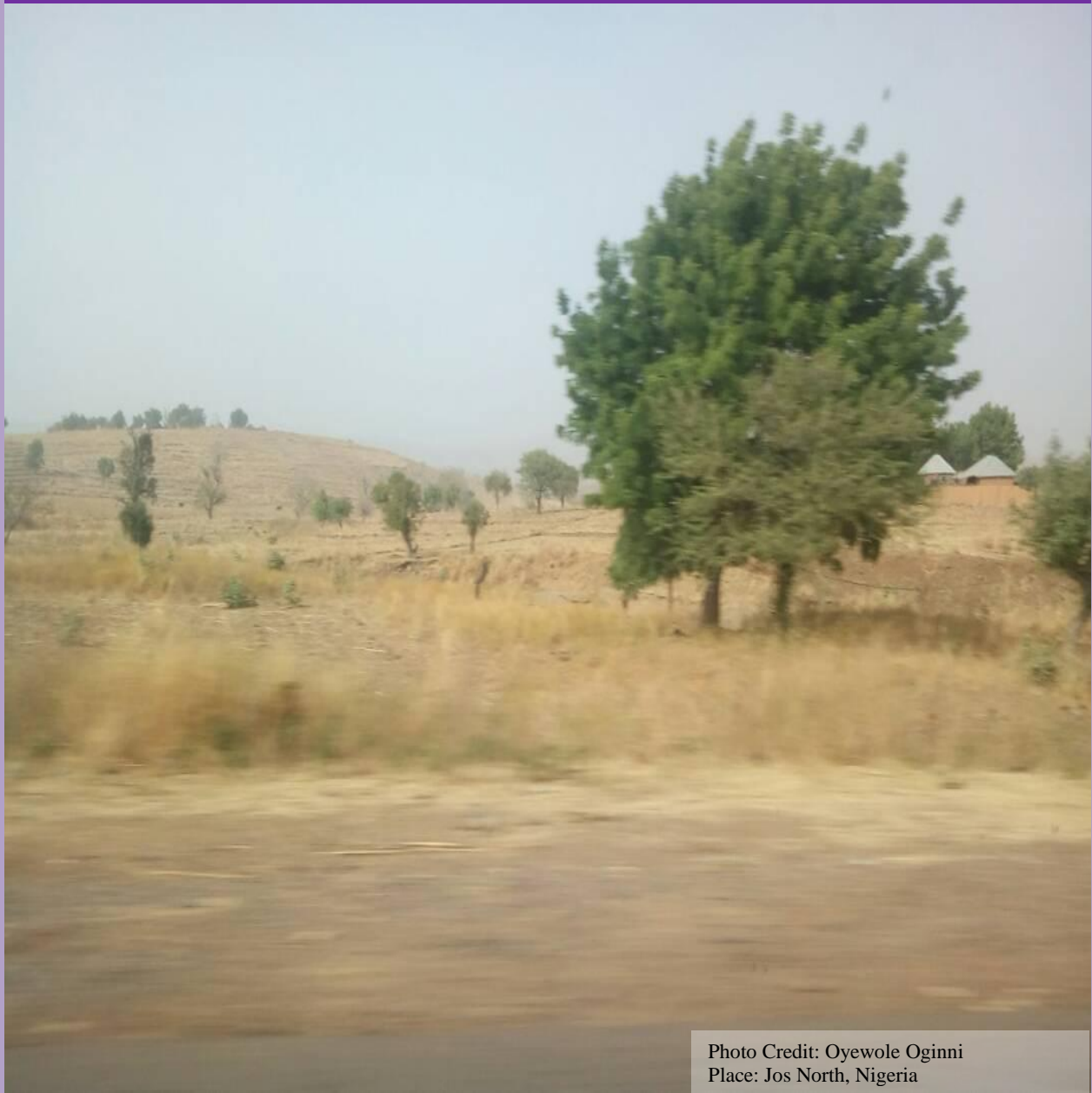# The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Place: Jos North, Nigeria

Inside Africa
The Organization for World Peace

The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa

Oyewole Oginni
Executive Director, Africa
The Organization for World Peace (OWP)
Email: owpafrica@theowp.org
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Registered Office
The Organization World Peace,
1 De Boers Drive, Toronto, Canada
Email: worldpeace@theowp.org
Tel: +1(416)5875107

Executive Summary

For many decades, democracy has been the bedrock of development, peace and security in the Global North. Africa, like other continents of the world, has held unto the promises that liberal democracy presents, given her long experience of inter-state and intra-state conflicts after independence. The historical tragedy of political instability and conflicts in the region, which seemed to have threatened the very existence of the young nation-states, motivated a swift move towards liberal democracy that promised absolute peace and economic fortunes in the late twentieth century. Thankfully, for about two decades now, there have only been pockets of inter-state rivalries in the continent. More than two-third of the 55 African states also have experienced 'regime change' as the former colonial powers continue to push forward the ideal of (neo)liberal policies, as the only recourse to achieving greater economic fortunes, political stability and lasting peace in the region. However, in the recent years, the millions of lives lost to political violence, insurgency and state terrorism have become unimaginably alarming. The axioms on which democratic peace thrives are being challenged by the illiberalities of liberal democracy, increased globalization and de-territoriality, leaving behind the structural problems that many African countries are finding difficulty to overcome.

Taking stock records of the successes and excesses of democratic peace, this edition analyzed a number of issues that are considered symptomatic of threats to peace and stability of the Sub-Saharan African countries, with a view to providing the state-of-the-art findings that presents the potential to inform better policies. While during the brief period from 1989 to 2010, where democracy seemed to be on the rise and many long-lived regimes crumbled, today many African countries are seeing a slide back towards authoritarian practices. In countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Zambia, current incumbents are once again clinging onto power through whatever means necessary. A new term, "constitutional coup" is used whenever the incumbent, such as Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, successfully abolishes presidential term limits introduced in the 1990s to remain in power. Out of the 33 African countries that have term limits set into their constitution, 24 of them have at some point attempted to remove the term limit, and 12 of them succeeded. Furthermore, active suppression of opposition parties through intimidation or propagating laws that limit public gathering or fundraising activities has become common again. Unsurprisingly, the suppression of opposition and constitutional coups by African strongmen leaders are more tolerated now than they were, is due to the increasingly global reach of violent extremism and the population displacement that results from political violence. The western players are more willing to support African strongmen to maintain stability, check the spread of militant Islamism in Africa, and prevent more migrants from reaching Europe. Thus, the illusion of democratic peace has stunted growth and progress in the continent.

About the OWP

The Organization for World Peace is an international non-profit think-tank organization registered with the Canadian government. Our organization focuses on providing non-combative solutions to complex international crises while strictly advocating for non-violence. Our organization places an emphasis on the human impact of war, specifically child soldiers, refugees and other civilians impacted by conflict. It is the goal of the OWP to push governments and societies toward non-violent forms of conflict resolution. With over 120 volunteers operating in 5 continents, we are a large non-profit organization that thrives on youth engagement in peace-building, conflict prevention and post-conflict transition in line with the UN Resolution 2250. For more information about the OWP mission, vision and global strategies, visit www.theowp.org

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Introduction

The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa: Loise Ndegwa – Lead Correspondent, OWP Africa

More than 50 years since the decolonization of Africa began and African countries gained their independence from their colonial masters - at the height of the Cold War - the discussion of democratic peace still looms. Scholars, governments and concerned citizens alike contemplate the implementation of democratization throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, which is heavily influenced by the theory of democratic peace. The illusion of democratic peace has stunted growth and progress in the continent as a consequence of the promotion of a theory that has rarely been tested to reflect African realities.

What is democratic peace?

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1990 ushered in a new phase in International Relations, in which Western nations sought to spread democracy throughout the world more than they did during the Cold War. According to Sebastian Rosaro, these nations, using works by scholars who formed the theory in the 1960s based on the works of Immanuel Kant, believed that "democracies rarely fight one another because they share common norms of live-and-let-live and domestic institutions that constrain the recourse to war." Such common norms include non-violence, human rights, legitimacy, accountability, freedom, and free and fair elections. With this central point, the theory of democratic peace was born.

Scholars such as Doyle, Garber and Gowa have argued that both World Wars are clear examples of why democratic and non-democratic countries (democracy vs. fascism and communism) will be in conflict. This understanding explains why democratic countries such as Great Britain and the United States (U.S.) participated in the two World Wars because of the conflicting norms, as well as a lack of trust and respect towards then non-democratic countries such as Japan and Germany. In other words, democratic countries have a moral authority to challenge non-democratic ones, since their leaders are held accountable by institutions which uphold the norms mentioned above, and by the public.

The theory of democratic peace is in direct conflict with the most dominant theory of International Relations, Realism. Scholars of realism claim states will always act in their own interests as their main objective is survival. Following Bruce Russet, in the realist viewpoint, academics who subscribe to democratic peace theory ignore instances in which countries such as the United States and Great Britain attacked or fought to undermine democratic countries in Asia and Latin America. In such instances, then, democratic countries were acting in their self-interests, i.e., in their quest for raw materials to maximize economic growth.

The flaws of democratic peace

One of the victims of the flawed nature of democratic peace theory is the African continent. Ever since African countries fought against their colonial masters to gain independence from 1957

onwards, Western nations have sought to ensure that they became democratic nations. Ironically, the same countries that colonized Africans (Great Britain and France) are, with the addition of the United States, now preaching democracy to them. The theory of democratic peace argues that the democratization of the African continent will lead to less interstate conflicts. Therefore, the main promoters of democracy within the African continent - Great Britain, France, and the US - are constantly advocating for regime change through "free and fair" elections, one of the guiding principles of democratization. Moreover, once so-called "democratic leaders" are in place, these countries are expected to abide by the democratic principles mentioned above.

Errol Henderson argues that, given that Western countries are pushing for a concept whose theoretical and empirical models have not been tested on African states, the process of democratization has had mixed results. Democratic peace theory ignores African realities, which in turn, leads to limited successes of democratization. In addition, the theory of democratic peace in the African context ignores the fact that most of the borders of African nations were a result of colonialism. As such, after independence, and regardless of democratization, some African countries sought to expand their borders to include what they deemed their "traditional land." Conflicts that arose due to this approach included the Somali-Kenya war (1963), the Somali-Ethiopian war (1978), the Ethiopia-Eritrea war (195 onwards), the Algeria-Morocco dispute (1962-1970), and the Chad-Libya war (1935-1994). Fareed Zakaria argues that without a strong background in constitutional liberalism, the introduction of democracy in divided societies (which is one of the consequences of colonialism) will fuel intra-state and inter-state wars and conflicts.

The theory of democratic peace in the African context also ignores the perpetuation of neopatrimonialism in so-called "democratic" countries. According to Henderson, neopatrimonialism is "a personalist political system in which 'relationships of loyalty and dependence pervade a formal political and administrative system in which leaders occupy bureaucratic offices less to perform public service than to acquire personal wealth and status'." Since democratization has been reduced to mainly "free and fair elections," human rights

The illusion of democratic peace has stunted growth and progress in the continent

abuses and high levels of corruption remain rampant as "strong men of Africa" are elected to power. The half-hearted condemnation by Western countries contributes to the success of such leaders. For example, despite the fact that Great Britain's government has stated that abiding by democratic values is a condition for developmental aid, they have not permanently withdrawn aid from Rwanda despite the government's support of the M23 rebel group in Eastern DRC.

