



**Wilson Center
Africa Program**

**Africa: Year
in Review
2019**

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Cover image: Street Art from the Sudan Revolution.

*Photo by "duncan c," via Flickr Commons.
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*Images on page 4 and 5: Citizens take part in a demonstration against former president Abdelaziz Bouteflika during the Algerian protests. Photo by "Fethi Hamlati" via Wikimedia Commons.
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Africa: Year in Review 2019

A Letter from the Director

The *2019 Africa: Year in Review* continues the Wilson Center's annual tradition of asking experts, scholars, and stakeholders what they considered the most meaningful developments in Africa.

Many developments stood out with two in particular resonating greatly with many of our contributors: The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement and the rise of popular protests across the continent. The entry into force of the AfCFTA in 2019 was a major milestone, resonating in Africa and across the globe. Four contributions capture both the hope and potential of AfCFTA but also the challenges ahead. Without doubt, the commitment with which African countries embrace and implement the AfCFTA could shape the continent's future for years. On the governance front, 2019 was the year of "people power" as citizens in various African countries came out in their masses to protest bad governance and "presidents for life." Leaders in Algeria and Sudan were forced from office, and Angola and Zimbabwe continued to move forward with new leaders. As Sudan leaves behind Omar al-Bashir's 30-year dictatorship, our contributors look at the implications for Sudan, the Horn, and the continent. We also delve into popular mobilization in Algeria, Guinea, and Zimbabwe. Clearly, Africans are no longer willing to accept political and economic systems which fail to address their needs and aspirations.

Matters of economic governance loomed large on the continent. Several countries, including Kenya, faced the prospect of falling into serious debt crises in 2019 while others continued to grapple with how best to address corruption. There were also key developments on the peace and nation-building fronts. With increased violent extremism and pastoral violence across many parts of the continent, we have contributions on ways to more effectively understand and address these challenges. In the Horn of Africa, we look at why the hope that characterized the much-heralded peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea appears to have faded. Women played critical roles in both the protests and in efforts to build peace. One essay looks at the increasingly significant role that women are playing in South Sudan's peacebuilding efforts even as they face significant sexual and gender-based violence. We also look at how, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, conflict has confounded efforts to combat an Ebola epidemic. Immigration and refugee policy was a huge global issue in 2019, including in Africa. One of the essays looks at how some



African governments have developed policies that manage refugee situations in an inclusive manner that strengthens human security.

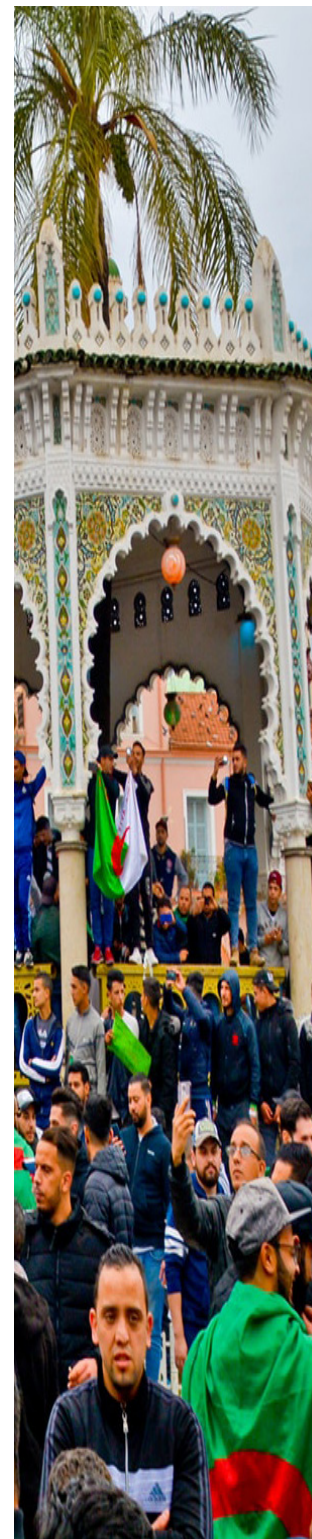
In U.S.-Africa relations, concerns remain over U.S. commitment to the continent. The Trump administration continues to move forward with its Prosper Africa initiative and the creation of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), although there are concerns that other countries, especially China, continue to outpace U.S. investment. The new U.S. Ambassador to South Africa arrived after a three-year gap. The U.S. military continued its collaboration with African partners to build stronger security services and address security threats. However, the administration's move to withdraw from Syria raised concerns about the durability of U.S. security commitments to the continent.

