,” explained the Tanzanian economist. “But through these three contacts people are aware of what is going on between the Tanzanian government and the DP World.”

One of the issues the deal raised was about the fate of Tanzania Port Authority staff after the new management takeover. Now, it has been reported that the Tanzania Ports Authority employees will be absorbed by DP World.

“The Tanzania Ports Authority will be a shareholder of the port concessionaire, and there will be no job losses for employees at the port authority,” stated Professor Makame Mbarawa, Tanzania’s Minister of Transport in a statement.

According to a statement released by DP World, during the concession period the investment could increase to \$1 billion, which

will include potential investments in temperature-controlled storage to enhance Tanzania’s agricultural sector, as well as greater connections to rail-linked logistics.

Investments will also potentially include the future development of a special economic zone together with the broader port’s logistics sector, the port operator said.

Efficiency management

The port operator will also work with Tanzania Ports Authority to facilitate faster cargo handling and clearing, “strengthening Dar es Salaam’s critical role as the maritime gateway for green energy metals from

the copper belt in Southern-Central Africa”.

Through the agreement Tanzania hopes to increase port’s efficiency.

Enhanced efficiency of the port will attract more shipping lines and bigger ships into Dar es Salaam, which will reduce freight costs for importers and exporters in Tanzania, DP World added.

DP World is expected to work with Tanzania Ports Authority to facilitate faster cargo handling and clearing.

DP World currently manages approximately 9 per cent of the world’s handling capacity and is among the top five global ports operators.

Inside DP World's African Galaxy With Mohammed Akoojee

By Ajong Mbapndah L

DP World is focused on enhancing Africa’s supply chain by leveraging its global and local expertise to drive the continent’s economic growth through trade, says Mohammed Akoojee, CEO & MD for Sub-Saharan Africa. Fielding questions from PAV, Mohammed Akoojee says DP World’s Imperial business has been operating in Africa for over 70 years and during that time has established extensive knowledge and expertise in terms of operating African markets.

“With a reach spanning 48 countries across sub-Saharan Africa, DP World has the relevant experience, skillset, and knowledge of operating in Africa. DP World offers a comprehensive suite of solutions, unparalleled expertise and experience and scale, says Akoojee.

On the Tanzania Ports deal that was met by some with mixed reactions, Mohammed Akoojee said DP World’s investment will have a positive impact on the country’s socioeconomic development, in terms of job creation and increased access to products and services, among other benefits.

“DP World will invest more than \$250 million to upgrade the port over



We have a presence in 48 countries in the region through owned operations and partnership networks supported by some 27,000 employees says Mohammed Akoojee.

the first five years and the Investment could increase to \$1 billion during the concession period alongside hinterland logistics projects,” Akoojee said.

May we get an introduction of

DP World and its operations or networks in Africa?

Mohammed Akoojee: Trade is at the centre of the global economy, creating opportunities and improving the quality of life for millions of people around the world. DP World is here

to make trade flow better, changing what’s possible for the customers and communities we serve globally. With more than 106,000 employees across 75 countries, we are pushing trade further and faster towards a seamless supply chain that’s fit for the

future. By integrating our physical infrastructure with cutting-edge technology, we create efficient end-to-end solutions, pushing the sector towards better ways to trade, minimising disruptions from the factory floor to the customer's door.

DP World's service offering in sub-Saharan Africa comprises Logistics (parks and economic zones, contract logistics, freight management), Market Access and Ports & Terminals. We have a presence in 48 countries in the region through owned operations and partnership networks, supported by c.27,000 employees. With a fleet of more than 6,300 vehicles, over 260,000 points of sale, 1.5 million m² of warehouse space and total TEU capacity at ports of over 2 million, our reach is unparalleled.

What has the experience typically been like for DP World in doing business across Africa, where have you seen progress, and what are the challenges faced?

Mohammed Akoojee: DP World is focused on enhancing Africa's supply chain by leveraging our global and local expertise to drive the continent's economic growth through trade. Specifically, DP World's Imperial business has been operating in Africa for over 70 years and during that time has established extensive knowledge and expertise in terms of operating African markets.

Africa has seen socioeconomic progress and still has significant growth potential. The continent has experienced strong growth driven by an emerging consumer class and resources. The compound annual growth rate for real GDP is expected to grow by 4.3% between 2022 and 2027. Moreover, Africa's population is predominantly youthful, with 70% of it being less than 30 years old, whilst only 3% is older than 65 years. Importantly, albeit relatively low to other regions, intra-Africa trade is growing at 3.9% (CAGR).

However, Africa still faces key challenges including the significant



DP World's investments will have a positive impact for Tanzania's socioeconomic development, says Mohammed Akoojee

infrastructure gap that the continent faces, which limits sustainable economic growth.

In the face of competition from other actors and partners, what does DP World offer Africa differently, why should countries prioritize working with DP world as opposed to some other companies?

Mohammed Akoojee: DP World offers a compelling client value proposition, and our vision is to create end-to-end integrated global supply chain solutions from factory floor to customer door. In Africa, we provide customers with access into and out of the continent, by providing integrated end-to-end supply chain solutions in key markets, which is critical to giving customers visibility, reliability, and flexibility of their supply chains. In addition, we operate in key industries of the economy including healthcare and pharmaceuticals, automotive, industrial, technology and perishables among others.

With a reach spanning 48 countries across sub-Saharan Africa, DP World has the relevant experience, skillset,

and knowledge of operating in Africa. DP World offers a comprehensive suite of solutions, unparalleled expertise and experience and scale in SSA including:

- Parks and economic zones
- Freight management
- Contract Logistics
- Market Access
- Ports & Terminals

DP World's local relevance and expertise, coupled with its world class infrastructure, allows us to meet our client and principals' needs across the continent. We integrate best-in-class facilities, multimodal transport solutions, digital solutions and market access capabilities into seamless end-to-end supply chains.

What further differentiates us from our competitors is that we develop special economic zones next to our ports. In addition to the job creation opportunities for the host country, these economic zones streamline trade by centralising end-to-end transport, warehousing and tax-effective trading solutions in one place while investing in the development and growth of our countries and communities of operation. This ensures that

supply chains are more accessible, sustainable and affordable for all.

Our purpose is to make the world flow and change what's possible for everyone. We aim to achieve this with fast, sustainable movement of products through a single platform for trade.

Could we get insights into the recent partnership that was signed with the Republic of Tanzania?

Mohammed Akoojee: DP World signed a 30-year concession agreement with the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) to operate and modernise the multi-purpose Dar es Salaam Port, connecting Tanzania and the wider region to global markets.

The concession agreement was signed between Mr Plasduce Mkeli Mbossa, Director General of the TPA and Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, in the presence of H.E.

Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The concession to operate and modernise the Dar es Salaam Port was awarded to DP World with the primary objective of optimising the Port's operations to improve transport and logistics services throughout Tanzania and its hinterland. This is the first phase of a multi-phase investment plan. DP World will initially invest more than \$250 million to upgrade the port and the investment could increase to \$1 billion during the concession period, alongside hinterland logistics projects. This investment will have a positive impact for Tanzania's socioeconomic development, in terms of job creation and increased access to products and services, among other benefits.

How challenging was it for you to get this particular contract or partnership and what does Tanzania stand to gain from it?

Mohammed Akoojee: The Emirate of Dubai and Government of Tanzania signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement last year which allowed

DP World to enter into bi-lateral negotiations for the port concession. From a process perspective, we followed all due process in line with the Inter-Governmental Agreement.

DP World is excited about the prospect of running the Dar es Salaam Port. This is a key part of our vision to transform African trade and helping to improve the port's operations will enhance the flow of trade across East Africa and beyond.

In addition to the port, DP World's interest is also focused on improving transport and logistics services throughout Tanzania and its hinterland with the investment being the first step in a multi-phase engagement that could potentially see DP World invest up to \$1 billion within Tanzania.

Other potential follow-on investments include:

Investing in cold and cool storage to enable Tanzania to export more of its high value agricultural production (e.g. avocados, chilli etc.).

Rail-linked logistics platforms across the country to enable Tanzania to benefit from the government's massive investment in rail (approx. \$6bn). Currently more than 95% of cargo enters/leaves ports by truck.

Developing a special economic zone to support value addition to Tanzania's agricultural production.

Now, there has been some stiff opposition or push back to this deal. How does DP World respond to critics and reassure Tanzanians that the deal is also a win for them and not just DP World?

Mohammed Akoojee: DP World's investment will have a positive impact for Tanzania's socioeconomic development, in terms of job creation and increased access to products and services, among other benefits.

DP World will invest more than \$250 million to upgrade the port over the first five years and the Investment could increase to \$1 billion during



DP World will invest more than \$250 million to upgrade the port over the first five years and the Investment could increase to \$1 billion during the concession period.

the concession period, alongside hinterland logistics projects.