The creation of illiberal democracies

Since the promoters of democratic peace within the African continent have failed to monitor and evaluate the democratization process, or have African leaders taken ownership of the process, they have contributed to the spread and solidification of illiberal democracies, as Fareed Zakaria refers to them. According to the esteemed scholar, illiberal democracies exhibit illusions of democracy. For example, although many African countries do not have "free and fair elections," they reflect the reality of popular participation in politics and support for those elected. Since colonialism promoted division along ethnic and clan lines, the custom of multi-ethnic collaboration was destroyed,

allowing for politicians to organize support along ethnic lines rather than creating unity among people. As a result, the persecution of government opposition and other human rights abuses remain prevalent in these illiberal democracies. Therefore, as stated by Shah Tarzi, the process of elections is only a mechanism for the transfer of political power and nothing else. In other words, regime change is the continuation of the same policies that ensure the success of the political elite with insincere attempts to tackle developmental goals, such as poverty reduction and securitisation. Another example is that even though there is an increase of women representation in government in Uganda and Rwanda - which is viewed as a sign of democratization - these countries still expect women to uphold patriarchal standards.

What now?

With limited success, it is vital that the process of democratization in the African continent be re-evaluated. Clearly, political elites have noted the value of maintaining illiberal and neopatrimonial governments. They have continually demonstrated that they will put their interests over that of most of the country. Additionally, Fareed Zakaria's research shows that the rise of democracy in countries that do not have a foundation of constitutional liberalism will result in hyper-nationalism and war-mongering, as seen in many African countries. As a result, the youth - now more than before - must rise above the flawed political climate and change the status quo. They must demand accountability of the governing elite, instead of expecting Western countries to police their actions. The youth must have their voices heard both in political systems and in the grassroots realm in order to bring about change in a combined bottom-up and top-down approach. In the words of Ghanaian president Akufo-Addo: "we need to have a mindset that says we can do it and once we have that mindset, we'll see there is a liberating factor for ourselves."

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Inside Africa: January 2018

Ending the Year in Pieces: A glossary on some events that took the World from Peace to Pieces in 2017

By Gerald Tapuka, Senior Correspondent, OWP Africa

2017 has been a very busy year and one of the most remarkable years in world politics, diplomacy and international relations, as well as national and regional politics. It opened with one of the most miraculous political mutations in the world when Donald Trump became the 45 President of the most influential nation in the world, the United States of America. This miraculous political mutation witnessed from the West also blew through Africa, reminiscent of the early 1990s wing of change in Africa. In the 21st century transformation which became the contemporary Glorious revolution, Adama Barrow took over for a leader with 23 years in power, of the tiny West African nation of The Gambia. Before the year could end, the most dramatic political mutation in the world and Africa, in particular, visited the Southern African territory of Zimbabwe when the "grace" of Mugabe could no longer keep him in power. However, it was also a year of tears as the United Nations experienced the worst attack in its peacekeeping missions. The story of Royhingya Muslims also worsened, as well as the continuation of attacks by Boko Haram members, and the violent trend witnessed in Southern Cameroon. Reactions have come from diverse quarters especially UN Secretary-General and the Pope who have expressed disappointment in the trend of these events and many more.

On January 20th, 2017, a new leader was being welcomed to the world political scene which has changed the international relations of nations. Donald Trump's victory in November 2016 and subsequently his inauguration in 2017 was a rare occurrence in the world as most did not expect a man with ideas which challenged regular protocol arrangements to lead such a nation. However, it came to pass. And just when Donald Trump was taking his seat in the inner boos of the white house, another political miracle was taking place in Africa, as The Gambia's strongman, who owns all the titles of the world, His Excellency El-Hadj Chief Pr Dr General President Yahya AJJ Jammeh, was stepping down beyond all expectation after 23 years in power. It was widely believed Jammeh, who had ruled the tiny West African nation, would, as usual, prevail during the elections but miraculously he was stepping down, thanks to international pressure.

While Africa and the world were celebrating this political miracle, Africa's largest nation, South Africa was presenting a difficult report card as Zuma's handling of the nation had moved from the fight against racial inequality to the fight for his personal aggrandizement. While South Africa's situation did not present bloodshed, the continuous manslaughter in 2017 worsened with UNICEF reporting that hundreds of children have been killed in the fighting with hospitals and schools becoming the main targets of government aerial bombardments. In nearby Yemen, the situation has been appalling in 2017 as the UN has even described it as a purely man-made disaster. More violence was reported in Burma where an entire community and ethnic group, the Rohingya's have been forcefully displaced. Thousands have been killed while millions displaced.

Despite numerous peace agreements, the South Sudan conflict continued unabated with each side accusing the other of violating the agreements. Even the relative peaceful Cameroon also embraced violence as the famous English-speaking minority conflict escalated into an arms conflict involving groups of men against the regular military. Despite its frequency on world media because of the protracted conflict, DR Congo broke new grounds in violence as 14 UN Peacekeeping soldiers were killed in one attack. This prompted Antonio Guterres to describe it as the worst attack on Blue Helmets in recent times.

South Africa came back to the news before the close of the year as Africa's longest liberation movement turned political party, the African National Congress (ANC) witnessed a dramatic change in leadership as Zuma gave way for businessman, Cyril Ramaphosa. However, the greatest shock in the Southern African community was the ousting of Zimbabwe's liberation hero, Robert Mugabe who unceremoniously abdicated following pressure from the same liberation movement that brought him to power. For the first time in history, independent Zimbabwe moved from Mugabe's government to that of Mnangagwa. More success stories came from Liberia as Africa's only FIFA Ballon D'or Winner, George Weah was declared the winner of the Presidential runoff on Boxing Day.

The last 365 days have been one of the longest in contemporary times and sometimes a day becomes almost longer than a month. This is because the rate of untold hardship has greatly increased and the sanctity of human life has been desecrated. In most cases, events happened like a surprise to many even more of a surprise to the players directly involved in the events.

It was almost concluded that Hilary Clinton would be the next President of the United States of America. But against all expectation, the political inexperienced Trump won the elections and took over on January 20. The same situation was experienced in The Gambia when strongman Jammeh was finally forced out of power the following day after Trump was sworn in. After elections on December 1, 2016, Jammeh erred by first of all accepting defeat and later on rejecting it. He relied on his strength and political manipulations which had suppressed all organized oppositions and kept him in power

> *The last 365 days have been one of the longest in contemporary times … because the sanctity of human life has been desecrated.*

since 1994. However, 1994 was different from 2017 and Jammeh failed to read the writing on the wall and was unable to reconcile with the changing times and political dynamism of the regional institution ECOWAS. And so, Jammeh was forced out of power thanks to the muscular intervention of ECOWAS leaders.

It was also the refusal of Mugabe to acknowledge the changing times that made him leave power unceremoniously. Even when opposition against him was mounting, Mugabe thought he could still rely on his old political tactics which could no longer fit into the changing times. The Zimbabwe of the 1980s and 1990s is not the same of today and Mugabe also failed to understand that the Mugabe of 2017 was not as strong, vibrant and agile like the Mugabe who took power in 1980. Moreover, the 'Grace' he had to cling to power in the 1990s and 2000s was no longer sufficient to maintain him.

It was a similar surprise which befell the Francophone government of Cameroon following the rise of Anglophone nationalism in the country. Despite being banned and suppressed violently, the movement has succeeded to thwart educational, economic and legal activities in Southern Cameroon in particular and in Cameroon in general in 2017. From a marginalized people, Anglophone nationalist movements are now fighting not just for their rights but for a separate state of what they called Ambazonia and the conflict can only be managed through a pacific formula and not the violent move spearheaded by the government.

In a more desperate situation, Bashar al-Assad has tended to prolong his stay on power based on the continuous sacrifice of human blood as many more Syrians are being killed in order to give him a foothold on power. At the end of the day, all Syrians would still sit on the negotiating table to talk the way forward because no side would ever be able to rule the country peacefully. The same situation transpires in Yemen where both Houthi rebels and Saudi backed government are trenched in an impasse with civilians paying the price. Just like Syria, Yemen can only gain stability when all parties involved in conflict sit around a table without guns and bombs.

Meanwhile, the world's newest country, South Sudan, which had not had the opportunity to fully enjoy its independence, was back in the news after the Transitional Government of National unity crumbled in July 2016 as the bitter squabble between President Salva Kiir and former Vice President, Riek Machar, remained unresolved. However, with the two most prominent South Sudanese politicians hijacking power and showing signs of irreconcilable differences it would be a feasible reality if it is international partners especially IGAD can trace a new peace initiative without these two men. Despite all these events, most media organs chose to focus on Burma where the case of the Rohingya minority became alarming since August 2017 as the UN reported that more than 600,000 have crossed the Burmese border into Bangladesh in fear of ethnic cleansing perpetrated by government security operatives and Buddhist militias. This even prompted some Nobel Laureates to criticize fellow Laureate and Burmese de facto civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi for her silence in the face of the conflict. Just like Desmond Tutu used his privileged position to defend justice in South Africa, the Rohingya situation presents a case for Suu Kyi to clamour for justice not just for the Rohingyas but for all Burmese.

Despite the chaotic situation in African politics in particular and global affairs in general, there was still a situation which brought smiles to the face of many as Liberia organized one of the most free and fair elections of recent times which saw a former football player, George Weah, winning over 61 percent of the votes cast. It came as a Christmas gift to Africa where such situations are rare and especially owing to the bloody past of Liberia. However, while Liberians are enjoying their "Christmas gift" many are languishing in terrible man-made conditions as world leaders rely on the blood of the people to water their success story.

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A New Dawn for Sub-Saharan Africa, Or More Authoritarianism?

By Hanyu Huang, Correspondent, OWP Canada [Featured article]

The overthrow of Robert Mugabe in November 2017 marked another upheaval in the tortured history of democratic transition in Sub-Saharan Africa. The end of Mugabe's thirty-year regime has been met with tempered optimism by democratic activists. Yet, even as people celebrate Mugabe's overthrow, others are concerned that his successor, Emmerson Mnangagwa will continue to resist the democratic transition in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe's scenario has been played out across much of Sub-Saharan Africa, which is home to some of the world's oldest and longest-serving heads of state. Even the "third wave" of democratization, which swept away many authoritarian governments across the world in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet bloc, seemed to only have a limited long-term impact in Sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, since the new dawn of the new millennium, Sub-Saharan Africa seems to be sliding back towards authoritarianism. While recent events, such as Mugabe's fall or the first peaceful transition of power in Liberia since 1944, has led to some to hope that a democratic wave sweeping across Africa remains possible, global geopolitics and internal dynamics of many African states make such a scenario unlikely.