In addition to continuing relations with traditional partners, Africa forged new and strengthened existing relationships with non-traditional partners. One contributor looks into how Turkey is expanding its footprint in Africa. Amid rising tensions and conflict in the Gulf, another contributor analyzes how the Gulf States are attempting to influence transitions in the Horn of Africa to their advantage and what role the U.S. might play in ensuring stability in the region.

On the cultural front, one contributor examines the role played by the African creative sector in economic growth and global entertainment. This was also a year to reflect on the long, complicated history between the U.S. and Africa, as the U.S. observed the 400th anniversary of the first arrival of enslaved Africans to its shores, and Ghana's president launched the "Year of Return, Ghana 2019" initiative to deepen ties between Ghana and the African diaspora. While focused on Ghana's initiative, our contributor also demonstrates that a more connected global African diaspora can be an even greater force for good, healing, and transformation.

We thank all of the authors for their contributions to this year's *Africa: Year in Review*. I am especially proud of and grateful for the many young people who contributed to the publication thus allowing us a glimpse into what matters to the next generation. As we begin a new decade, we must look back on the triumphs, failures, and lessons learned from the past 10 years to see how these experiences can inform the building of a more prosperous Africa that benefits all Africans.

Dr. Monde Muyangwa
Director, Africa Program



TRADE, INVESTMENT, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Now That We Are All Getting Cozy Together—The African Union’s African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement

Ms. Viola Llewellyn

The idea that Africa can become “one” has been a topic of discussion amongst Africans for decades. Uniting fractured markets, opening up cross-border trade, aggregating demand, and creating a genuine reason for digital currencies all became possible with the ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement in April 2019.

Turning Africa into a free-trade zone could arguably make the continent “too big to push around;” business and market autonomy combined with a scale-back of heavy-handed regulatory responses could shift the power of influence into the hands of the private sector. Add to that currencies backed by Africa’s own gold reserves or resources, continental transformation of raw materials, wide-spread renewable energy, and a departure from oil dependency, and the continent might just have a chance at *real* change and *real* wealth. Africa could finally have “lift off” ... No more vague references to Africa rising.

It’s clear why this is important for Africa: economic unity represents a *massive* human resources shift from post-colonial career choices to vocationally driven STEM careers that will solve challenges across all sectors. Leveraging technology to enable swift communication and transfer of resources en masse will create a velocity of capital continentally. In short, a fully operational AfCFTA will diminish Africa’s dependence on aid. Individual wealth of Africans would rise with the projected 52 percent increase in trade and removal of approximately 90 percent of current tariffs. Think of it as “Africa’s New Deal,” similar to President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1930s “New Deal” aimed at resetting the American economy.

Access to appreciable wealth will have a wholesale impact on how Africans view their relationship with America—and themselves. The psychology of “ownership and opportunity” creates strong ties to property and endowment. A wealth-focused Africa would also force a revision of U.S. policy on aid and business engagement with Africa. There would be a continental demographic bulge of 40 percent of Africans under the age of 40 who are consumers of “Made in Africa” products or products assembled on the continent. The United States will have to revise its age-old assumptions about equality, partnership, and economic power. Everything from competition with Russia and China, diplomacy, and even how the media speaks about Africa could change because of the union achieved through the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement.

Securing Africa's Future: The African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement, Women Empowerment, Security, and Prosper Africa

Dr. Leila Ndiaye

The prospects of a thriving and prosperous Africa are real. Statistics reveal promising trends for a continent that is hardly associated with good news, especially from the international media. True democracy has gained root with rising numbers of real political transitions and people participation, albeit with a few setbacks. Many governments have invested more in infrastructure. Better and cheaper communication technologies have increased connectivity, improved business transactions, provided for more efficient services, and increased productivity in traditional sectors like agriculture and manufacturing.

While trade and development have continued to be constrained by smaller markets and poor infrastructure, dramatic change is unfolding with the enactment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement in 2019. AfCFTA brings together Africa's 55 states, 1.2 billion people, and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD\$3.5 trillion, forming the world's largest single market according to the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). If implemented right, this agreement will facilitate greater movement of people, goods and services, and investment and trade across Africa. Africa's regional markets are sufficiently large to attract more investors and capital.