May we know the impact that the criticisms from Tanzania had on DP World and the morale of it its team in other parts of the continent?

Mohammed Akoojee: There was no adverse impact on DP World and the morale of our employees in the region. Our employees are aware that we had followed all due process in line with the Inter-Governmental Agreement signed between the Government of Tanzania and the Emirate of Dubai, which allowed DP World to enter into bi-lateral negotiations for the port concession and the team is excited about the positive impact this port will have on Tanzania.

Based off your experiences on the continent, any suggestions on how the investment climate could be made better or more attractive to investors?

Mohammed Akoojee: The investment climate can be improved through better governance, institutional capacity, adequate infrastructure and prudent macroeconomic policy, among other factors.

For the good business that DP World seems to be doing in Africa, how does the company give back to the community?

Mohammed Akoojee: As a responsible corporate citizen, DP World prioritises making a meaningful impact on the lives of people in all our regions of operation across the world. In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), DP World invests in social impact projects in communities across many of its markets, supporting upliftment of people of all demographics and backgrounds.

Through this ongoing investment over many years, DP World's intention is to support a more equitable and sustainable society,

with thriving communities. As a result of these efforts, DP World has provided support to over 2.5 million beneficiaries globally since 2014. In 2022, our charitable donations and community investments totaled over \$17.5 million, of which \$4.9 million was in the Middle East and Africa region. Our Imperial business, which DP World acquired in March 2022, additionally spent \$1.37 million on community investment in F2022.

After Tanzania, what next for DP World, any other deals or projects coming up?

Mohammed Akoojee: DP World continues to make significant investments in ports and logistics on the continent to realise its Africa strategy and growth ambitions, which aim to boost economic growth and uplift local communities and businesses through enabling trade and connecting markets to the global trade ecosystem.

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Building to Last: Nurturing Excellence and Crafting Future African Leaders at United Bank for Africa (UBA)

By Tony O. Elemelu*

UBA has created a six-month programme, identifying the best and brightest young men and women from across Africa.

Some moments resonate as profoundly remarkable in life, where dreams are born from humble beginnings and transformed into extraordinary realities.

As I stood before 700 UBA graduate trainees, drawn from across Africa, I thought of the long journey that brought me to where I am today. A journey that began with the same vigour, dedication, and hope that I saw in these young Lions and Lionesses.

I had the privilege of having my one-on-one induction session with UBA's new graduate trainees on Tuesday. I love these sessions, as I eagerly anticipate interacting with the brilliant minds, that become part of our UBA-Tribe.

I, too, started my career as a trainee many years ago, equipped with little more than ambition, a thirst for knowledge, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. I walked that same path as these bright minds, who have now become part of Africa's Global Bank. Countless challenges and triumphs have marked the way from that moment to this day, each contributing to the story that brought us together.

In these sessions, I make it a point to share fragments of my journey, detailing my processes, highlighting my triumphs, and even discussing my lowest moments.

This practice isn't just a personal reflection; it's a conscious effort to ensure everyone can learn from the dedication and hard work that has marked my career. Through these personal stories, bonds are forged, and lessons are imparted.

This ethos of transparency and shared learning is central to my approach and symbolic of the values that drive UBA's success. As an



Tony O. Elemelu is Group Chairman, United Bank for Africa.

institution, every stage of one's career should be marked by growth, mentorship, and the continuous pursuit of excellence.

This same excellence has driven me throughout my career – a vision of creating a bank for all, a bank for Africa and an environment where talent is nurtured, dreams are realized, and excellence is celebrated. It is a vision that has inspired me to create a world class trainee programme, that will nurture future leaders, who mirror the passion and dedication I demonstrated as a trainee myself.

But beyond nurturing future leaders, the UBA GMAP – our bespoke graduate trainee programme, is making significant strides in addressing critical societal issues.

The experience reinforced to me the criticality of institution building. In front of me were a generation of new leaders. UBA has created a six-month programme, identifying the best and brightest young men and women from across Africa. We have invested in and equipped our youth.

We have done well and done good.

Our example illustrates why my management strategy and philosophy also address our common African future.

1. Addressing the issue of unemployment through Job Creation

The UBA Graduate Trainee Programme goes beyond its primary goal of nurturing future leaders; it also plays a vital role in addressing the pervasive curse of unemployment across the African continent.

Youth unemployment remains a significant challenge, and UBA actively contributes to the solution. The Group is creating real, tangible jobs for young Africans by providing opportunities through this programme. These jobs not only benefit the individuals involved, but also positively impact our immediate environment and stimulate the economic growth of our continent's economy.

2. Creating opportunities for

and Investing in Young Africans

UBA's commitment to developing and empowering young talent is a response to the pressing need for opportunities on our continent. GMAP is designed to identify and nurture the potential of young Africans, giving them access to training, mentorship, and real-world experiences essential for their personal and professional growth. It is building to last.

By investing in these young minds, UBA is shaping the banking industry's future and offering hope and prospects to a generation of African youth eager to contribute to their communities and the broader society.

3. UBA - A Bank for All Ages

The UBA GMAP is compelling evidence that UBA is for all; we are a dynamic and forward-thinking institution dedicated to youth development, which is an integral part of our identity as Africa's Global Bank.

By investing in the younger generation, we continue to affirm

that we are leaders and role models in fostering innovation, diversity, and inclusivity in the financial sector.

I am filled with pride in the UBA Executive Management team and gratitude as I witness this dream of a world-class trainee programme come to life. A programme that represents the culmination of years of hard work, determination, and unwavering belief in the potential of our future leaders. A total of 107,310 young Africans applied for the programme. After a rigorous selection process, we shortlisted to 47,639. The banking school kicked off with 775 trainee and we successfully graduated 666 young Africans eager to conquer.

This programme is a testament to the incredible journey that each graduating member will embark upon – a journey of growth, learning, and transformation.

To the new members of the UBA Tribe, your journey, much like mine, will be filled with moments of challenge and triumph, and each experience will contribute to your growth. Embrace these opportunities



as steppingstones toward your extraordinary reality. just as I have been fortunate to have remarkable journey. mentors who shaped my path.

Embark on this journey with Your dedication, hard work, and pursuit of excellence will shape your both eyes open to the opportunities and challenges ahead and the future and the future of UBA and the understanding that we are here to financial industry. support and empower you every step, Welcome to the beginning of your

#TOEWay
* Tony O. Elemelu, Group Chairman, United Bank for Africa

World Leaders Must Act With Courage And Vision To Safeguard Ukraine's Humanitarian Efforts

By Dr Christopher Fomunyoh*

In March this year, I travelled to Mombasa, Kenya, to see for myself the first ship carrying 30,000 tonnes of Ukrainian grain to the people of that East African country, impacted by an unprecedented drought in some of its northern counties. The ceremony was chaired by the Deputy President of Kenya, Rigathi Gachagua, surrounded by cabinet ministers, high-level government officials, diplomats from donor countries and thousands of Kenyan citizens. As Deputy President Gachagua received the cargo, he thanked President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his #GrainfromUkraine initiative under which the delivery was made.

During my visit, I had an opportunity to meet and listen to Kenyans from all walks of life. I heard many of their personal stories



Dr. Christopher Fomunyoh is Goodwill Ambassador #GrainFromUkraine initiative.

– some of them tragic and shocking. Stories that tell us the human cost of hunger: Youngsters forced to leave school to work, earn money and feed themselves and their families. Parents skipping meals despite working around the clock, so their children could eat. Mothers unable to breastfeed their babies, their bodies too lacking in sustenance to produce milk. Frail elderly people left alone for days while their relatives travelled miles from home to find food.

The broader picture into countries impacted by conflict such as Ethiopia, Somalia and now Sudan, is even more terrifying. Today, a fifth of the African population is undernourished, and 55 million children under five are stunted due to severe malnutrition. Recently, more than 20 million more people have been pushed into extreme hunger – equivalent to the entire population of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe combined -- and the United Nations declared food security a global priority.

In Kenya, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Somalia, communities face the worst food crisis in 40 years. In Somalia alone, 4.3 million people are expected to face greater food insecurity between October and December this year.

A major contributor to these devastating ripples is the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. When Russia launched its illegal invasion in February 2022, its navy blockaded Ukraine's Black Sea port, trapping more than 20 million tons of grain meant for export. Many countries felt the immediate negative consequences of that blockade, such as Yemen which paid a devastating price as wheat is a crucial part of the country's diet, and approximately 40% of its grain was imported from Ukraine. But Ukraine could not export to Yemen anymore.

To continue Ukraine's commitment to act responsibly and help countries in Africa and the global South more broadly in a time of dire need, President Zelenskyy launched the "Grain from Ukraine" (GfU) humanitarian programme in partnership with the UN World



Grain for Africa Ambassador Chris Fomunyoh was recently in Mombasa, Kenya as part of a high profile team that received a ship carrying 30,000 metric tons from Ukraine.