Sub-Saharan Africa is in many ways, the region of archetypical failed states since new polities emerged from colonial rule. Today, Sub-Saharan Africa ranks the lowest in the Human Development Index of the six global regions by the United Nations Development Programme. Sub-Saharan Africa is also home to some of the oldest and longest-serving heads of states in the world. In the countries with the worst cases of mismanagement, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo or Zimbabwe, human development metrics such as life expectancy and per capita income have fallen in recent decades, this is in sharp contrast to the rest of the world. Despite the failure of

> *Historically, many African authoritarian leaders remain in power until they are deposed in military coups*

many of these leaders to bring about economic success or political improvement to living conditions, historically many African authoritarian leaders remain in power until they are deposed in military coups, only to implement the same policies as their predecessors by another kleptocrat, enriching themselves and their immediate associates at the expense of the rest of the population.

People will continue to debate why Africa has been the laggard of the entire developing world, but some explanations have been put forward to explain the phenomenon of colonialism including, the commodity-based economy that many African nations have tribalism and the Cold War. These factors and causes intersect and frequently feed into each other. Colonialism is often blamed for much of the violence and slow-moving progress outside of the few developed regions of the world. This is a result of the European colonizers who carved out their empires without giving consideration to pre-colonial territory and dismantled the traditional forms of authority in places carved out by the Europeans. Nor were they interested in imbuing their African subjects with either liberalism or administrative professionalism, instead relying on a few European bureaucrats to administer their extensive domains on top of loosely governed local chiefdoms. After the European empires collapsed in the aftermath of World War II, it left behind unstable states that are rife with tribal rivalries and lacking an educated professional class to build a modern state. Instead, African

leaders turned to a mixture of tribalism, military repression and clan patronage; the oldest and surest of bonds, to stay in power and bankrupt their citizens in the process.

Another major reason for Africa's lack of development, even compared to Latin America, is the different goals for which the European dominions in Africa are set up and administered. Instead of permanently settling and developing the land to be more successful, as European powers did in the Americas, most of the African European empires focused on extracting the natural wealth of the continent and shipping them as fast as possible to fuel the Industrial Revolution back home. This created an economy that focused on short-term mineral extraction or growing a few cash crops that prevented the development of a diverse economic base for most of the new African nations after they become independent. This deprived the newly emerging African nations of an economic base with which to develop. And in states that are more dependent on mineral extract, such as the Congo, warlords would fight over the natural wealth and governments would rely on mineral royalties to pay for patronage without much attention towards looking after the needs of the people.

The Cold War furthered instability and inhibited the development of liberal democracy. Both the Soviet Union and the United States propped up authoritarian leaders in exchange for diplomatic influence. Many civil wars in Africa, from the Congo to Angola, were fought by proxies of the superpowers. Conflict in any form is usually ruinous, and for Africa, the superpower competition combined with the previously mentioned tribalism and economic failure contributed to the rule of strongmen, whose regimes were solely dependent on the strength and loyalty of their armies.

While during the brief period from 1989 to 2010, where democracy seemed to be on the rise and many long-lived regimes crumbled, today many African countries are seeing a slide back towards authoritarian practices. In countries including Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Zambia, current incumbents are once again clinging onto power through whatever means necessary. A new term, "constitutional coup" is used whenever the incumbent, such as Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, successfully abolishes presidential term limits introduced in the 1990s to remain in power. Out of the 33 African countries that have term limits set into their constitution, 24 of them have at some point attempted to remove the term limit, and 12 of them succeeded. Furthermore, active suppression of opposition parties through intimidation or propagating laws that limit public gathering or fundraising activities has become common again. Through a mixture of old and new tricks, democratic transition in Africa appears to be slowing down, if not outright reversing in many African states that embraced election after the Cold War.

In addition to the domestic hurdles that the African democrats have to overcome, the external environment has also taken a turn for the worse. Globally, Africa is becoming the battlefield in a new round of geostrategic rivalries between new global players. One reason why the suppression of opposition and constitutional coups by African strongmen leaders are more tolerated now than they were, is due to the increasingly global reach of Islamic extremism and the population displacement that results from violence. Western leaders are more willing to support African strongmen to maintain stability, check the spread of militant Islamism in Africa, and prevent more migrants from reaching Europe. The emergence of China as a major global player and heavily investing in Africa presents another

> *Africa is becoming the battlefield in a new round of geostrategic rivalries between new global players.*

challenge for liberal democracy. As China offers development, aid free of political demands on the existing African leadership, the African states can use the old Cold War game to play off of the regional powers. Whether the West chooses to forego its democratic ideals and fund unsavoury regimes to check Chinese influence, or outright install pro-Western governments, the effect on democracy in Africa is still damaging to the liberal democratic cause.

The fact that in Europe liberal democracy and globalism are looking less appealing by the day must also play a large role in the decline of democracy in Africa. With the rise of populism in the heartland of liberal democracy, traditional liberal values such as the rule of law and the independence of the courts, are being cast aside in favour of simple majorities and appeal to the emotion of the people. Politicians such as Donald Trump and political parties such as the PiS, AfD, and FN in Europe explicitly or implicitly champion the belief that the "will of the majority" is bigger than any law or any other constraint. Such an understanding of democracy may be more common in Africa and is welcomed by many African politicians who harbour ambitions to accumulate more power, evidenced by the South African president Jacob Zuma's quote that "[y]ou have more rights because you're a majority; you have less rights because you're a minority. That's how democracy works." Given the erosion of liberal democratic values at home, one can hardly expect developing countries and ambitious political leaders not to use the rise of radicalism in the West for their own purposes, whether to underscore the undesirability of democracy or to feed into populism to remain in power.

With the underlying factors and the changing international situation, one should be cautious when reading the recent political change in Africa and herald it as a revolution against tyranny. One should also expect the imminent implementation of democracy in places such as Zimbabwe. Instead, in the dawn of a new age of international competition over Africa's natural wealth, combined with the historical baggage of Africa's past, it makes a swift transition to liberal democracy in Africa unlikely. While many democracy activists remain hopeful that a younger, more educated, and more urbanized generation of Africans will support democracy and overthrow their authoritarian leaders, there is evidence that past a certain stage of economic and social development people will no longer put up with authoritarian leaders. They will desire freedom and respect, but that day is still likely decades into the future

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Cameroon and Boko Haram: The Fragility of the North Region

Olayiwola Opeyemi Ademola, Correspondent, OWP Africa

Four people were killed, two others abducted in attacks that took place in the far North Region of Cameroon on Thursday, January 11. This happened in Kolofata and Ashigashaya, towns which are on the border of Nigeria, where three of the victims were slaughtered. The jihadists also burned some 60 of grain and motorcycles.

The North Region is the poorest of Cameroon's regions and has the lowest school enrollment rate. A combination of weak national integration and historic neglect by the state have for many years contributed to violence and the presence of smugglers in the region, with a proliferation of highways robbers, traffickers, and petty criminals. It was vulnerable to this jihadist insurrection due to geographical and cultural overlap with north-eastern Nigeria, the presence of an intolerant version Of Islam and the repercussions of the Chadians Civil Wars. The Cameroonian government's focus on a military response has been partly successful, but the structural problems that allowed this threat to arise have not been addressed.

The attacks came after Cameroon and other West African countries launched a major offensive against the jihadist group in Borno state, northeast Nigeria. These attacks have claimed the lives of several of the jihadists, hundreds of others have been forced to surrender. Boko Haram began its bloody insurgency in Nigeria in 2009. Since 2013 the Nigeria-based Boko Haram succeeded in exploiting the vulnerabilities of the North region and made it a logistics base, a safe haven and a source of recruitment. The group has particularly gathered support among disaffected youth in districts adjacent to Nigeria through the use of ideological indoctrination, socio-economic

The fight against Boko Haram calls for security cooperation and sub-regional solidarity

incentives, and coercion. Cameroonian security forces, starting in 2013, dismantled hidden weapon stockpiles and arrested Boko Haram leaders, pushing the group to threaten and eventually attack Cameroon directly. In the last two-and-a-half years, the Far North region has experienced at least 460 attacks and about 50 suicide bombings.

Although the threat of Boko Haram to Cameroon is great, there is a great danger of a sole focus on terrorism and obscuring the structural and political problems facing the country. The two challenges should not be considered in isolation from one another because Boko Haram has the potential to drive an escalation of existing internal conflicts. Also, in the fight against Boko Haram, Cameroon government must shift focus from a security-based approach to socio-economic development and to counter religious radicalism. This step is toward consolidating military gains against Boko Haram and bringing back lasting peace in the Far North. The fight against Boko Haram calls for security cooperation and sub-regional solidarity.

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Read more on Boko Haram Insurgency in Cameroon on OWP Crisis Index

Libyan Migration and the EU's 'Policy of Containment'

Abigail Kennedy, Correspondent OWP USA [Featured article}

On Friday, CNN uncovered a video of Sudanese migrants kidnapped and tortured for ransom in Libya. The video showed victims being whipped while they begged their families to send money for their freedom. After strong pressure from social media, Libyan Special Forces intervened and arrested four men found at the location and freed eight abductees. Many other unresolved incidents of extortion, enslavement, and torture of migrants travelling through Libya have also been reported.

Through a CNN investigation, money trails from the Libyan slave trade were found to link criminal gangs to a global network of transactions – drawing connections with countries as close as Niger and as far as Bangladesh. In an effort to mitigate these crimes, the European Union (EU) has made efforts to help the International Organization for Migration (IOM, a United Nations agency) to repatriate immigrants stuck in the northern African country and settle thousands of Libyan immigrants already in Europe. However, it is unclear how repatriation will decrease the need for emigration from Sub-Saharan Africa, and the subsequent result of migrants resorting to high-risk and illegal methods of migration.

Many migrants find that their only passage to the shores of Italy – and Europe in general – is from off the coast of Libya. They spend their life savings on paying smugglers for the passage. In this context, Amnesty International (AI) calls the EU's 'policy of containment' as preventing the flow of migration, sending migrants to detainment camps within Libya, which, according to AI, consist of around 20,000 from Sub-Saharan Africa. Detainees are then subject to limited and inconsistent meals, are often denied access to bathrooms and showers, and are even forced to sleep on the ground (while also running a daily

> *It is unclear how repatriation will decrease the need for emigration from Sub-Saharan Africa*

risk of being kidnapped and tortured with small hope for freedom). EU member-states, particularly Italy, help fund Libya's coastguard to intercept smuggled migrants at sea, and give additional assistance to Libya's Department for Combating Illegal Migration in order to detain them. While being detained, migrants are exposed to organized crime and systematic violations of human rights at the hands of their own authorities via torture, extortion, and slavery. According to CNN, some detainees and migrants are kidnapped and sold into the Libyan slave trade for as little as $400 USD.

The EU denies that it has had a negative impact on the current migration crisis in Libya, mainly due to its efforts to repatriate those in detainment camps back to their home countries. Moreover, the EU intends to send home 15,000 of the 20,000 currently detained. However, as post-colonial Africa struggles with war and attempts to find peace despite the implementation of democracy, individuals and families alike are desperate to leave their homelands to find a better life in Europe. Securing the borders of Libya and increasing efforts to detain and repatriate smuggled migrants ignores the origin of this conflict and the consequences of denying migrants' rights. Preventing migration in Libya is seen by non-government organizations and human rights activists as a serious humanitarian issue. John Dalhuisen, Director of Amnesty International's Europe and Central Asia programme, states that "European governments must rethink their cooperation with Libya on

migration and enable people to get to Europe through legal pathways, including by resettling tens of thousands of refugees." If Libya were to formally recognize the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) mandate, sign the Refugee Convention, and adopt asylum law, migrants and refugees could have higher hopes for escaping the atrocities and corruption that surround them.