Reduction of trade barriers between countries can lower transaction costs, increase trade flows, and spur more jobs and create income. However, this will happen only if there is increased industrialization and value addition, especially in industries that raise productivity among women and youth. More access to finance, land, training, and other requisite productive resources for women and youth can help Africa realize its immense potential. While donors and governments are starting to pay more attention to youth and women, their efforts are too small to make a dent.

This offers a great opportunity for U.S. engagement through Prosper Africa and the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative, two programs that can help to unleash the power of the private sector to scale-up and grow Africa's small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in key sectors that would also benefit the U.S. It is time to go beyond research and experiments to establish real U.S.-Africa business-to-business relationships. However, without peace, there can never be sustained development. That is why there must also be programs that strengthen countries' ability to secure their people's freedom by creating enabling conditions for peaceful co-existence and dignified livelihood.

The African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement May Be the Last Opportunity for Africa's Economic Transformation

Mr. George Boateng and Ms. Beatrice Oforiwaah Dankyi

The landmark African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which will be fully operational in 2020, has the potential to create a continental free-trade zone with a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of USD\$3.4 trillion, according to the African Union (AU). This trade agreement, if implemented fully, would become the largest in the world. The AfCFTA is one of the flagship projects of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2014-2023) under the AU's Agenda 2063—"The Africa We Want." Realistically, what do Africans really want?

The AfCFTA emphasizes the reduction of tariffs and non-tariff barriers, and the facilitation of free movement of people and labor, right of residence, right of establishment, and investment. Yet the hype around the AfCFTA's agenda could experience a boomerang effect if negotiations on some protocols and annexes become protracted. Despite its extensive propagation by the AU leadership, some experts have cautioned against the way ahead for the AfCFTA, yet expectations remain high. There are several challenges on the road ahead.

Member nations of the African Union vary in their preparedness to execute the requirements of the agreement and its related protocols and annexes. It is also a fact that in order for the AfCFTA to thrive, the continent needs to address the existing annual infrastructure deficit—about USD\$108 billion according to the African Development Bank (2018)—to be able to drive free trade. Additionally, the continent would require billions of dollars to strengthen supply chains as well as fiscal and monetary policy in order to ensure that the benefits of the agreement are maximized. Primarily, there is the need to develop national strategies to guide the implementation of the AfCFTA. Accordingly, African countries must be willing to have open borders. Coincidentally, developments such as Nigeria's August 2019 closing of its borders with Benin and Ghana may cripple the AfCFTA's effectiveness, especially when all the involved countries are signatories to AfCFTA.

In the perspective of the great pan-Africanist, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, "It is clear that we must find an African solution to Africa's problems, and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided, we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world." Likewise, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's recent Nobel Peace Prize honor can also inspire Africans to pursue the Africa they desire. To this end, Africans need to rally around the AfCFTA to make it a success. This is all the more important given the suboptimal impact on Africa's development that has been derived from multilateral trade agreements to date. The AfCFTA might be the last grasp chance for Africa's economic transformation.

The Protectionist Headwinds and the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement

Mr. Sotola David Olusegun

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which was ratified in 2019, is expected to come into full implementation in 2020. However, the continent's 2019 realities show that it may be sailing into serious headwinds. As designed, the AfCFTA is a great leap forward for boosting pan-African trade as it demonstrates the continent's intent to break down barriers and forge a bigger and more close-knit economy. Estimates suggest it will increase intra-African trade by at least 53 percent. In 2019, more countries, including heavyweights like Nigeria, signed the agreement, bringing the signatories to 54. As of December 2019, 29 African countries had deposited their instruments of ratification with the African Union thus paving the way for implementation.