Food Programme, in November 2022. Its goal is to ensure the safe transportation of grain through Ukrainian ports and delivery to countries in need, to tackle global famine and food insecurity.

As part of the GfU initiative, 170K tons of Ukrainian grain have been delivered to Yemen and the African countries of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Thousands more were planned to be delivered, but that was not to be.

Russia's repeated air strikes on Ukrainian ports including Odesa, Reni, and Izmail, and destruction of hundreds of thousands of stocked grain supplies have disrupted these plans.

For African countries grappling

with multiple challenges, food insecurity could be the 'straw that breaks the camel's back.' We don't want family structures to fall apart in Africa. We don't want children to be forced out of school to take on the responsibility of feeding their families. African children have the right to be breastfed by their mothers, and their mothers have the right to nutritious food. We need to guarantee food security so Africans can focus on other development priorities that would allow this continent of 1.2 billion inhabitants with tremendous human and natural resources and potential to make a meaningful contribution to global peace, security, and development.

Weaponising food is one of the

starkest disregards of international humanitarian law.

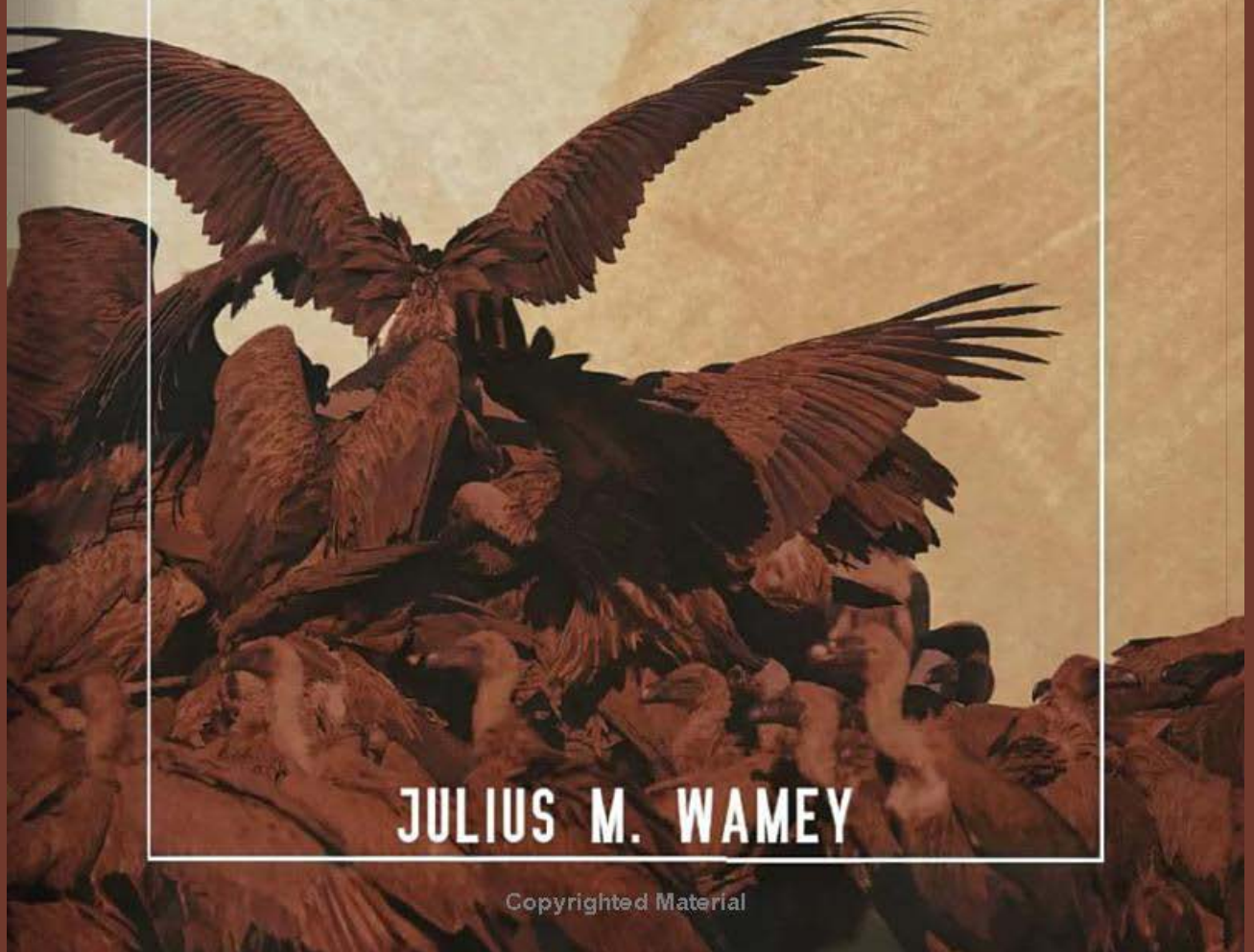
Global leaders will convene on October 16, to mark World Food Day. They must act with courage and vision against the Russian war on Ukraine and its repercussions on other continents across the globe. Ukraine is determined to continue its humanitarian endeavors despite its own herculean challenges. The world must speak with one voice to condemn Russian attacks on grain ports and grain stocks, on humanitarian programmes and on our children's future.

*Dr. Christopher Fomunyoh is Goodwill Ambassador #GrainFromUkraine initiative.

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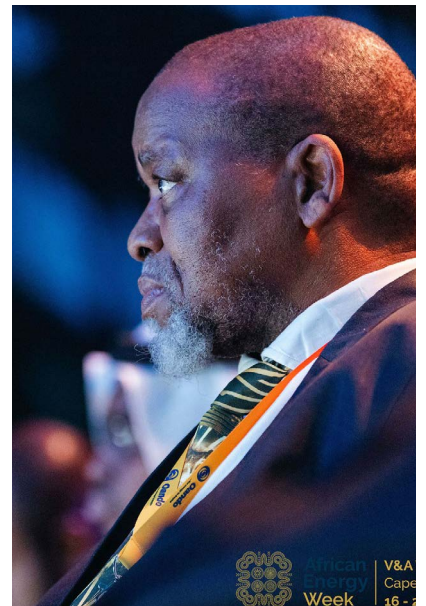
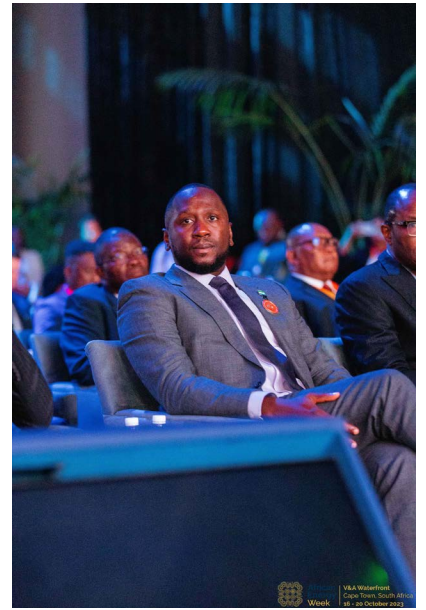
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Dr Rufaro Nyakatawa-A Woman With Passion To Reshape Africa's Financial Landscape

By Wallace Mawire

Based in Johannesburg, Dr Rufaro Nyakatawa's primary focus is developing the strategy for Jersey Finance's engagement in the South African market. She also plays a vital role in supporting the organisation's wider activity across the continent. An international speaker and thought leader, Dr Nyakatawa has been interviewed on various platforms including the BBC, CNBC, ENCA and various publications. She champions women's issues as an Advisory Board Member of Women in Tech (SA Chapter) and an International Campaign Advisor for the Cherie Blair Foundation's 100,000 Women Campaign Board, among others. She was recently elected by members to the Board of Directors of the Financial Planning Institute of Southern Africa (FPI), she is a Non-Executive Director at Masthead and is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP®), CFA member and SAVCA member.



Jersey has strong connections in Africa with over 40 finance firms offering expertise for inbound FDI to support African infrastructure and growth, says Dr Rufaro Nyakatawa.

Could you begin by sharing a bit about your background and the journey in the finance industry that led you to your current position as a driving force for change?

My journey in finance started by chance. I was seeking an opportunity to get into management, and I got an opportunity to join a management development programme in one of the top four financial services companies in South Africa. I have worked in the finance industry for more than 23 years, with experience in financial advice, private wealth management and private equity.

A pivotal moment in my career when I first realised the impact I could have as 'an agent of change' on the continent was when I was seconded to West Africa to set up a

wealth management business for a Pan-African bank with a presence in 34 countries. I spearheaded the framework and supported the creation of a business to help people make good decisions about their finances, protecting their finances for future generations. It was a very fulfilling job.