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Read more on Libya Crisis: OWP Crisis Index

The Brewing Proxy War in Northeastern Africa

Geordie Jeakins, Senior Correspondent, OWP Canada [featured article]

In rapid-fire succession, a series of events appears to be pushing much of Northeastern Africa inexorably closer to a region-wide conflict. Within hours of each other, Sudan closed their border with neighbouring Eritrea and declared a popular mobilization, seemingly foretelling a war between the two nations. Ultimately, the roots of this potential conflict run much deeper, and the ramifications could be far more significant, than just a small skirmish.

On 8 January 2018, Sudanese state media announced that the government had shut its eastern border with Eritrea three days earlier. No official reason was given for the closure, but the announcement came on the heels of President Omar al-Bashir's declaration on 30 December 2017 of a state of emergency in the central province of North Kordofan and the eastern province of Kassala, which borders Eritrea. Significant movements of Sudanese soldiers and military equipment have also been reported near the border.

Just hours following the border closure, the regional government in Kassala created a higher committee for popular mobilization. The Popular Defense Forces (PDF), a paramilitary group which fought alongside the official Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) during the decades-long civil war, cited illegal arms and drug trafficking as the reason for the upsurge in military activity. This fiction evaporated just three days later on 11 January, when Khartoum officially announced that the state considered both Eritrea and its ally, Egypt, as security threats. In a public statement, the National Congress Party's Deputy Chairman Ibrahim Mahmoud Hamid declared "the meeting of the Leadership Office of the National Congress Party has directed for the continuation of security arrangements on Sudan's eastern borders after receiving information on potential security threats from Egypt and Eritrea at Sawa area." This statement preceded another increase of troops sent to the Eritrean border. In effect, it appears as if Sudan is on the brink of war with at least one, and potentially more, of its neighbours.

The rising tensions in Northeastern Africa are neither new nor insignificant. In fact, the rivalry between Sudan and Eritrea is only one facet of an emerging regional competition, which is pitting multiple nations, as well as outside players, against one another. The current standoff between the two countries represents a proxy war of Sudan and Ethiopia against Eritrea and Ethiopia, in competition for security, resources, and influence. However, this conflict, as many have speculated, may be in and of itself a proxy war between the so-called Turkey-Iran-Qatar axis, and the Saudis and their allies.

Perhaps at the most basic level, recent events have centred around the escalating tensions between Eritrea and Sudan. Eritrea is one of the poorest countries in Africa and the world. The country's problems are numerous—authoritarianism, corruption, slavery-like forced labour, an all-encompassing military draft, and continuously simmering conflict. As a result, more than half a million of the country's six million people have fled, mostly taking refuge in neighbouring Ethiopia or Sudan. However, Eritrea does maintain an army that is larger than either Sudan or Ethiopia, despite the country's much smaller population. Sudan, for its part, is similarly poor but fields a far more experienced military force, one that was forged in the long civil war that split the nation

asunder. Unlike Eritrea, Sudan also possesses a modest air force. In a hypothetical military conflict between the two countries, it is more than likely that the larger, more populated, and better-equipped Sudan would come out ahead of the Eritrean forces. However, in the event of any such war, the balance sheet would likely also include support or even full intervention from other countries.

For some time, Eritrea has been gaining valuable military assistance from Sudan's other major regional rival: Egypt. In a recent meeting between the Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Egypt reaffirmed its support for its ally. Although both countries deny it, international observers believe there is a significant Egyptian military presence in the Eritrean capital of Asmara. It is uncertain whether Egypt would embroil itself in a Sudanese-Eritrean conflict, but the alleged troop presence might make avoiding such an intervention impossible. If that were the case, Egypt would almost certainly outclass Sudan.

However, for its part, Sudan also has an important ally in Ethiopia, who, while not nearly as militarily powerful as Egypt, would effectively help even the scales in the event of a regional conflict. Ethiopia has had an antagonistic relationship with Eritrea since the latter's independence from Ethiopia. From the early 1960s to the early 1990s, Eritrean separatists waged a low-level guerrilla war against the various governments in Addis Ababa for the independence of the Eritrean territories. Conflict broke out again in the late 1990s, when Ethiopia defeated Eritrea, asserting control over disputed border zones. Since then, there has been bubbling tension between the two countries, with a minor border skirmish breaking out recently in 2016. Clearly, there is ample historical reason for Ethiopia to join Sudan in a

> *With Sudan's connections to Ethiopia and Turkey and Eritrea's relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, an otherwise localized conflict could swiftly spiral into a more general war*

fight with Eritrea. To add another layer of complexity to the web of alliances, Egypt is also very antagonistic towards Ethiopia. The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, also known as the Hidase Dam, currently under construction near the mouth of the Nile River, presents a massive threat to Egypt, and, to a lesser extent, Sudan. The dam would give Ethiopia the ability to partially block the flow of the Nile towards Egypt, where its irrigation effects are vital for the country's agriculture. In addition to aiding Eritrea, a potential conflict may also provide Egypt with the excuse it needs to strike at the offending dam.

The brewing conflict in Northeast Africa is not insulated from outside pressures. In many ways, a war between Eritrea and Sudan (and any other regional actors) would not only be waged along the border between the two countries but also in the halls of government in Riyadh and Ankara. This conflict, in short, would be yet another proxy war in the growing war for influence in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, most notably from Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The regional rivalries have taken on international significance in a number of ways. Egypt and Sudan have long laid mutually exclusive claim to the Hala'ib Triangle, a piece of land on the border between the two countries on the Red Sea. However, in 2016, Egypt redrew maritime borders when it handed two Red Sea islands over to Saudi Arabia, unilaterally claiming the Hala'ib Triangle in the process. In response, Sudan opened a dispute in the United Nations. More significantly, perhaps, Sudan also reached out to Turkey, a regional rival of both Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The government in Ankara

agreed to restore the old Ottoman Red Sea port of Suakin, deepening economic and military ties with Sudan as part of its broader strategy to court potential allies in East Africa. Eritrea has also sought to bolster its regional alliances. In particular, the Eritrean government supported the Saudi embargo against Qatar in the summer of 2017. In this way, both Sudan and Eritrea have enmeshed themselves within a tangled web of alliances, which they believe can compensate for their singular weaknesses and deter one another.

This alliance network poses an acute danger to peace in Northeastern Africa. As events in recent days have shown, tensions can rise very quickly and a military response can rapidly become perceived as the only solution to a threat. With Sudan's connections to Ethiopia and Turkey and Eritrea's relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, an otherwise localized conflict could swiftly spiral into a more general war, particularly considering the Egyptian and Turkish tripwire forces which currently reside in Asmara and Suakin, respectively. As it currently stands, however, such a prospect remains unlikely; more likely is a scenario where both sides back down after some political theatre or a minor military skirmish. Nevertheless, the danger remains that Sudan and Eritrea could be plunged into a proxy war that would be to no one's benefit.

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Chad Goes To The Polls: An Opportunity For Change?

By Olayiwola Opeyemi Ademola, Correspondent, OWP Africa

President Idriss Deby of Chad has announced that the legislative elections, scheduled for 2015 but much postponed, will be held this year. The President declared this on the cusp of the New Year and encouraged politicians to show patriotism and responsibility in the run-up to the poll.

A good number of Chadians showed a positive reaction to the announcement, with a great hope and optimism that it will be used by the opposition to build momentum towards the unseating of President Deby who has been in power December 1990 after toppling Hissene Habré. The spokesperson of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agnès Romatet-Spain, has expressed her hope and declared the importance of Parliamentary elections in democratic life. In addition, Analysts explained that it came as a response to Chad's key ally France, who has on more than one occasion asked the Chadian government to organise the legislative elections. It is also seen as a way to pacify the opposition who has persisted in calling for the holding of legislative elections. The parliamentary elections will not only play a critical role in the democracy of Chad but will also allow its citizens to articulate their interests and hold government accountable. This is a long-awaited period for the Chadians. Although, the opposition rejected the financial constraint as the reason for postponing the parliamentary elections originally scheduled to hold in 2015, this is an opportunity for the Chadian government to pacify the tension and doubt, since the country has secured billions of dollars in pledges from donor countries aimed at helping to revive the country's struggling economy.

Chad holds elections at the national level for a head of state - the President - and a legislature. The president is elected for a five-year term by the people, while the National Assembly is elected for a four-year term. A parliamentary election which held on Sunday 13th February 2011, the first such election since 2002, was originally scheduled for 28th November 2010 but was postponed following a meeting in September between the ruling party and opposition leaders. According to the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI), this was due to timing constraints caused by complications encountered during electoral preparations. The next

Chad faces a political crisis resulting from more than 27 years without a democratic change in leadership

election, which will be held this year, was originally scheduled for 2015 but was postponed due to financial constraint. However, the opposition derided his comments that the country did not have the financial means to hold polls and have dubbed the current parliament illegitimate.

Elections in emerging democracies and conflict-ridden societies have a great potential to plunge a country into more violent conflict, to undermine processes of stabilisation and to discredit democratization. Elections are not only a tool of democratic participation but also a fierce contest for positions of leadership, power and access to resources. Chad faces a political crisis resulting from more than 27 years without a democratic change in leadership. The past elections in Chad had recorded problems, such as electoral fraud, multiple voting, underage voting, and low voter turnout, which have the potential of generating violent conflict. Therefore there is a need for collaboration between various institutions—government, civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the international community—to establish a robust security framework that recognizes the underlying causes of electoral conflict and mitigates the risk of violence.

Source: Olayiwola, O. A (2018). Chad Goes To The Polls: An Opportunity For Change? In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1.
Read more on Boko Haram Insurgency in Chad on OWP Crisis Index

An Ambitious Task for the G5 Sahel Force

By Nasser Haidar, OWP Editor [featured article]

Few regions in the world face the daunting security challenge of the five Sahel countries. The five countries, Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso, are located in the Sahel where they are victims of their own geography. Militant groups and cross-national criminal organizations have thrived by taking advantage of the large stretches of porous desert borders that are geopolitically interconnected.

In 2015, the idea for a military force was first floated around. However, 5,000 soldiers from seven battalions of the Sahel countries are highly ambitious for nations which rate among the world's poorest and have no capabilities of establishing such a force themselves. Fortunately, since the election of Emmanuel Macron as the President of France, the entire political weight of Paris and its allies in the European Union have breathed new life into the idea.

France currently has 4,000 troops in the region originally sent to combat Al Qaeda linked groups that overran northern Mali in 2012. Since all five Sahel nations are previous French colonies, the soldiers have remained there to ensure the stability of the region. The French forces were quickly successful in forcing out the Islamist militants that took control of northern Mali, but the security situation has barely improved, with frequent attacks on French forces, as well as the 12,000 strong MINUSMA United Nations force.