As focus shifts from ratification to implementation, however, the outlook for the AfCFTA is poor. In particular, the agreement's alignment with member countries' domestic policies is demonstrably weak. The AfCFTA's reliance on open borders and easy movement across member states is undermined by strong waves of protectionist policies and nationalistic sentiments across the continent. Nigeria, for example, closed its land borders with neighboring countries, effectively stopping import and export especially along its western trade corridor—to Benin, Ghana, Togo, and Liberia. The primary goal for the closure was to protect local rice production by stopping illegal rice imports. The closure also led to collateral damage, including losses to genuine business through trade corridors. There is also the possibility of counter-measures by the affected countries. Similarly, in many African countries, anti-foreigner sentiment is rife due to concerns about protecting jobs for locals. There were also closed border situations involving Kenya and Somalia, Sudan, Libya, and the Central African Republic, as well as violence involving truck movement across borders in southern and Central Africa.

A wave of xenophobic attacks in South Africa in September 2019 led to counter-attacks on South African businesses in other African countries.

These developments point to the continent's low level of readiness for this agreement. For it to have optimal impact, member countries need to demonstrate greater commitment to addressing the inconsistencies between domestic policies and the AfCFTA. At present, the framework seems ambitious and isolated, and thus may under-achieve. The AfCFTA can only thrive to the extent that domestic policies align with it. Until then, the AfCFTA is only a demonstration of intent.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Following in the Footsteps of Dinosaurs: Helping Transitions Succeed in 2020

Dr. Alex Vines

Africa's "dinosaur" leaders are members of an increasingly small and unstable club. 2019 saw dramatic change in Algeria and Sudan as after almost 20 years in power, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and after 30 years, Omar al-Bashir, were forced from office by popular protest. They followed in the footsteps of Zimbabwe's 93 year-old Robert Mugabe, who died in 2019 after having been forced out of the presidency in 2017 after 37 years in power, and Angola's president José Eduardo dos Santos, who stepped down from office in 2017 after almost 37 years.

All four ex-leaders wanted to remain heads of state and only considered succession planning as a last resort. 2020 is a critical year for all four countries.

Algeria: There have been widespread demonstrations contesting the legitimacy of the elections held on December 12, 2019. A soft landing for Algeria in 2020 seems unlikely, and this has significant regional implications for North Africa and the Sahel.

Zimbabwe: The post-Mugabe transition is deeply troubled, with an acute foreign exchange liquidity crisis, deteriorating economy, and underperforming government. Zimbabwe's short-term future looks bleak—a far cry from the euphoria of two years ago when a "military assisted transition" removed Mugabe and replaced him with Emmerson Mnangagwa as president.

Sudan: Transition here is more promising, despite deep economic crisis. A 39-month transitional administration led by a technocratic Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok enjoys domestic and international goodwill. Its honeymoon will likely be short, and it needs to show results.

Angola: This transition, led by President João Lourenço, is smoother than the aforementioned, and 2020 will be a watershed year. Angola has been in an economic recession for four years, but gross domestic product is predicted to grow in 2020. Increasing frustration among urban youth and the middle class gives pause, however.

Preparing for and supporting transitions from long-standing leaders is an important lesson of recent years. Three of the aforementioned leaders suddenly capitulated under internal pressure (in Algeria, Sudan, and Zimbabwe); only in Angola was the transition part of an elite bargain. What all four transitions have in common is that time is short and new leaders need to deliver visible political and economic improvements. Algeria is currently too fluid to predict, and Zimbabwe seems to be deteriorating, but Angola and Sudan, after years of stagnation, could in 2020 see economic and political improvement with good domestic policies and international investment and support.

Guinea Tests Resilience of Presidential Term Limits

Dr. Sophia Moestrup

While three-quarters of African citizens favor limits on presidential terms according to Afrobarometer, some African presidents are not so easily convinced. Since 2001, presidents in 16 of the continent's 54 countries have attempted to modify or eliminate term limits. Of that number, 10 were successful. According to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, countries without term limits tend to be more unstable and at greater risk of armed conflict.

Guinea is currently testing the resilience of the two-terms presidential limit adopted in the 2010 constitution. After months of speculation and suspicions, President Condé, in his second and last term due to end in 2020, announced in late December a referendum on a new constitution which could reset the term limit counter to zero.

The proposed new constitution, drafted in utter secrecy by a "technical committee" far from the public eye, increases the presidential term length from five to six years, "renewable once." Its transitory provisions are silent on whether the incumbent president can run again under the new terms, although many Guineans are convinced that is the main purpose of Condé's move. The referendum timing remains unclear, as Guinea prepares for legislative elections in February and presidential polls by October 2020.