Today, I am proud of my contribution to the continent's economic development by enabling positive conversations on the financial landscape in Africa in terms of capital-raising and wealth diversification, connecting businesses to African opportunities and being a thought leader on women's financial inclusion.

Jersey plays a pivotal role in reshaping Africa's financial landscape. Could you elaborate

on the key aspects of this role and how it contributes to financial inclusion and equity across the continent?

As an international finance centre (IFC) made of substance and stability, Jersey has built strong connections with Africa and there are more than 40 finance firms in Jersey offering expertise to enable inbound FDI to support African infrastructure and growth, as well as supporting African investors and families with their outbound investment activities and portfolio diversification.

In respect of financial inclusion, Jersey plays a critical role as a facilitator of economic activity globally. Capital intermediated through Jersey supports £6 billion of Africa's GDP and on average annually, between 2017 and 2020, capital intermediated in Jersey supported

916,000 jobs in Africa.

Women's leadership has been identified as a transformative force in international financial reform. How do you see women's unique perspectives and approaches influencing global financial challenges?

Women in leadership isn't a new term for successful women in finance. Organising, multi-tasking, negotiating, empathy, resilience, drive – these are skills women have always been associated with. Today, the focus has shifted to channelling and leveraging these qualities to be positive influences as women in leadership positions.

In the last seven years, the percentage of women in senior management positions in Africa has increased by more than 10% between 2017 and 2023 (Source: Women in Business 2023,

Grant Thornton). However, this will not happen overnight. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs estimates it will take 140 years to achieve equal representation in leadership in the workplace.

Creating an environment that fosters women in entrepreneurship is a vital driver of growth in Africa. Women bring the diversity dividend and it has been shown that women starting up in business tend to provide an immediate contribution to the economy. Women founded businesses can deliver higher returns to investors, promote womenpreneurship and inspire their societal peers, which can have a positive knock-on effect on economic prosperity. (Source: InclusiveBusiness.net, Finding Innovative Funding, 2021).

To help increase the representation of women in decision-making

positions, women must lift each other and support each other as they advance in their careers. The more platforms we provide to inspire other women, the more influence women will have in decision-making, whatever the industry.

Could you provide specific examples of how women's contributions in the finance industry have led to tangible transformations in the international financial sector?

I am an Advisory Board Member of Women in Tech (South Africa Chapter) and an International Campaign Advisor for the Cherie Blair Foundation's 100,000 Women Campaign Board. I have met many influential women throughout my career and involvement in these organisations.

I regularly speak at the annual Me Time events (Me Time is a women's organisation which aims to boost women's confidence).

This year, I am also a speaker at a 100 Women in Finance event – they are a global organisation of which I am also a member.

I want to inspire women through hosting platforms where they can hear stories of women in leadership positions and mentor young women, including my daughters. I aim to empower women to find their paths.

In August, I hosted a Jersey Finance Women in Leadership event in Johannesburg, focussing on the personal journeys of leading professional women who offer unique perspectives regarding their lived experiences in the global finance industry.

One of the speakers at this event was Moushmi Patel, Executive Director and Partner at Sanari Capital – a private equity firm headquartered in South Africa – with an investment focus in tech, education, health and agriculture in Africa. Sanari Capital stands out because it is women-led and majority black and women-owned. We also had Sindi Mabaso-Koyana, Executive Chairperson of African Women Chartered Accountants (AWCA) Investment



The more platforms we provide to inspire other women, the more influence women will have in decision-making, says Dr Rufaro Nyakatawa.

Holdings, on the event panel. Sindi founded the AWCA, which is also a women-only organisation. So, these are some clear examples of how African women in the financial sector are transforming and addressing the diversity and impact agenda.

What strategies or initiatives have you observed that effectively leverage women's leadership to drive positive change in financial systems and structures?

IFC's such as Jersey provide the environment and platform to leverage women's leadership to affect positive change.

Jersey's extensive experience in providing support to business owners, corporate and families globally, Jersey's IFC has the international pedigree to appeal to women and entrepreneurs across Africa, helping them to grow and protect their wealth.

One example of how Jersey's IFC supports sustainable growth in Africa is Standard Bank -who chose to launch a foundation in Jersey to support the African Women Impact

Fund (AWIF) – an initiative which will create a sustainable investment platform to grow the number of women asset managers in Africa. The fund was created with the intent to strengthen the economic empowerment of African women who will drive economic growth, create jobs and enable prosperity. Through the AWIF foundation, Jersey's IFC shows that it is an enabler of funding to African-led organisations in a way that is less demanding and more equitable.

The upcoming event aims to inspire and empower the next generation in the finance industry. How do you envision this inspiration translating into practical and sustainable changes within the sector?

The theme for the 2023 Jersey Finance Perspectives: Women in Leadership event was based on women leading meaningful changes to make an impact beyond financial returns. Sharing career stories and lessons learnt creates a community - building networks among like-

minded professionals. We keep everyone involved in these events exclusively female, from the speakers to the photographers and of course the journalists. The purpose is always to inspire change in the finance industry to create a more inclusive future for the next generation.

What advice would you give to young professionals aspiring to make a meaningful impact in the finance industry, particularly in terms of promoting inclusivity and positive change?

To make a meaningful impact and promote inclusivity in the finance industry, aspiring young professionals should prioritise building purposeful networks with mentors and peers who share your commitment.

By embodying resilience and determination early on in your career, not only you can excel in your finance career, but you can also drive lasting positive change for a more equitable and socially responsible industry.

South Africa is often recognized as a driver of change within the finance industry. Could you shed light on the unique role that South Africa plays in shaping the broader narrative of global financial transformation?

South Africa is the highest-ranking entrepreneurial African country (Source: News and World Report, 2022). Small to medium enterprises support the nation's gross value-add (equal to GDP before taxes and subsidies). Contributions by SMEs in South Africa increased from 18% in 2010 to 40% in 2020 (Source: OECD, March 2022).

The financial services industry in South Africa is mature and sophisticated, with plenty of expertise and knowledge built over the years. Decision-makers can better harness the expertise and skillsets of those working in the industry to support the country's and the continent's future growth.

At a roundtable in Stellenbosch, which I hosted alongside Jersey

Finance's Head of Funds, Elliot Refson, during which we spoke with both South African funds experts about how the recent greylisting of South Africa by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) will impact investors and fund managers.

Investors may perceive South Africa as a higher-risk jurisdiction in which to do business, and they are likely to increase their due diligence requirements.

And for fund managers, the recent greylisting of South Africa will mean that they must consider a broader range of factors when choosing the optimal jurisdiction for their funds - including the regulatory environment, political stability, ease of doing business, and reputation of the jurisdiction.

In the context of South Africa, what specific challenges and

opportunities do you see that have the potential to influence the trajectory of financial transformation across the African continent?

As we see globally, environmental issues remain a massive threat to South Africa and the broader continent, with the recent record-breaking floods and heat waves. South Africa is directly and indirectly exposed to the transition risks associated with climate change, amplified by the dependence on minerals, energy, and mining. On the positive side, the opportunities for Africa are tremendous; it is the second largest continent in the world in terms of size and population after Asia, and 60% of the population is under 25 years old. There is also vast potential for sustainable agriculture due to Africa's abundant untapped natural resources.

In Jersey, as a world-leading international finance centre, we very much feel the responsibility to leverage our expertise and capital to support the transition to an environmentally and socially sustainable global economy. Jersey's vision is that: "By 2030, Jersey will be recognised by its clients, key stakeholders and other partners as the leading sustainable international finance centre in the markets it serves." To support this in 2021, we successfully launched our Sustainable Finance Strategy. This strategy titled 'Jersey for Good' sets out our long-term plan and vision for Jersey's finance industry as well as a two-year roadmap to accelerate this journey towards a sustainable future.

As we conclude, what are your hopes for the future of the finance industry, particularly with regards to the themes

of inclusion, equity, and transformative change?

Africa is open for business and is very fertile for impact investing. There are considerable opportunities to make change and positively impact communities for a better Africa.

Entrepreneurship contributes significantly towards the GDP of African countries and contributes towards a stable environment for capital-raising, which goes a long way towards fostering entrepreneurship on the continent.

A lot of African governments are deliberately increasing the number of women taking seats in parliament, which helps in making policies that foster gender equity and results in more women being able to participate in the economic development of the continent.

Relaxation of Visa Restrictions a New Pathway for Deeper African Cooperation

By Prince Kurupati

African nations in the recent past have demonstrated a clear will and desire to move away from spewing words to taking concrete action when it comes to seeking and implementing African solutions for African problems. One of the main challenges that has bedevilled Africa for so long has been a reluctance to embrace each other in the spirit of brotherhood preferring to prioritise trade and cooperation with foreign nations. Trade volumes for many African countries demonstrate this as most inflows are from Eastern and Western nations even though the African continent on its own can self-sustain.