Renewed attention on the region began after an ambush claimed the lives of three American troops in Niger, who are helping train Nigerien forces, as well as building a $50 million U.S. drone base near Agadez. Among the various groups spread across the Sahel area includes the fleeing Boko Haram forces that were mostly pushed out of Nigeria over the last two years, as well as the Tuareg rebels of Northern Mali that were mercenaries for the Libyan leader Muammar Ghaddafi during the 2011 Libyan revolution.

The instability in Northern Mali, which is symptomatic of the rest of the region's issues, was the lack of engagement of the marginalized minority groups with the rest of the nation and it's slow – but growing – economic development. The Tuareg leaders created the security vacuum that allowed Al Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) to take over northern Mali when they lost faith in the central government's ability to govern them as equals within the entire population. With the mediation of many actors like France, the Tuareg leaders have signed a peace accord in 2015, which as of now, is being hesitantly implemented, and surviving on a single thread of trust between the two sides that have made limited attempts to implement their share of the agreement.

Europe, on the other hand, is very committed to empowering the G5 Sahel group: it creates an eventual long-term exit strategy for the French forces stationed there, and it can police the long borders of the Sahel which could stop the mass migration across the Mediterranean towards Europe. Countries such as Italy, Germany and the Netherlands stand by France in its efforts and have hosted two summits over the last two months, with more planned for the next two months. The hope is that enough donors could be found to create a $500 million reserve that would fund the force for its first year.

Other actors involved include Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that have pledged $100 million and $30 million, respectively. The UAE has also pledged to build a "War School" in Mauritania that is expected to open this month. The two Gulf countries view this as a logical investment to increase their influence in West Africa, as well as for their long-term strategies of being included as security stakeholders in the wider region. In addition, Saudi Arabia would like the new Sahel force to complement its own Islamic Military Coalition, which already includes all five Sahel states as members of the coalition.

In response to the massive impetus for the creation of such an unprecedented military force in the region, a group, which calls itself the Islamic State in the Great Sahara, has said that it is now taking up the fight against the G5 force. With the intense "operational urgency to regain control of the region", said by a French diplomatic source, the miniature details of the force and its objective are magnified with importance. Efforts to increase security in the region are futile without ensuring sustainable development.

Preventing radicalization and stabilizing the region requires that economic growth and employment be an essential objective for the stakeholders involved, especially with such a significantly growing young population in the region. Equally important is that the deployed forces earn the trust of locals in the areas that they are given their mandates. If the rights of the local populations are not rigorously respected, it risks alienating the people that they are there to serve. As a result, the alienation hands over a great and difficult to overcome weapon to the militants, a steady supply of young radicalized individuals that they have been successful in promising revenge and accountability towards.

> *Preventing radicalization and stabilizing the region requires that economic growth and employment be an essential objective for the stakeholders*

The daunting task increases in difficulty considering that, as with most security challenges, it must also include political dimensions. The fledgling peace process in northern Mali must be upheld, and that redundancy is avoided with the already plentiful of security forces from the UN, France, and the U.S. Even more so, a force that has become successful in achieving its mandate in the border areas must be diplomatically careful to build bridges and establish networks with neighbouring countries and regional organizations such as the militarily powerful Algeria, and the diplomatic heavyweight, Economic Cooperation Organization of West African States (ECOWAS).

These efforts must include ensuring that rifts do not form between neighbours and proliferate into future conflicts. Solving a conflict by setting up another would be a wasted opportunity for the people of the region, and all those involved. The regional network must also spread and include open lines of communication with global stakeholders such as the African Union, the European Union, and the United Nations.

The ambition behind the force is well-intentioned, and the benefits of establishing the rule of law in the sporadically inhabited desert areas are vast from security, political, social and economic perspectives. However, this is an instance when a badly implemented plan, which could be hijacked by political manipulation, interference, and partisanship, could severely backfire and create further

generations of militants that would make the new security challenge overwhelming for all five Sahel states.

All security stakeholders should be steadfast in their commitment towards the end goal by having a holistic and multidisciplinary approach. Legal resources must be made available for the inhabitants of the region, and the forces involved should be made extremely aware of the principles of human rights and the operational aspects of respecting, and protecting them. Abusive governance has to be reined in, and all militaries involved should immediately open internal investigations into alleged abuses that are impartially checked by the mandates of the independent and respective National Human Rights Institutions of each Sahel country, as well as international organizations, such as the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner.

An illusion of democratic peace in the region cannot be allowed to overshadow the accomplishments of the force. All things, which can help empower the institutions and democracies of the nations involved and in the region at large, can only improve the force's ability to achieve its goals. Anything but the most democratic of mechanisms will add to its likelihood to fail. This is a defining moment for the region.

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Read more on Sahel Crisis: OWP Crisis Index

Attacks by Fulani Herdsmen Raises Fears of Genocide in Nigeria

By Olayiwola Opeyemi Ademola, Correspondent, OWP Africa

On January 17th, five persons were killed in attacks by herdsmen in Guma, Logo and Okpokwu local government areas of Benue State, Nigeria. This was in addition to the previous killings and mass burial of 73 persons, in which more than 60,000 people were also displaced.

Governor Samuel Ortom, in his reaction, stated that despite the presence of the Inspector General of Police and 663 armed mobile policemen deployed to the state, killings were being perpetrated without the arrest of the attackers. State governments across the country have begun putting measures to avert similar occurrences in their domain. Governor Ayodele Fayose of Ekiti had previously labelled them as terrorists. However, President Muhammadu Buhari had on Monday at a meeting in Abuja appealed to the government and people of Benue State to "in the name of God" accommodate their countrymen. He assured them that all the perpetrators of violence in the state would be made to face the wrath of the law. Some religious leaders have condemned the lukewarm attitude of the government in reacting to the situation and also faulted its approach, saying that it deserves more than police intervention. Human rights group Amnesty International stated that the violence "is reaching a boiling point of total anarchy." Civil society groups have largely been critical of the slow response by the Nigerian government.

The threat posed by Fulani herdsmen in different communities across the country they migrate to for the purposes of grazing their cattle is very alarming. The reaction from the Federal Government, so far, has been wanting. The security and law enforcement agencies of the country have established neither early-warning nor quick response mechanism. As a result, both herders and farmers are taking things into their own hands, further aggravating conflicts. The menace of violent herdsmen is not new in Nigeria; in 2016, pastoral conflicts accounted for more deaths in Nigeria than Boko Haram. The escalation of pastoral conflicts in recent years has been triggered by the effects of climate change in the Northern part of the country, with lower rainfall and increased desertification of grazing land forcing herdsmen to look further South to farmlands in a region often described as Nigeria's food basket. But the recent violence has been markedly brazen and seemingly unprovoked, with villages and communities being attacked and razed at night, leading some to describe the attacks as genocide.

> *There is an urgent need for Buhari Administration to strengthen conflict resolution mechanisms, reforming livestock management practices and improving border security*

The herdsmen attacks are becoming as potentially dangerous as the Boko Haram in the North East. There is an urgent need for the Buhari administration and affected state governments need to work together in strengthening conflict resolution mechanisms, reforming livestock management practices and improving border security so as to curtail cross-border movements of both cattle rustlers and armed herders. Also, the government should address environmental factors that are causing herders to migrate to the South. The Buhari administration must also address the urgent need of strengthening the security arrangements for herders and farming communities. Failure to

respond may provoke many communities to resolve to self-help. This will also avoid the involvement of non-state actors such as vigilante groups, who may claim not to be bound by legal obligations, thereby becoming a threat to human rights. Finally, Nigeria should work with Cameroon, Chad and Niger to regulate movements across borders, particularly of cattle rustlers, armed herders and others who may not possess any documents, valid international passport or permit for them to stay in Nigeria.

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Inside Africa: February 2018

How the African Union failed the People of Western Sahara

By Loise Ndegwa, Lead Correspondent, OWP Africa

On 29 January 2018, the member States of the African Union (AU) voted in favour of Morocco re-joining the esteemed body after the North African country left the institution in 1984. Morocco's decision to leave the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the predecessor of the AU, was based on OAU's decision to recognise Western Sahara as a country. With the addition of Morocco, there are 55 nations represented in the AU.

As stated earlier, Morocco chose to leave the OAU when the member States recognized Western Sahara, whose official name is the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), as a country. This decision angered Morocco since the presence of their troops in the country would be then be classified as an occupation. The Kingdom of Morocco claimed Western Sahara as its territory after the Spanish colonial power relinquished its control of the country in 1975. The Polisario Front declared SADR a nation just four months after Spain left the country. The invasion of Morocco soon after caused a 16-year war led by the Polisario Front, who was heavily supported by Algeria. Following a UN-monitored ceasefire in 1991, the inhabitants of the Northern African country have had to endure the presence of UN peacekeepers and the Moroccan troops who occupy territory close to its border. The 16-year conflict resulted in over 100,000 refugees fleeing to Algeria for safety, many of whom are still living in refugee camps. As part of the ceasefire, the people of Sahrawi Republic were promised a referendum to decide their independence, but it has not happened. Parties involved in the conflict could not decide who is eligible to vote. Despite the involvement of the UN in the Morocco-Western Sahara conflict, the international institution classifies the country as a "non-self-governing territory."

The decision for Morocco to re-join the AU was overwhelmingly supported by member States, with 39 nations out of 54 voting yes. Morocco was able to get the necessary vote by ferociously campaigning throughout the continent, within the last year especially, while making economic and development agreements with many of these countries.

In his speech, King Mohammed stated, "Africa is my home and I am coming back home. I have missed you all." He continued to say, "Africa is indispensable to Morocco and Morocco is indispensable to Africa." In terms of the situation between Morocco and SADR, the Moroccan King claimed that the decision to admit the country into the African Union is "...a positive step for the people of Western Sahara. After 33 years, Morocco has realised that it has to sit with the Sahrawi Republic. We hope that Morocco will have the goodwill to resolve this conflict and withdraw its troops."

In response to the vote, Western Sahara ambassador to the AU and Ethiopia, Lamine Baali, reiterated that the readmission of Morocco into the AU is "…made with the understanding that Western Sahara will remain a member of the AU." She continued to say, "all debates were focused

on [the issue] that Morocco should respect the internationally recognised border of Western Sahara."

Ten countries voted against the decision, with Algeria and South Africa leading the charge. Algeria, led by the commissioner of the Peace and Security Council Ismail Chergui, was among the few countries that objected the return of Morocco into the African Union. Mr Chergui urged that the AU should restart its mission in Western Sahara. The outgoing AU Chair Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma of South Africa also attempted to restart the process of ensuring full independence for the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic. Not only did she lobby at the UN for the resume the process for self-determination for the people of SADR but also appointed a special envoy for Western Sahara, Joachim Chissano. Joachim

The readmission of Morocco into the African Union is just another example of how this continental institution continues to ignore the call for self-determination for all African nations.

Chissano and Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma have vocally denounced the exploitation of natural resources, especially phosphates and oil, from SADR by Morocco.