President Condé has not yet stated whether he will stand for re-election, should a new constitution be adopted before the end of his term. Since October, opposition parties and civil society organizations in a National Front for the Defense of the Constitution (FNDC) have organized demonstrations across the country, bringing hundreds of thousands into the streets. Violent crack-downs by security services have resulted in more than 20 deaths and many arrests.

Many West Africans worry that continued controversy over a new constitution could lead to more deadly violence. Guinea is a bellwether for other countries in the region and the current debate could influence political developments in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, where incumbent presidents are in their second and last terms in office. Circumventing term limits in Guinea could lead to violence and major destabilizing effects in an already fragile neighborhood. On the other hand, should Condé abide by the existing constitution and relinquish power when his current term ends, he would be the first democratically elected president of Guinea to peacefully cede power at the end of his constitutionally mandated term.

Africa in 2019: The Resilience of People Power

Mr. Adotei Akwei

As 2019 winds down to close, it is hard to identify continental trends for a region that encompasses 54 countries and 1.216 billion people—Africa. Developments in one corner of a country often do not have an impact on the other side of that country, let alone the continent. That said, one trend for 2019 has to have been the strength of protests to drive political change. In a period of increasing intolerance and closing civic space across Africa, people took to the streets in dozens of African countries including Algeria, Guinea, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Egypt, and Ethiopia.

The drivers behind these protests varied by country. Post-Mugabe Zimbabwe has been embroiled by protests since the election of Emmerson Mnangagwa, as the economic situation continued to deteriorate and Mnangagwa struggled mightily to enact political reforms.

Algeria's protests were in response to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's attempt to seek a fifth term after 20 years in power. Following Bouteflika's ouster, the protestors began demanding broader political reform and ending the military's political control.

By far the most dramatic and unexpected example of people power has been in Sudan. The Sudanese protests were sparked by a steep rise in the cost of living and tapped into decades of anger and frustration caused by the brutal 30-year rule of Omar al-Bashir.

Non-violent protestors faced security forces and allied militias that have been linked to decades of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Al-Bashir's removal from office in April was not enough and the protests continued as the people sought meaningful democratic change. True to form, the Sudanese security forces cracked down, including the massacre of over 100 people in June. However, it soon became clear that the protests were not going away. This paved the way for an interim power-sharing agreement and began a transition process to democracy.

While the outcomes of these examples are not guaranteed, they confirm that Africans will demand good governance, political accountability, and human rights, especially if they have been denied achieving those hopes through the ballot box. U.S. policy toward Africa needs to reprioritize supporting these aspirations before people are forced to resort to protests.

Sudan and Algeria: The Growing Power of African Protests

Dr. Joseph Siegle

2019 saw the sudden departure of Presidents Omar al-Bashir of Sudan and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, collectively representing 50 years of authoritarian leadership.

The precipitating factor in the downfall of both leaders was popular protests that crystallized these governments' weak claim on legitimacy and the yawning disparities in living conditions they generated. These protests have been extraordinary for their size, staying power, demographic cross-section, and leadership from middle-class professionals. Perhaps most meaningfully, the protests have been non-violent. That they were able to remain so despite repeated acts of intimidation by security actors, even when this resulted in hundreds of lives lost, is remarkable.

To be clear, neither case has yet resulted in a democratic transition. In Sudan, a transitional civil-military coalition government has emerged to ostensibly lead the country to competitive elections in 2022. In Algeria, the military-backed ruling party continues to hold on. In neither country has the military leadership come to accept that they must cede power.

Still, the Sudan and Algerian protests are highly significant. They show African citizens asserting agency over their political institutions. Rather than opting for violence or insurgency, they are acting to reform political systems that are not responsive to citizens. This reflects a more sophisticated, urban, and youthful population that is connected to the outside world and has higher democratic expectations than previous generations. This is part of a growing pattern across Africa. In 2019, 22 African countries experienced sustained protests, building on a decade-long trend.

Alarmed by the prospect of democracy taking root in North Africa, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Russia have tried to prop up the status quo military-led governments in Sudan and Algeria through financial, diplomatic, and security assistance.

The United States and other established democracies, on the other hand, have mostly remained on the sidelines. Stronger diplomatic engagement and technical support could substantively help these reform movements translate their vision of creating responsive democracies into reality. Absent this engagement, authoritarian powerbrokers are sure to fill the void. And they have a vastly different vision for how these protests should end.