The enhanced desire to cooperate has been described by many African diplomats and political analysts as the renaissance of the Pan-Africanism spirit. Perhaps the clearest example of this is the emergence of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) IN 2021. The AFCFTA among other things was created to provide a single market for goods and



President of Angola Joao Lourenco and the Kenyan President William Ruto have agreed to ease visa restrictions between their two countries.

services facilitated by the movement of persons to deepen the economic integration of the African continent. Inversely, the rationale behind creating AFCFTA was that an increase

in intra-African trade would in turn have positive spillover effects that will positively impact African countries hence leading to the socio-economic development of the continent.

In the same spirit of Pan Africanism, African leaders drawing inspiration from the early successes of the AFCFTA are taking worthy steps to ease visa restrictions with each other.



Any African can get on a plane to Rwanda whenever they wish, and they will not pay a thing to enter our country, says President Kagame.

In the past couple of years, several such partnerships have been entered into by many nations. This past month, the President of Angola Joao Lourenco and the Kenyan President William Ruto met in Nairobi Kenya and agreed to ease visa restrictions between their two countries.

Addressing the media after their meeting, Kenyan President William Ruto that trade between Kenya and Angola has increased immensely over the past four years. The potential for more cooperation between the two countries is even higher and as such, to spur the trade volumes, the two nations saw it fit to ease visa restrictions and hence unlock the underlying potential. "There is a huge scope for these numbers to go up if we strengthen our interconnection," President Ruto said in relation to the current Kenya-Angola trade figures.

The proposed plans as relayed by President Ruto will see residents of both Kenya and Angola not requiring a visa upon landing at their destination. Angola has demonstrated that it's ready to handle higher volumes of trade thanks to the completion of the \$3.8 billion airport in Luanda. The Agostinho Neto International Airport can handle 15 million passengers per year and up to 130,000 tons of cargo annually.

Earlier in July, Kenyan President William Ruto also adopted a visa-free

regime with Congo-Brazzaville. While addressing members of Parliament on a state visit to Congo-Brazzaville, President Ruto said, "We, the Government of Kenya, have already decided that nationals of Congo-Brazzaville will no longer need visas to enter Kenya. This will enable us to increase trade between our two countries. Our peoples, businessmen and others need this".

The news on the visa-free regime between Kenya and Angola comes just a few weeks after Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo entered into the same deal. The two neighbouring countries signed a memorandum of understanding to increase trade and adopt a visa-free regime. In a joint statement, the two countries said, "The two parties recognised that their shared geography, culture and history impose obligations on them, particularly in terms of ongoing dialogue, in the interest of their respective peoples. To this end, the two parties agreed to remove entry visa fees on reciprocal bases to facilitate free movement of people".

In the same month of October, Ghana and South Africa signed an agreement for the mutual waiver of visas. The deal which takes effect in November 2023 will see passport holders from both countries stay in their destination for 90 days visa-free

in a calendar year. Earlier on, South Africa signed a similar agreement with Kenya. With both Ghana and Kenya, South Africa also discussed plans to lift barriers that limit trade.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame also joined in saying "Any African, can get on a plane to Rwanda whenever they wish, and they will not pay a thing to enter our country". President Kagame said this while speaking at the 23rd Global Summit of the World Travel & Tourism Council. Kagame's declaration means that Rwanda becomes the fourth African nation to offer visa-free entry to all African residents.

The Chairman at Nest Marketing Rwanda Sosthene Mardi said the moves by African nations to adopt visa-free regimes is a positive step in the right direction. Mardi said many great benefits will be derived from this which include the boosting of intra-Africa trade, commerce & tourism, facilitating labour mobility, intra-Africa knowledge & skills transfer, promoting pan-African identity, improving trans-border infrastructure, fostering a comprehensive approach to border management and promoting rule of law, human rights and public health.

The increased cooperation between and among African nations as demonstrated by the numerous visa-free regimes being signed proves that

African nations are now embracing intra-African trade. The 2022 Africa Visa Openness Index report showed that "African countries (are) making progress in their freedom of travel policies, most of which had been severely curtailed by the Covid-19 crisis".

The Africa Visa Openness Index report is a publication prepared by the African Development Bank Group in collaboration with the African Union Commission. The report tracks visa policies adopted by African governments on three main criteria that is, whether entry to citizens from other African countries is visa-free, if a visa on arrival can be obtained, and whether travellers are required to obtain visas ahead of travelling to other African countries.

The 2022 Africa Visa Openness Index report concluded with these overall stats:

- Africa now has an even split between travel that is visa-free and travel where a visa may be obtained on arrival at the destination country
- Four countries (Benin, The Gambia, Rwanda and Seychelles) offer visa-free entry to all African residents
- 24 African countries offer an eVisa
- 48 countries offer visa-free travel to the nationals of at least one other African country
- 42 countries offer visa-free travel to the nationals of at least five other African countries.

In a bold move, Kenyan President William Ruto said his country is ready to join the three countries that offer visa-free entry to all African citizens by year-end (2023). President Ruto in a statement at the Three Basins Climate Change Conference in Brazzaville, Congo «By the end of this year, no African will need a visa to enter Kenya. The time has come to understand the importance of doing trade between us... It is time we realize the importance of trading among ourselves and allowing goods, services, people and ideas to move freely across the continent.»

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Africa Set To Reap Rewards from the East-West Expansionism Drive

By Prince Kurupati

The East led by China and the West led by the European Union (EU) are currently embroiled in a massive global domination drive. Both the East and the West are looking to expand their influence on the globe and in doing so, garner the support of many nations. The two parties have each rolled out initiatives meant to achieve this objective. The East is guided by China's Belt and Road Initiative while the West is guided by the EU's Global Gateway Initiative.

For Africa, the nature of both the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the Global Gateway Initiative means that it is set to reap some 'free' rewards. Many African nations have already benefitted from China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Davis Ankunga Rwangoga a doctoral scholar in Diplomacy and International Affairs says «The Chinese-sponsored Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is an ambitious strategic program aimed at the development of infrastructure platforms connecting China with the rest of the world... In Africa, the Belt and Road Initiative has been manifested through the construction of several infrastructural projects ranging from railways, roads, ports, airports, and pipelines. China's commercial banks have funded several infrastructural projects in Africa, such as the gas pipeline and railways in Nigeria, roads, and hydroelectric power projects in Uganda, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and many other countries.»

Rwangoga went further stating that «In Kenya, the Belt and Road Initiative has helped establish a high-speed railway connecting the East African port of Mombasa and Nairobi. In fact, this is the first high-speed railway ever constructed on the African continent.»

Moving over to the EU's Global Gateway Initiative, Namibia is set



to be the first country to benefit immensely from the Initiative. As reported by Alexis Akwagyiram writing for Semafor Africa, Namibia has "agreed to a partnership with the bloc to develop its renewable hydrogen capacity, backed by 1 billion euros (\$1 billion) in EU investments. The deal is part of the EU's Global Gateway Initiative, a plan to 'mobilise' 300 billion euros (\$322 billion) in public and private investments to develop projects focused on green energy, transport infrastructure and digital economies in various parts of the world".

The news about the EU-Namibia hydrogen deal was announced at the October EU Summit in Brussels. Government officials, policymakers and leaders of financial institutions at the Summit expressed confidence that the deal will bring about much-needed infrastructural development to Namibia while at the same time helping the EU to exert its influence on the global stage.

As part of the hydrogen deal,

Namibia will see its ports including Walvis Bay and the Maputo Corridor upgraded to world-class standards. Speaking at the first-ever EU-Namibia Business Forum held on the sidelines of the October EU Summit, the European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen thanked the Namibian President Hage Geingob for accepting the deal and expressed his commitment to making it a success.

By upgrading the ports of entry, Urpilainen said Namibia's hydrogen projects will expand and succeed as the "critical raw materials industry requires good transport connectivity. Upgrading the ports of Walvis Bay and Luderitz and developing the wider Maputo-Gaborone-Walvis Bay Strategic Corridor will be important for the future of these value chains".

Apart from just helping in facilitating the hydrogen deal, Urpilainen said that the upgraded ports of entry will serve another important function for Namibia as they will help in aiding intra-African

trade. Moreover, it will transform Namibia into a logistics hub in the southern African region. "Namibia has ambitions to make the port of Walvis Bay into a logistics hub for the Southern Africa Development Community. The port could also facilitate trade and mobility beyond the region, inter Africa, and between Africa and Europe, further advancing economic integration," Urpilainen said.

More benefits set to come Namibia's way thanks to its hydrogen deal with the EU relates to job creation. As relayed by Urpilainen, "The development of green hydrogen and downstream industries has the potential to create thousands of jobs in the coming years. Namibia alone has a pipeline of projects of around 21 billion euros (\$22.2 billion) to be developed by 2030... Likewise, the development of critical raw materials (lithium, rare earth minerals, graphite, cobalt) production and beneficiation industry has the potential to generate a significant

number of jobs in the coming years”.