The decision to admit Morocco comes less than two years after Morocco expelled UN staff from Western Sahara after the visit of the former UN Secretary-General (UNSG) Ban Ki-Moon visited Sahrawi Refugee camps in southern Algeria. Following the visit of the UNSG, who used the term "occupation" to refer to Morocco's presence in Western Sahara, the King threatened to withdraw its troop out of the UN global peacekeeping mission. Additionally, the Moroccan troops crossed the UN-mandated buffer zone in August 2017, breaking the agreed-upon ceasefire.

The readmission of Morocco into the African Union is just another example of how this continental institution continues to ignore the call for self-determination for all African nations. Furthermore, this decision goes against the "strong messages of support and solidarity [with] the people of Western Sahara" that were uttered during the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the proclamation of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic on February 27, 2016. According to the AU press release, the AU delegation stated that "Africa will not be free, until the last of its colonies, Western Sahara, was liberated, free and independent." Moreover, during a visit to Dakhla Refugee Camp, Dr Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, reassured the people that "Africa will stand side by side with the Sahrawi people until victory is achieved."

African nations have illustrated to the people of Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic that they are willing to ignore the right to self-determination if the alternative is an economic gain. Morocco is the fifth largest economy in Africa, following Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa and Algeria. According to the King's speech, the Kingdom has signed almost 1,000 agreements and treaties with African countries since 2000. Countries such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, who had historically supported SADR, voted for Morocco once the respective countries had signed economic agreements worth billions of dollars. The same can be said about Western African nations. According to the International Crisis Group project director, Issandr El-Amrani, "Morocco has marketed itself as a leading investor in West Africa with a natural network of business contacts to play upon." He also insinuates that Morocco's decision to re-join the African Union is partly motivated by the growing influence of Algeria in the Peace and Security Council.

Individuals representing the biggest supporters of SADR (South Africa and Algeria) are leaving or have left the office by the beginning of this year. Those who took over their positions are big supporters of Morocco. Therefore, it is unlikely the current deadlock will be broken anytime soon. Once again, the African Union has demonstrated that they are a dog with no bark or bite.

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The Non Respect of International and National Laws in Africa: The Case of Cameroon, Nigeria, DR Congo, And Kenya

By Gerald Tapuka, Senior Correspondent, OWP Africa

Respect for the rule of law has been very difficult in contemporary times with nations and countries frequently coming into conflict with human rights defenders and rights organizations which are frequently challenging these governments. In recent times, some African countries have taken the lead in their lack of respect for international laws to which they are signatories, as well as with their own national legislation that is duly promulgated into law.

The accentuation of this practice has been made relevant by the huge appetite for political power and the quest of politicians to impose their personal agendas over the national agendas. In this light, powerful politicians, especially at the national level, have imposed their personal political might over and against that of the sovereign state. This has presented a difficult situation for human rights defenders but most especially for the populations of these countries. In this flagrant disrespect of international and national laws, there now remains no other jurisdiction to intercede on behalf of the nationals of these countries.

Moreover, even the intervention and communications of foreign bodies and organizations have not prevented the levelled playground from becoming undulated. With most international laws and instruments protected and regulated by the United Nations, they have become helpless and unable to intervene in these cases because it presents more of an advocacy phase than an enforcement of jurisdiction. In one of its recent communications, the United Nations expressed its disappointment over the lack of respect of international and national laws by Nigeria and Cameroon in the transfer of some arrested persons from the former to the latter.

Four countries in Africa have distinguished themselves in the flagrant disrespect of international and national laws, exposing their citizens to the mercy of nature. There may be many countries but for the sake of this study and with recent happenings, we have singled out Cameroon, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya.

The International and National Juxtapositions and the Breakdown of Order

In the meantime, the international and national responses have been limited to public communications aimed at condemning some of these acts while other acts seemingly go unaddressed despite their disastrous consequences on the local populace. Rather than serving as a correctional measure, the problem persists and the brunt of the consequences is borne by common citizens of these states.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R. Congo), President Joseph Kabila's second official mandate as President came to an end on December 31, 2016, but more than a year on, he has still maintained himself as President of the Republic through military power. Despite a negotiated settlement brokered by the influential Catholic Church of the country between the government of President Kabila and the opposition which granted the incumbent another year, he has still projected himself at the helm of the country. In reality, for more than a year now DR Congo has failed to organize elections despite calls from the church, national agencies, international bodies, and opposition parties.

Kenya presents a similar case pertaining to political and democratic mutations which have witnessed an unprecedented setback in recent days. In August 2017, the country organized Presidential elections which instead opened a spiral of backward trends as they were annulled by the Supreme Court. In October of the same year, rerun elections were organized but were boycotted by the main challenger to the incumbent President Uhuru Kenyatta.

Despite being sworn in last November 2017, the troubles were far from over as opposition strongman, Raila Odinga also staged a "mocked" swearing-in ceremony for himself in January 2018. The political and democratic manoeuvres were transferred to the media where the government sealed three media houses (KTN, NTV, and Citizen TV) for their planned coverage of the "mocked" swearing-in ceremony.

Despite the ruling by the Kenyan High Court, the government, using its political might, rejected the decision of the court outright and imposed its own by refusing to reopen these media channels. Kenya now finds itself in a situation where the rule of the law is abused by the same people who swore an oath to protect the law.

Meanwhile Cameroon and Nigeria, because of their long borderline have found themselves in the same situation caused by the political upheavals unfolding in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon. In the meantime, Nigeria is being accused of having arrested at least 47 persons consisting of people fleeing from political persecution, refugees and some asylum seekers from Cameroon and transferred them back to their country of origin without due process. Among these people is the leader of the movement clamouring for a separate state for Anglophones is Ayuk Tabe Julius, known as the Ambazonia Republic, as well as some of his close aides, and other individuals from Cameroon.

Most of them were arrested on January 5, 2017, and have since then remained incommunicado until January 29 where Cameroon's Communication Minister, Issa Tchiroma Bakary announced that

they had been transferred to Yaoundé. However, the accused still remained incommunicado and have never been seen by their lawyers and doctors in contrast to their nationally and internationally protected rights.

Political Illegality versus Conventional Legality

The question facing these countries is that of the political will of governments faced with conventional norms and legality. The imposition of the political will of these regimes and governments exposes once again the slim delimitation between the executive, legislative and judiciary arm of government. Rather than these three arms acting as a check on each other, the political arm has remained preponderant, pocketing both the judiciary and the legislative arms, and making the two to be subjected to the former.

D.R. Congo's government challenged decisions of the legislative arm of the government that makes the laws, and according to the constitution, President Kabila was to step down in December 2016 which he rejected. Even a negotiated settlement prolonging his mandate to December 31, 2017, was still not considered tenable by President Kabila's government. It argued that the conditions were not satisfied to organize an election. However, the non-organization of the election is further worsening the political and social conditions in the country with protests and loss of lives recorded.

In the case of Kenya, which is considered as the East African giant, the government committed a political miscarriage by tempering on the rights of the media and also violating a court decision. A free media is a prerequisite for democracy. A society is only considered democratic as per its level of press freedom. The press acts as a check and balance to the government's policy and defends the opinions of the citizens. Limiting the press in Kenya meant the government is limiting the democratic match and violating the rights of the people and the very constitution the government was elected to preserve.

Kenya's case is double-edged because the government violated the constitution as presented by the legislature and also suppressed the judiciary following its refusal to implement a court decision to reopen the channels. The United States has many media houses which imposingly challenge and insult the President and government agents but in the spirit of maturity and democracy, none of these media houses have ever been shut down.

The situation in Kenya is tantamount to a military takeover where the constitution and democratic institutions are suspended. In such a case, the state apparatus becomes dormant while the politicians steering the state machinery emerge superior.

The cases of Cameroon and Nigeria have taken an international tone with the two governments conniving to arrests individuals without warrants and transferring them from one country to another. It should be noted that Cameroon and Nigeria have several diplomatic accords but none of them addressed the issue of extradition. In the present case, apart from those arrested in an open war-front, persons arrested by either Cameroon or Nigeria must be presented before a court for the extradition to be established or challenged by the parties involved.

In the course of this, the arrested persons must have access to their lawyers which is a basic human right. This is in pursuance of international and national legislation. However, since January 5, when they were arrested in Nera Hotel, Abuja, they have not yet been seen by their lawyers, doctors or family members. Even the announced transfer from Abuja to Yaoundé is still being seen as a myth because Yaoundé based Lawyers have also been denied access to their clients.

In its disapproval of the trend of events, lawyers of the arrested persons in Nigeria and Cameroon have expressed their dismay at the flagrant disrespect of legal norms. The United Nations have also expressed its consternation following these developments.

The Cameroon and Nigeria case also presents an episode of political diplomacy overriding national and international laws. Cameroon and Nigeria have both used their diplomatic connive being enjoyed in the fight against Boko Haram to erroneously exploit a situation which is winning them more enemies at home and abroad than friends. Moreover, it is exposing the frailty of the democratic and human rights policies of these two states. Both regimes have virtually hijacked their legislature and judiciary and are merely imposing the political ambitions of the regimes and leaders and not the nations.

> *Regimes and politicians are gradually becoming more powerful than the state*

In all these cases, regimes and politicians are gradually becoming more powerful than the state. This gives a broader assignment to future generations which have to deal with the challenges of nation-building based on institutions and not personal wills. This highlights the challenges of Africa as exposed by former United States President, Barack Obama while addressing Ghanaian parliament in 2009. He preached stronger institutions for Africa and not stronger politicians and regimes. Close to ten years after, the recent happenings are proof of the fact that the continent is still strongly embedded in the greatness of its regimes and politicians than state institutions.

Source: Tapuka, G (2018). The Non Respect Of International And National Laws By African Nations: The Case Of Cameroon, Nigeria, DR Congo, And Kenya. In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1
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Life after Mugabe: The Era of President Emmerson Mnangagwa

By Loise Ndegwa, Lead Correspondent, OWP Africa

It has been two and a half months since former President Robert Mugabe resigned from office. This momentous occasion ushered in Emmerson Mnangagwa as the third President of Zimbabwe. The Mnangagwa presidency serves as a transitional government that will prepare the country for the upcoming election. During the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the president stated that by March, his government will make a proclamation regarding when the elections will happen.

What has President Emmerson Mnangagwa been doing for the past two and a half months?

The Mnangagwa's presidency has decided to tackle on the biggest and controversial issues in Zimbabwean politics, land reform. In a televised speech, the new president stated "our land must be productive. We must mechanize and modernize our agriculture," he said, adding that the land reforms were "irreversible." He continued to say, "our economy is struggling, unemployment is high, our youth lack opportunities, too many people are unable to afford essential goods for their families and our infrastructure is stuck in the past."

The first initiative in the agriculture sector that the new government has initiated revolves the leasing of land for white farmers. The former president, Mugabe's government had made it difficult for white farmers to remain active and profitable in the industry. For one, white farmers were only allowed to lease land for five years. The government gave white farmers 99-year leases like their black counterparts. This change was welcomed by the Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) director Ben Giplin. Although the criteria "sounded narrow for now," the change is still a step in the right direction.