Urpilainen also stated that the EU-Namibia deal is a plus for the southern African region as “the successful development of a green hydrogen industry in Namibia is poised to create spillover effects for the region along the value chain from the creation of downstream industries – for example on e-fuels and e-steel – to excess clean electricity to be sold to the regional electricity market via the Southern Africa Power Pool”.

Commenting on the effectiveness and feasibility of the Belt and Road Initiative as well as the Global Gateway Initiative, PhD scholar Davis Rwangoga said, «The economic growth of a country or region is predominantly dependent upon existing infrastructure». Owing to this, the initiatives are indeed beneficial to Africa. He however cautioned that before ratifying and



Inaugural journey to Nairobi at the port of Mombasa, Kenya in 2018. Photo credit Tony Karumba, AFP, Getty Images.

accepting all deals emanating from both initiatives, African countries need to thoroughly review them to ensure that guarantee a win-win scenario instead of simply allowing the East and West to expand their hegemonic influence on the global stage.

Innovation or Looting Scheme: A Look at Zimbabwe's New Mutapa Investment Fund

By Prince Kurupati

Individuals who work either as employees or in their personal capacity as entrepreneurs may at times find themselves with extra funds after paying for essentials. These extra funds are referred to as disposable income as it's the money that can be used for luxuries or savings/investments. Governments on the other hand after they engage in trade may end up with surplus (income) reserves. Often, these surplus reserves are channelled towards the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF), a state-owned investment fund that can be used for a variety of purposes.

As most countries globally engage in trade and other income-generating activities, many of them do have a Sovereign Wealth Fund. The investment fund is put in place to ensure that whenever surplus (income) reserves are realised, they are channelled to the fund. The funds can then be used for various purposes which include savings (future



President Emmerson Mnangagwa amended and rebranded the SWF to the Mutapa Investment Fund using Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023. Photo courtesy.

generation funds), stabilisation funds, reserve investment funds, public benefit pension reserve funds or for helping emerging or distressed industries during times of need.

Since 2014, Zimbabwe had one such

Sovereign Wealth Fund. Zimbabwe's SWF was designed to build up a portfolio of State-owned investments for the benefit of future generations. The state-owned investments include both those wholly owned by the

state and joint ventures that the government has shares in.

Just this past month however, Zimbabweans woke up to surprising news that the Sovereign Wealth Fund had been disbanded and, in its place,

emerged the Mutapa Investment Fund. The country's President Emmerson Mnangagwa fresh from his electoral victory of August 23 had just invoked his Presidential Powers to amend and rebrand the SWF to the Mutapa Investment Fund using Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023.

Just like the now disbanded SWF, the new Mutapa Investment Fund as contained in Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023 will be funded from the balance of payment surpluses, official foreign currency operations, the proceeds of privatisation, government transfer payments, fiscal surpluses and resource earnings.

Controversially, however, Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023 exempted the Mutapa Investment Fund from following Procurement regulations. The rationale behind speeding up the procurement process as the red tape bureaucratic procurement process that was previously in place hindered the fund's competitiveness.

The rebranding essentially meant that the shares in 20 State-owned enterprises which were part of the disbanded SWF were transferred to the Mutapa Fund. Among the 20 entities were some major mining companies such as Kuvimba Mining House, major power stations, as well as leading state bodies such as the National Railways of Zimbabwe, Air Zimbabwe, TelOne, NetOne, Zupco and Cottco.

The news about the rebranding of the SWF was greeted with mixed reactions by the country. Well, more appropriately, it's best to say it was received along political party lines. Those aligned to the government of the day and supporters of the ruling Zanu (PF) party were quick to embrace the decision saying it was a step in the right direction towards the revitalisation of the country's economy. Government critics and the opposition however were sceptical and others in total disagreement with the move saying the rebranding was largely driven by greed and a selfish agenda aimed at looting the country's resources.

Writing in the State publication The Herald, which is sympathetic



Former Finance Minister Tendai Biti describes the new Mutapa Investment Fund as an unconstitutional capture of state funds. Photo courtesy.

to President Mnangagwa, Farirai Machivenyika said the Mutapa Fund "will be a game changer in the country's quest to allow Zimbabweans to benefit from their natural resources". The chief executive officer of Vision 2030, an empowerment organisation established to rally the country's citizens in support of the government's initiative to achieve an upper-middle-income country by 2030 Mr Walter Chimene had this to say:

"The Mutapa Investment Fund will be a game-changing paradigm to allow Zimbabweans to think and exploit for their benefit, their God-given natural and human capital resources... The Fund implementation model will ensure that empowerment initiatives are activated so that resources can be unlocked, and opportunities created while indigenous innovations will be turned into solutions."

Dr Munyaradzi Kereke of the Justice Foundation said that the newly established Mutapa Investment Fund "by its nature, the fund has a long-term perspective, such that its investments would lead to sustained socio-economic growth and development, which will contribute to intergenerational justice in the enjoyment of the fruits from Zimbabwe's natural resources

and State-owned enterprises."

Echoing the same sentiments is Tawanda Chabara, a lecturer in Finance and Investment who said, "The Mutapa Investment Fund represents a significant milestone for Zimbabwe, not just as a financial instrument but as a harbinger of economic potential. By understanding its foundation, based on the Sovereign Wealth Fund Act and the recent Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023, we gain insights into Zimbabwe's economic ambitions. Moreover, the fund serves as a unique 'savings account' for the nation, which could play a critical role in stabilising its economy and fostering development".

Former Finance Minister in the Government of National Unity (GNU) running from 2009 to 2013 and a key member of the main opposition party the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) Tendai Biti described the new Mutapa Investment Fund as nothing but an unconstitutional capture of the country's funds. In an interview with independent TV station Heart & Soul, Tendai Biti said, "The instrument (Statutory Instrument 156 of 2023) does not meet the test of the law and must be rejected as it is illegal. This law was unnecessary... They are transferring the public shares into

a private vehicle. The government already owns the shares, I think the issue is to sell shares as quickly as possible without public scrutiny."

Biti said President Mnangagwa and his administration have for long aimed at evading public accountability and transparency in national procurement projects hence the reason behind the establishment of the Mutapa Fund. He however went on to state that President Mnangagwa and his administration will still have to be accountable as section 340 of the Constitution states that "neither the President nor Ministry of Finance secretary George Guvamatanga could seek not to exclude the operations of Public Procurement Act from any transaction."

By exempting the Mutapa Fund from the Procurement Act, Siphosami Malunga a human rights lawyer shared the same sentiments expressed by Tendai Biti saying, "The unconstitutional Mutapa Investment Fund in Zimbabwe, is not a Sovereign Wealth Fund but an untransparent, unaccountable, personalised funnel for appropriation and privatisation of Zimbabwe's entire public wealth and resources and the greatest national heist since Cecil John Rhodes."



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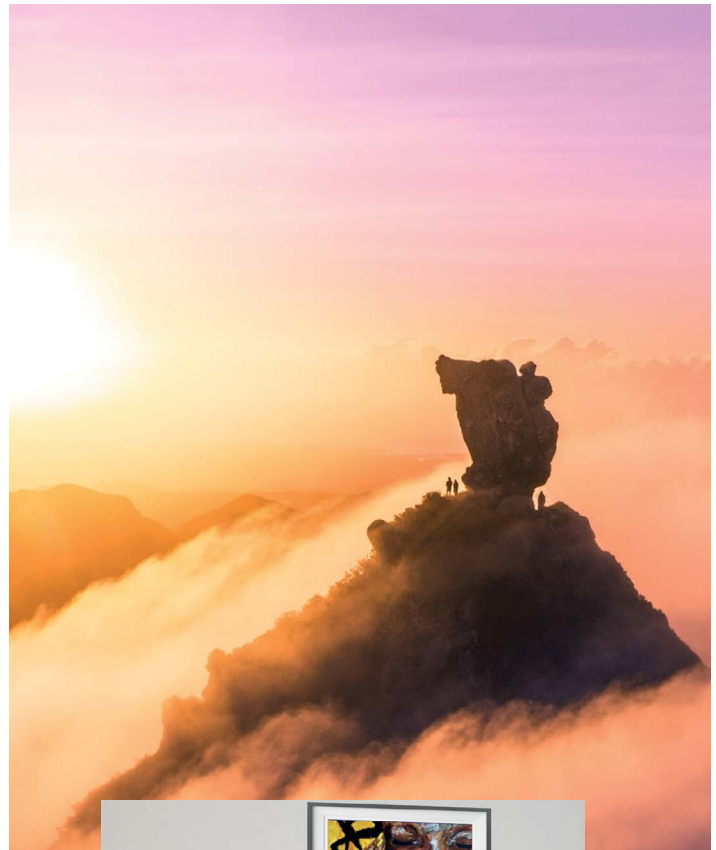
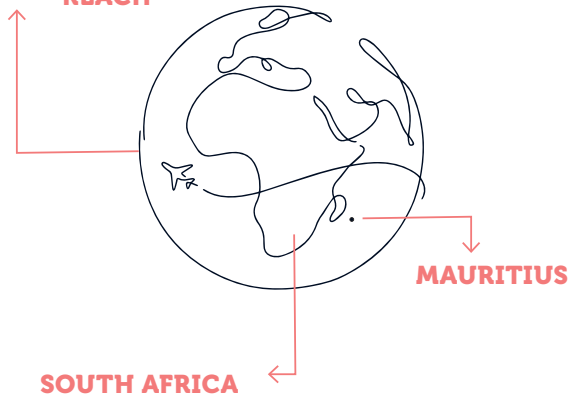


OBJECTIVE

To help build and grow businesses efficiently and sustainably by providing opportunities conducive for growth, shape businesses for a prosperous future so they become new African success stories.

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Tanzania: A Love Affair With Catholic Cardinals

By Adonis Byemelwa

Tanzanians must have reasons to smile broadly after marking a history with the third Cardinal, since the inception of Catholicism in the country.

The newly created and proclaimed cardinal said he has received with humility the appointment to the new role as he has been doing in the past.

Tanzania's Vice President Philp Mpango hailed Cardinal Rugambwa for his steadfastness in placing much emphasis on Tanzania's peace and stability.

"I noted with joy the speech you delivered in the Vatican in which you particularly placed much emphasis on ensuring peace and stability prevail in Tanzania. The government feels honored to have you assuming this new and noble position," said the Vice President adding..... "We have reasons to stand tall before others after recording three cardinals in Tanzania's history of Catholicism. President Samia Suluhu Hassan is abroad but I think upon his arrival she will have a special means of having a talk with you about this new appointment. Receive some showers of congratulations."

Some catholic songs and razzmatazz were hot after the new cardinal landed at Tanzania's Mwalimu Nyerere Airport, with critics reminiscing the August 18 event that saw thirty-seven Catholic Bishops in Tanzania issuing a joint statement patching holes in the controversial Tanzania-Dubai intergovernmental agreement.

The only Evangelical Lutheran Church, Karagwe Bishop-cum-human rights activist, Benson Bagonza, who attended the cardinal's proclamation ceremony in Rome said: "Cardinal Protase Rugambwa commands the highest level of humility but he is not a coward. He looks affable but tough as well when it comes to passing on decisions. He is a man of the people and approachable. His intellectual ability is beyond reproach."

Tabora Regional Commissioner, Batilda Burian assured Cardinal Rugambwa of the government's



Tanzania's Vice President Philip Mpango with Cardinal Rugambwa. Photo courtesy.

cooperation in the execution of his duties.

She challenged the cardinal to strengthen the present relationships between the two sides, commending the church for complementing the government in the provision of social services in the country.

Protase Rugambwa is the third cardinal in Tanzania's history after Cardinal Laurean Rugambwa (1912-1997) and Cardinal Polycarp Pengo, who retired in 2019 and will celebrate his 80th birthday on August 5, 2024.

Pope John Paul II during his visit to Tanzania ordained him for the priesthood on September 2, 1990, for the Diocese of Rulenge. After four years of pastoral work in the diocese as a parochial vicar and hospital chaplain, he was sent to Rome.

While in Rome, he obtained a doctorate in pastoral theology at the Pontifical Lateran University from 1994 to 1998. After returning to his diocese, he served as formator, vocations director, secretary of the pastoral departments, and finally vicar general of the Diocese of Rulenge.

Cardinal Rugambwa then went back to Rome from 2002 to 2008 to work for the Dicastery for Evangelization on January 18, 2008, he was appointed bishop of the Diocese of Kigoma, and consecrated bishop on April 13 of the same year.

Four years later he was called to Rome once again. On June 26, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI appointed him deputy secretary of the Congregation for the Evangelization of the People and president of the Pontifical Mission societies with the rank of archbishop.

On November 9, 2017, Pope Francis confirmed him as secretary—number 2—of the congregation. During his years of service, the archbishop distinguished himself in particular for his defense of African youth faced with the challenges of migration.

In one of the July 2022 catholic reports, Cardinal Rugambwa urged members of the Association Episcopal Conferences of Central Africa Region (ACERAC) to "help the youth of Central Africa not to waste, but rather to shape an identity that values their origins, their culture and

their religiosity in the encounter with new cultural and religious schemes and models."

The new cardinal represents Rome in East African countries marked by religious pluralism consisting of Christians and Muslims as well as animist communities and Hindus and Sikh minorities. The local catholic church is relatively well developed with 34 dioceses.

Long considered the «princes» of the Roman Catholic Church, cardinals serve as top administrators and advisers to the pope.

Some lead departments within the Roman Curia, the government of the Holy See, but most work from their home countries.

Among the new group of cardinals are clergy from two geopolitically sensitive areas: the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who is the Holy Land's top Catholic, and the bishop of Hong Kong, who will be key in improving the Church's fraught ties with communist China. Some of the future cardinals already hold top positions in the Curia, namely the prefect for the Dicastery of the Eastern Churches,



Protase Rugambwa is the third cardinal in Tanzania's history .Photo courtesy.

the head of the powerful Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, and the head of the Dicastery for Bishops.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, as Pope Francis created 21 new cardinals from around the world on 30th September, most of whom would one day be eligible to elect their successor -- or become pontiff, it is important to take a wealth the consistory. The ceremony called a consistory, is the ninth of Francis' pontificate since his election in 2013.

It was closely watched for clues as to the future direction of the Church, especially since the 86-year-old pope said he would not be averse to stepping down -- as did his predecessor Benedict XVI -- should his declining health warrant it.

The ceremony was held on 30th September at 10:00 a.m. (08:00 GMT) in St Peter's Square.

Of the 21 cardinals, 18 were under the age of 80 and thus eligible to vote as «cardinal electors» in the next conclave, when Francis' successor will be determined.

As is customary, the cardinals knelt before the pope to receive their biretta, or four-cornered scarlet cap, whose color recalls the blood of Christ

shed on the cross. Francis was also present each with the cardinal's ring, which replaced the episcopal ring they received as bishops.

The ceremony was followed by the traditional «courtesy visit» in which the general public was invited inside the gilded halls of the Apostolic Palace to greet the newly made cardinals.

Following the consistory, there were 137 cardinal electors. About three-quarters of these or 99 cardinals, were appointed by Francis, the former Jorge Bergoglio.

That had increased scrutiny of Francis' picks, with some Vatican observers viewing the list as an indication of the future spiritual roadmap of the Church.

During his papacy, Francis -- the first pope from the Americas -- sought to elevate to the highest ranks of the Church clergy from developing nations far from Rome, part of his philosophy of diversity and inclusion.

That has sparked speculation that the next pope may well be cast in the same mold as Francis, preaching a more tolerant Church with a greater focus on the poor and marginalized.

Of the cardinal electors, 21 percent were created by Benedict XVI and six

percent by John Paul II.

The Jesuit pontiff, who has championed the faithful from «peripheries» far from Rome, also wanted cardinals to reflect the «universality of the Church», looking to areas where Christianity is growing, such as Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

From the Americas, Francis has chosen archbishops from Venezuela and Argentina for Saturday's consistory, as well as a 96-year-old Capuchin priest from Buenos Aires. From Africa come archbishops from South Sudan, South Africa, and Tanzania, while the clergy from Asia hail from Malaysia and Hong Kong, including the city's current bishop Stephen Chow.

Earlier this month, Chow traveled to Mongolia during a papal visit by Francis in which the pope sought to reassure China's communist government that the Church had «no political agenda to advance».

Clergy from Europe, where Catholicism is steadily declining, were represented, however.

New cardinals include the Swiss prelate serving as the Holy See's apostolic nuncio to Italy, equivalent to

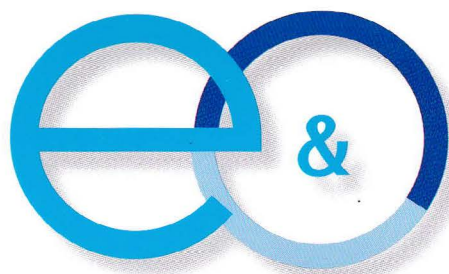
an ambassador, and the archbishops of Lodz in Poland and Madrid, Spain, and the bishop of Ajaccio, Corsica.

The Bishop of Setubal, Portugal is the youngest, 49-year-old, who most recently organized World Youth Day in Lisbon. Americo Aguiar will be the College of Cardinals' second-youngest member, just behind the apostolic prefect of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Giorgio Marengo.

According to the Journal of Catholics and Culture, approximately 30% of Tanzania's population identifies as Catholics, making Catholicism the most prominent Christian religion practiced in the country.