This move mirrors President Emmerson Mnangagwa's comments during the World Economic Forum. He claimed "Our economy is struggling, unemployment is high, our youth lack opportunities, too many people are unable to afford essential goods for their families and our infrastructure is stuck in the past. Farmers are farmers. We have lots of former [white] commercial farmers who have happily integrated into our system by accepting to have their farms reduced or downsized."

The second initiative that the new government initiated is that farmers can use their farms as collateral when obtaining loans. The Zimbabwean reserve bank governor, John Mangudya stated that "in line with the current economic dispensation's aspirations to transform agriculture into [a] viable business proposition and taking into account the significant improves made by [the] government on the 99-year-leases to enhance the security of the tenure of the lease and making it bankable and transferable, the [Reserve] Bank has agreed with banking institutions for them to accept the 99-year leases as security for accessing credit from financial institutions in line [with] the provisions of the leases." This government sees this strategic move as a positive move to change the agricultural sector.

Although the government is making positive steps to appease the white farmers in Zimbabwe, the government made it clear that white farmers who lost their land during the Mugabe era will not be

given their land back. The tacking of the white farmland was a ploy by Mugabe to ensure his victory during the 2000 and 2008 election. Some white farmers attempted to challenge the evictions but lost the court case since the agricultural land in Zimbabwe technically belongs to the government. One white farmer, Robert Smart, managed to get his land back after being evicted out of his land in June 2017 by Mugabe's government.

As the government is attempting to correct some of the wrongs of the Mugabe era, the opposition is battling its own struggle. The man Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai was hospitalized less than a week ago in South Africa. He is currently undergoing treatment for colon cancer. As the leader is hospitalized, the two vice presidents of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), Nelson Chamisa and Elias Mudzuri, each claimed through social media that they were in charge of the party. The conflicting statements from the two individuals show a divided home. Additionally, the third MDC vice-president Thokozani Khupe has boycotted recent party meetings. The status of Tsvangirai's health, in addition to the lack of unity within the MDC, raises concerns whether MDC will be a strong enough contender for the upcoming election.

It is very difficult to accurately depict the future of Zimbabwe. The current president and his government has made both positive and concerning moves. As stated in a previous article, the current president placed mainly military officials to be part of his cabinet. This move troubled many analysts as it seemed to be a step backwards and a return of Mugabe-like era with the domination of the military. The steps toward land reform is an important step forward as it shows the people of Zimbabwe that the government is willing to make necessary and positive changes to fix the problems that Mugabe had made.

In the words of Victor Kgomoeswana, "nobody could have predicted that Zimbabwe would be where it is today, but the changes that took place in November 2017 put the country on an irreversible bullish trajectory. It is early days yet, but the horizon looks much more promising for Zimbabwe than it did a few months ago. And if it looks optimistic for Zimbabwe, it should look optimistic for the SADC region and also for Africa."

Suggested: Ndegwa, L. (2018). Life After Mugabe: The Era Of President Emmerson Mnangagwa. In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1

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UN Ready to Charge Senior South Sudanese Officers and Officials With War Crimes And Crimes Against Humanity

Loise Ndegwa, Lead Correspondent, OWP Africa

On 23 February 2018, the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) in South Sudan announced that they have enough evidence to charge at least 41 senior officers and officials with war crimes and crimes against humanity during the four-year civil war.

Background on the conflict in South Sudan

South Sudan, the youngest country in the world, has had a very tumultuous history. Since its independence from Sudan in 2011, the Eastern African country has faced the challenge of containing the political ambitions of the warring factions who were willing to get a seat at the table by any means necessary. A civil war broke out in December 2013 after President Salva Kiir accused his then-Vice President Reik Machar and other officers of attempting a coup. Since then, individuals loyal to President Kiir, Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), have been fighting with Reich Machar's loyalists, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in Opposition (SPLM-IO), Both factions have broken the numerous ceasefires mediated by the impartial Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

Additionally, efforts by the African Union (AU) and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have resulted in limited success. The four-year conflict has resulted in approximately 300,000 people to lose their lives and millions more to be displaced within the country and in neighbouring countries. One of the worst atrocities during this civil war came as a result of an attack by suspected SPLM-IO allied faction where approximately 400 civilians lost their lives. Reik Machar denied UN and government reports attributing the massacre to his loyalists. In fact, the spokesman of the opposition group blamed the attack on government forces.

The UN, as part of UNMISS, has been documenting the atrocities committed during the four-year civil war. In a report based on 58,000 documents and 230 witness statements published a week ago, UN officials spoke of the horrendous cases that took place during the conflict such as beheadings, castrations, sexual violence, and torture. The report also details the killings, attacks, and illegal arrest of journalists and foreign aid workers. The 41 officials and officers accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity include 3 governors, 33 generals, and 5 colonels. The accused individuals come from both the government and opposition forces. The UNHRC has not yet released the names of the 41 individuals.

According to Yasmin Sooka, the chairperson of UNHRC in South Sudan, "The court could be set up straight away and the prosecutor could begin working on indictments. Under the peace agreement, those indicted can no longer hold or stand for office. Ultimately this is the only way to stop the rampant devastation of millions of human lives by South Sudan's leaders."

In response to the report and potential indictment of people, the spokesperson of SPLM-IO, Lam Paul Gabriel, stated, "the human rights body should start putting the blame directly on the regime instead of blaming both sides."

The potential impact of the court case for South Sudan

It is important that individuals who are committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and other crimes be held accountable for their actions. Unfortunately, in many of civil wars in the African continent, accusers from the government, rebel or peacekeeping forces, despite the evidence presented in reports gathered by local and international organizations, are not tried and convicted for their crimes. The local judicial system has also made small steps to hold such individuals accountable for their actions. In May 2017, a court case tried by a military court tried 13 soldiers accused of raping foreign aid workers and murder of a local journalist in 2016.

Although any indictment of individuals is a move in the positive directions, it is still unclear what impact the potential court case on the country. Depending on who the top officials are, it can possibly lead to an escalation in the conflict. The timing of the report and accusations have not come at a good time. Both groups are currently in Ethiopia negotiating terms of another ceasefire and peace agreement.

If top officials and officers of both parties are indicted, it is likely that they might attempt to prolong the agreement and/or the conflict. There is also a chance in which the top officials might try to negotiate, as terms of the peace agreements, for amnesty for themselves as we have seen in the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone. Just based on SPLM-IO's response to the report and probable court case, it seems that they will not accept any charges against them as they believe that they are not in the wrong and the blame rests solely on the government, its forces and allies.

Additionally, it is unclear whether the court case will be in The Hague or it will be a "hybrid court" with South Sudanese and African judges, as agreed upon in the 2015 peace agreement. In the UN report, not only called for the establishment of this court but also claimed that the AU is complicit in the bloodshed in South Sudan. Despite the creation of an inquiry by the AU to investigate the widespread human rights violations that detailed atrocities in the country, no action has been taken by the continental body.

All we can do now is wait and hope that the thousands of victims of the conflict in South Sudan will get justice.

Source: Ndegwa, L. (2018). UN Ready to Charge Senior South Sudanese Officers And Officials With War Crimes And Crimes Against Humanity. In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1
Read more on South Sudan Crisis on OWP Crisis Index

Inside Africa: March 2018

Kenya's Newfound Political Cooperation Revives Hopes of Peace

By Gerald Tapuka, Senior Correspondent, OWP Africa

There is new hope of settling the post-electoral crisis in Kenya which has left the country in a political quagmire for several months now. This newfound ambition has been revived following a historic meeting between the two main political contenders, President Uhuru Kenyatta and his main rival, opposition strongman, Raila Odinga.

According to the BBC, both men appeared on state television on Friday, March 9 after the meeting to declare their intentions of working together to bring an end to the situation which has been dragging the East African giant into the mud. President Kenyatta is quoted as having said, "We will begin a process of discussing what ails us and what creates division amongst us." In the words of Mr Odinga, the "time to resolve our differences" is now. Even though reactions are yet awaited, it is expected that this can transform Kenya's political landscape and pave a way forward for the country.

Since the presidential elections last October 2017, which the main opposition party flag bearer, Raila Odinga boycotted, the situation in Kenya has intensified with more than 150 persons killed. However, with the two main parties in the conflict meeting for the first time after the incidence, there is hope that Kenya can trace a better way forward. The conflict could never have been managed or solved by any other person except those directly involved in it. And putting aside their political ego and working together for the sake of the nation is an example to be followed by other African countries. It is the best time for such talks to take place before the situation escalates into something similar to the post-2007 elections. The meeting of Kenyatta and Odinga is one of the biggest political victories of 2018, as both personalities have shown proof of political maturity and a love for their nation over a love for their pocketbooks. This is a ticket for the Nobel Peace Prize.

In August 2017, Presidential elections were organized in Kenya where the incumbent, Uhuru Kenyatta was declared winner. However, a Supreme Court Order cancelled the elections and called for a rerun. In October, Raila Odinga boycotted the pools sighting irregularities. However, the election took place and the incumbent, Kenyatta was declared the winner. In November, President Kenyatta was therefore sworn in for a second five-year mandate in a ceremony attended by some Heads of States. In January 2018, Raila Odinga staged a mock-swearing in ceremony where he declared himself the "people's president." The ceremony was also heavily attended by thousands of Kenyans and this signalled the real beginning of another political gymnastic. At least one MP was arrested and even deported to a third country and three private television channels were suspended for their live coverage of the ceremony. This created an impasse reminiscent of the 2007 situation which left more than 1000 persons dead.

With the meeting of the two strongmen, the future of Kenya seems promising. They did not wait for international actors to come in and impose ready-made solutions but they are giving the Kenyan

problem a Kenyan solution. This is an example for countries like South Sudan, Cameroon, and Congo where the pride of politicians and self-interests are preventing them from discussing the future of the country which is causing more bloodshed every day.

Source: Tapuka, G (2018). Kenya's Newfound Political Cooperation Revives Hopes Of Peace. In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1

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Boko Haram: UN Aid Workers Lose Their Lives to Insurgency

Olumide Adejumo, Correspondent, OWP Africa

On 1 March, the Boko Haram terrorist group launched another attack on a military base and an internally displaced people's camp. Four UN aid workers were killed, one was injured, and another is reported missing. The attack took place in the town of Rann in the Kala Balge Local Government Area in Borno state, North-East Nigeria. The new waves of attacks seem to have increased in frequency and resulted in heightened tensions in the region.

The victims of the attack were aid workers attached to the internally displaced people's camp nearby, which houses about 55,000 people displaced by the conflict. Two of the aid workers were from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and one was a medical consultant.

According to Samantha Newport, Head of Communications for UNICEF, "four aid workers were killed, one aid worker was injured and one aid worker is missing, feared abducted." The injured and missing were women and all the casualties were Nigerians, she added. It was reported that the insurgents, moving on gun trucks and motorcycles, infiltrated the town and attacked the military base before moving on to the camp. This attack is coming on the heels of a recent attack on Government Girls Science Technical College in Dapchi, Yobe state, where about 110 schoolgirls were kidnapped by the terrorist organization.