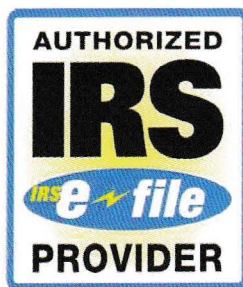
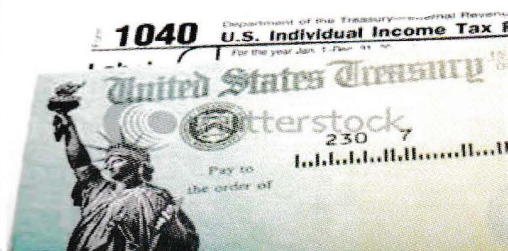
Catholics coexist and at times compete with their religious brethren from a variety of Christian traditions, including historical Lutherans and Anglican missions burgeoning Pentecostal churches.

Catholics also practice their faith in the midst of a large number of other believers. Tanzania has some of the largest populations of Muslims and practices of traditional religion in East Africa.



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Malawi: The Changing Fortunes Of Female Football

By Joseph Dumbula

To get to a football ground in Malawi, dress and play football for one Tabitha Chawinga ten years ago, was such an unprecedented tall order, just because of her state-being female in a pure case of existing gender stereotypes-which are now getting broken.

In the first place, the game has heavily been perceived as for males only with hefty funding for men's football, creating a gender divide in the sports world.

Now, the nation is faced with a radical change in this particular feat and two quick names have meanwhile come into the fore and coincidentally are sisters. The Tawinga sisters as they are fondly known; Temwa and Tabitha.

Tabitha broke history records when she became the first African player to win the golden boot in the Serie A Femine. At that time, she had been playing at AC Milan where she bagged an incredible 23 goals.

This also meant she became the only African woman to win the league Golden Boot in three countries abroad after finishing as the top scorer once in Sweden and thrice in China.

Nearly six months later, Tabitha also became the first Malawian to



Temwa and Tabitha in national team colors

play and score in the UEFA Women's Champions League with her goal as PSG drew 1 all against Manchester United.



Tabitha playing at PSG

The 27-year-old is playing in France on loan from the Chinese side Wuhan Jiangnan University where her sister Temwa currently plies her trade.

But, although the media focus has been on Tabitha given her global prowess, Temwa was also just the pivotal player to help Malawi defeat a strong Zambia side 2-1 to win their first Cosafa Women's Cup title in South Africa at the start of October.

In a global interview, the Chawingas said they faced unprecedented stereotypes to break the jinx in a male-dominated game and society.

Tabitha says: "Our parents initially opposed the idea, emphasizing the importance of education. In Malawi and many parts of Africa, parents often prioritize education over sports. But I had to continue playing when there were no credible competitions and what have you."

These are issues echoed by Levie Mhone, head coach for Topik Woman's Football Club who tells

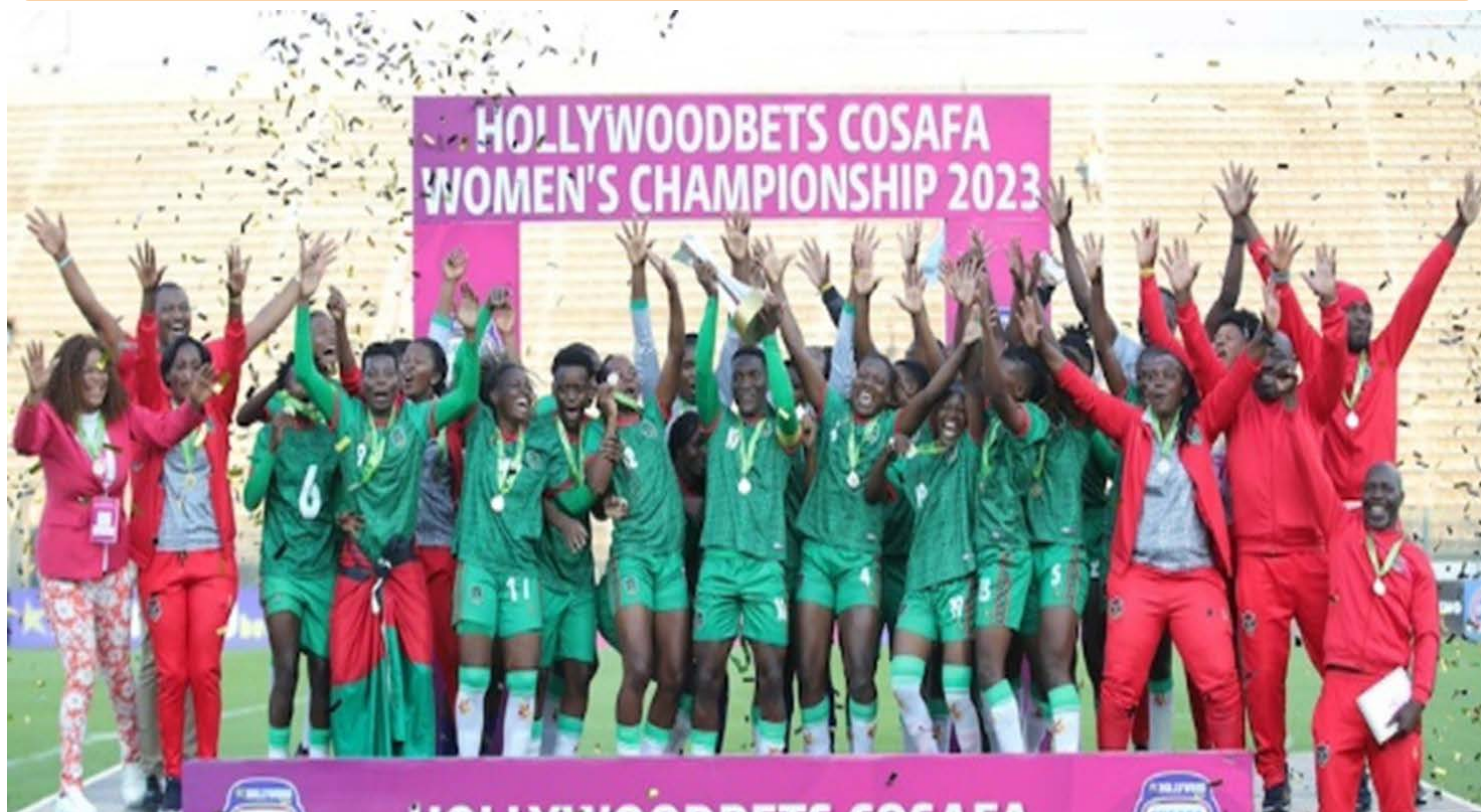
Pan African Visions in Blantyre that the hurdles even appear for male administrators like him.

"You see, the stereotypes are so extensive for people like me to coach a women's team, that it becomes a social issue as well. Apart from that, the growth of the game has been clad by uncertainty because there is no tailor-made infrastructure and even attire. This is a worrisome path," says Mhone whose side is one of the prominent local teams demystifying the women's football game.

Another crucial voice is that of Maggie Chombo-Sadik, one of the profound names in Malawi's women's football.

She has in recent years decried underfunding for women's football. Her sentiments continue making a whole lot of sense until now when a change is being inflicted into the game.

So far, sports journalist Christy Gomani of Blantyre-based radio



Malawi won the Cosafa Cup for the first time

station Capital FM believes the latest run of the athletes and the team is causing a mindset change in the game.

"The game is improving although there are a lot of things that need to be put in place if we are to be very competitive at the international level. You will notice that the Chawinga

sisters have helped spring that change which if compounded by support from all stakeholders will move the nation way far," he said.

Until now, the game has garnered unprecedented support with popular evangelist Shepperd Bushiri pumping in a remarkable MK 60 Million (US 2 Million) for the Malawi women's

national team players and a league.

No wonder, Football Association of Malawi (FAM) President Walter Nyamilandu said the support comes in handy as there has not been so much private support to the game.

"For close to 20 years, we [FAM] have been the only financier of women's football in the country. It

is been a struggle, but despite the hardships, we managed to unearth talent and export it overseas in the likes of Tabitha and Temwa Chawinga. This support will greatly transform women's football. You have chosen an area that has been ignored.

Meanwhile, Mhone feels that dealing with the biases towards the game could be more crucial even past the financial focus lately.

"I would say, the Chawingas are inspiring many girls that we coach because they rose to stardom when all these facilities and support were not in place. My view is that let us keep an eye on the potential of the game," said the coach.

According to a study by the Department of Sport and Leisure Studies, University of Pretoria in South Africa, the latest stand in Malawi is that gender stereotyping seems to be another major cause of persistent under-representation of women in sport.

So, perhaps the recent exploits are really a radical change that Tabitha and others, will live to remember as vital for a strenuous mindset change.



Bushiri (Second from right) has made a massive support



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