Different groups and individuals have condemned the Thursday night attack. Among them is the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Nigeria, Edward Kallon, who said "Aid workers put their lives on the line every single day to provide emergency assistance to vulnerable women, children and men. Our deepest condolences go to the families of the victims and our brave colleagues, and we call on the authorities to ensure the perpetrators are brought to justice."

In a statement released to the press, the UN said, "The north-eastern region of the country has come under severe attacks in the past years and the region has one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world today with 7.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance." They added that the crisis has displaced millions of people and some of them currently are camped in Rann and are supported by humanitarian assistance from the United Nations and some of its affiliates. According to them,

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the United Nations is working across the North-Eastern region of Nigeria, providing 6.1 million people with food, shelter and medicine among other things.

The European Union and the United States have also condemned the attack on the aid workers. The EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, called the attack "a grave violation of all humanitarian principles." The U.S. Embassy said, "The United States remains firmly committed to ensuring humanitarian workers are protected and able to do their life-saving work."

Nigeria and other countries along the Lake Chad Basin have continued to come under severe attack from Boko Haram, although Nigeria has been the worst hit by the insurgency which has claimed more than 20,000 civilian lives and millions displaced across the country. This is the time for the Nigerian government to step up its effort at stamping out insurgency finally in the country and to make sure that the deadly sect finds it difficult to attack soft targets who are the victims.

Suggested citation: Adejumo, O. (2018). Boko Haram: UN Aid Workers Lose Their Lives To Insurgency. In the Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1
Read more on Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria on OWP Crisis Index

The Controversial Rescue Of The Dapchi School Girls: Will Nigeria Seek For The 'One Sheep' Left?

Olayiwola Opeyemi Ademola, Correspondent, OWP Africa

The Federal Government of Nigeria has confirmed the release of 104 Dapchi schoolgirls abducted by Boko Haram. The Dapchi schoolgirls (plus one other girl and boy) were freed by insurgents in the early hours of 21 March. Recalling that 110 school girls were originally kidnapped, 104 were released by their abductors, and five were said to have died, it has become apparent that one other girl, Leah Sharibu, has been held back reportedly because she rebuffed an attempt to be converted to Islam.

The release comes as a sigh of relief to the country and the international community. There was joy and jubilation in the Yobe state, especially in the town of Dapchi, where the girls were released to the public. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara, has commended President Muhammadu Buhari on the release of the students. State Governor, Mr Ayodele Fayose has congratulated the parents of the Dapchi Girls that were released and sympathized with the families of the five girls that had reportedly died, describing the abduction of the girls as an indictment on the federal government and their release as "drama scripted by the government and its agents to swindle Nigerians." The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has expressed delight over the release of 104 Dapchi School Girls kidnapped by the terrorist group, Boko Haram. The United Nations Secretary-General publicly welcomed the safe return of the abducted school girls and has reiterated his calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all remaining missing girls and for their safe return to their families. Meanwhile, President Muhammadu Buhari has assured that efforts in releasing the final abducted girl, Leah Sharibu, will not stop.

The withholding of the Christian girl on the grounds of religion has a great implication for the unity and integration of the country, with the potential of spawning dangerous political, ethnic and religious conspiracy theories, which could possibly devolve into religious and ethnic conflict. Withholding the Christian girl is against the provision of freedom of religion in the Nigerian Constitution and a violation of the girl's fundamental human rights.

Earlier in the year, on 21 February and following several declarations that the extremist group Boko Haram had been defeated, the Nigerian government grimly reported on the 110 girls missing after Boko Haram militants stormed a school in the northeastern town of Dapchi on 19 February. The abduction revived painful memories of the 2014 kidnapping of 276 girls from a school in Chibok. However, there are many controversial and conflicting narratives that surround the abduction in Dapchi. The foremost including the sudden withdrawal of military check-points from the area a few days before the students were abducted and a failure of the security forces to act in advance of warnings. These claims have raised suspicion and questions with many Nigerians. Further adding to the controversy is the fact that many believe the release of the abducted girls to be an arranged abduction and release by the government.

Nigeria must prove its commitment to defend and protect all citizens irrespective of their faith and religion. Whereas the Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, has said all the 106 persons were freed unconditionally, contrary to reports in a section of the media that a ransom was paid, we recommend that the federal government go through the same procedures
and return back to the negotiation table for a peaceful and unconditional means of release for Leah Sharibu. Religious leaders in the country should also encourage their followers to avoid conflicting narratives that could divide the country.

Suggested citation; Olayiwola, O. A (2018). The Controversial Rescue Of The Dapchi School Girls: Will Nigeria Seek For The 'One Sheep' Left? . In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1.
Read more on Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria on OWP Crisis Index

"Punish a Muslim Day:" Hateful Letters Distributed around the United Kingdom

Ferdinand Bada, Senior Correspondent, OWP Africa

Think of the act of punishing a Muslim as a video game. In video games, you get points for performing different actions. Only in this game, the action is finding a Muslim and hurting them. Points are awarded depending on the severity of the punishment. At the lowest level, verbally abuse a Muslim to earn 10 points. Pull off the hijab of a Muslim woman to earn 25 points, or get 50 by throwing acid on a Muslim's face. The big points are gained from more extensive acts of destruction. Burning down a mosque is worth a massive 1,000 points. The greatest achievement, worth 2,500 points, is nuking Mecca, Islam's holiest city.

Imagine getting up in the morning to a letter informing you that all Muslims are horrible, and outlining the ways you can punish them on April 3, 2018. This horrific letter greeted citizens in some areas of the U.K., including parts of London and Leicester. While some may be quick to brush off these letters because their impact is limited to Muslims in the U.K., bear in mind that this is the era of the internet and viral content. With all of the hate and religious tension that is being promoted by leaders around the world, including U.S. President Donald Trump, it is easy to see how this could get out of hand.

To compound this problem further, there is a lot of ignorance about Islam. For example, some people don't even know that the religion Muslims practice is called Islam. A lot of people live and interact with Muslims every day and still have no idea what Islam is all about. Society and popular media tend to portray all Muslims as violent terrorists akin to Osama Bin Laden. Allow me to disabuse people of one misconception about Islam: nowhere does Islam preach violence. In fact, most of the teachings in the Quran are very similar to those in the Bible. Both Christianity and Islam are based on teachings of peace and love. The few bad seeds who misinterpret the Quran do so out of a desire to manipulate people and advance their own selfish, depraved desires. There exist plenty of these bad seeds among Christians as well, but nobody has created 'Punish a Christian Day.'

Do this Instead

You are probably wondering what you can do to help to ensure that April 3 does not culminate in violence, loss of life, or the destruction of Mecca. First, spread the word that we need to coexist peacefully with our Muslim brothers and sisters. Just because an ignorant individual decides to spread hateful messages does not mean that they are correct. People, Christians and Muslims alike, all make mistakes. That is why both the Bible and Quran preach forgiveness. What we can do for this person is pray for them and forgive their soul. Secondly, April 3 is now officially 'Love a Muslim Day.' You will receive points for loving and showing solidarity with our Muslim brothers and sisters. If you want the most points, go ahead and buy a Hajj package for a Muslim family's pilgrimage to Mecca. Alternatively, you can just smile at a Muslim and get yourself an easy ten points.

Lastly, everyone can take a moment to really understand Islam. It is widespread to the extent that most people have at least one Muslim person in their network. Take the opportunity to sit with them and understand the religion. Do not believe everything you see and hear, particularly in this age of 'fake news.' Have a lovely time as we all prepare to make Love a Muslim Day a success on April 3, 2018.

Suggested citation: Bada, F. (2018). "Punish A Muslim Day:" Hateful Letters Distributed Around The United Kingdom. In The Illusion of Democratic Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Organisation for World Peace. OWP Africa Quarterly Report. Issue No 1
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Conclusion

Over five decades of decolonization and independence of Africa, the discussion of democratic peace still looms. The reason is not unclear - the promoters of democratic peace within the African continent have failed to monitor and evaluate the democratization process, or have African leaders taken ownership of the process; they have contributed to the spread and solidification of illiberal democracies. As a result, illiberal democracies exhibit illusions of democracy. While many African countries do not have "free and fair elections," they reflect the reality of popular participation in politics and support for those elected. Since colonialism promoted division along ethnic and clan lines, the custom of multi-ethnic collaboration was destroyed, allowing for politicians to organize support along ethnic lines rather than creating unity among people. Thus, the persecution of government opposition and other human rights abuses remain prevalent in these illiberal democracies.

Apparently, the emergence of China as a major global player and heavily investing in Africa presents another challenge for liberal democracy. As China offers development aid free of political demands, the African states can use the old Cold War game to play off of the global powers. Whether the West chooses to forego its democratic ideals and fund unsavory regimes to check Chinese influence, or outright install pro-Western governments, the effect on democracy in Africa is still damaging to the liberal democratic cause. The fact that in Europe liberal democracy and globalism are looking less appealing by the day must also play a large role in the decline of democracy in Africa. With the rise of populism in the heartland of liberal democracy, traditional liberal values such as the rule of law and the independence of the courts, are being cast aside in favour of simple majorities and appeal to the emotion of the people. Given the erosion of liberal democratic values at home, one can hardly expect developing countries and ambitious political leaders not to use the rise of radicalism and nationalism in the West for their own purposes, whether to underscore the undesirability of democracy or to feed into populism to remain in power.

Therefore, it is important that the process of democratization in the African continent be revaluated. Evidently, political elites have noted the value of maintaining illiberal and neo-patrimonial governments. They have continually demonstrated that they will put self-interests over that of the people they represent. However, it is noteworthy that the rise of democracy in countries that do not have a foundation of constitutional liberalism will result in hyper-nationalism and war-mongering, as seen in the Sub-Saharan African countries. As a result, the youth - now more than before - must rise above the flawed political climate and change the status quo. They must demand accountability of the governing elite, instead of expecting Western countries to police their actions. The youth must have their voices heard both in political systems and in the grassroots realm in order to bring about change in a combined bottom-up and top-down approach.

With the establishment of Joint Multinational Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin Countries as well as the G5 Sahel forces, it is important to recognize that preventing radicalization and stabilizing the two regions requires that economic growth and employment be an essential objective for the stakeholders involved, especially with such a significantly growing young population in the affected regions. Equally important is that the deployed forces earn the trust of locals in the areas that they are given their mandates. If the rights of the local populations are not rigorously respected,

it risks alienating the people that they are there to serve. As a result, the alienation hands over a great and difficult to overcome weapon to the militants, a steady supply of young radicalized individuals that they have been successful in promising revenge and accountability towards.

Mapping of stabilization vectors in the conflict-affected regions is a necessity. This mapping exercise will help identify the loopholes in the security sectors and provide clear-cut roadmaps for proper coordination of actions against insurgency, terrorism and socio-economic challenges facing the regions. It is also an exercise that would check abusive governance and open internal investigation into alleged abuses that are impartially checked by the mandates of the independent bodies and respective National Human Rights Commissions in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin Countries. Thus, an illusion of democratic peace should not be allowed to overshadow the accomplishments of peace and stability in Sub-Saharan Africa but rather, democratic institutions should be empowered to improve the ability of security forces to stabilize the region.

Look out for our next quarterly report!!!