Sudan: The Making of a Peaceful Revolution

Ambassador Nureldin Satti

The December 2018 revolution in Sudan was triggered by the hike in bread and fuel prices, but it quickly turned into a massive popular movement lasting well into 2019. “Freedom, Peace and Justice” became the rallying cry for a real political and social revolution calling for civilian rule, together with the commitment to the peaceful nature of the revolution as an essential prerequisite to its successful conclusion.

Another notable feature of the Sudan revolution is the key role that young women and girls played in it. “Kandakadas” became the icons of the revolution, inspired by the fighting queens of the kingdoms of Kush, Méroé, and Nubia. The Forces for Freedom and Change, a coalition of professionals, civil society groups, and political parties, provided the leadership for the massive protests that ultimately toppled the Bashir regime. Civilian and military leaders then showed realism by accepting compromises that allowed the country to move forward, averting chaos and further mayhem, marking the beginning of a long and uncertain process, fraught with many dangers, conflicting agendas, and diverging interests.

The African Union and Ethiopia mediated a power-sharing agreement in August 2019 that allowed civilians and military/security forces to form a Sovereign Council at the head of the state level, while putting all executive powers in the hands of civilians. A three-year transitional period was agreed, the first part of which will be led by a military figure (General Alburahan) and the second part by a civilian. A 350-member Legislative Assembly was to be formed by mid-November. This is yet to be done. Elections are to be held at the end of the transitional period.

Dr. Abdalla Hamdok, a renowned former UN senior official, was appointed as Prime Minister, and a 20-member cabinet, mainly composed of highly qualified professionals, was sworn in on August 17, 2019. The cabinet is charged with fixing the ailing economy, ending the conflict in Darfur, delivering transitional justice, providing quality social services, initiating broad governance reform, and reintegrating Sudan into the regional, continental, and international communities.

At the behest of the U.S. and Germany, a Friends of Sudan group was established in May 2019 to support the transition to civilian rule. Close cooperation between a rapidly reforming Sudan and its international and regional partners will be critical to solidifying the Sudanese revolution’s hopeful gains.

Algeria's Second Chance at Democracy

Ms. Hannah Akuiyibo

The list of African presidents-for-life decreased by one in April 2019 when Algeria's leader of 20 years resigned. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's resignation followed sustained popular protests opposing his intent to run for a fifth term. The politically-powerful military encouraged Bouteflika's departure but has since underestimated the staying power of the protestors. Not appeased by the president's ouster, the so-called Hirak Movement has maintained twice-weekly protests since February. Their demands? A restructuring of the political system toward a more just and accountable government and the removal of the old regime elites. In response, the government postponed elections initially scheduled for July until December 12, 2019. Yet, all of the candidates were former members of Bouteflika's government. With the regime's loss of legitimacy, the lack of acceptable alternatives, and insufficient time to organize opposition candidates, the protestors decried the December 12 elections as premature.

Despite protestors calling for Algerians to boycott the vote and a record low voter turnout of 41 percent, according to official government figures (down from 49 percent in 2014 and 75 percent in 2009), Abdelmadjid Tebboune was elected president with 58 percent of the vote. Tebboune, who was a prime minister under Bouteflika for a mere three months in 2017, campaigned with the promise of a "New Algeria" that would tackle corruption and include younger Algerians in government. Despite his indicated willingness to dialogue with protestors, Hirak did not receive his election well, and post-election protests have continued. The extent to which Tebboune could be a reformer is unknown. While his 2017 firing and the confiscation of his passport allegedly stemmed from conflicts with the president and Algerian businessmen over corruption, he is still a political insider of over 40 years. Nevertheless, the key determinant for Tebboune's success will be how well he manages his relationship with the military. This was complicated by the December 23 passing of Tebboune's long-time friend, General Gaid Sala, who had led Algeria in the months preceding the election.

The next steps will be important for the United States to watch. The U.S. has historically partnered with Algeria on security and counter-terrorism efforts and invested in its energy sector. With the increasing importance of the Sahel to U.S. counter-terrorism efforts, Washington will likely pursue even closer security cooperation. The high-level U.S.-Algeria Strategic Dialogue convened in early 2019 is an indication of the U.S. intent to strengthen the relationship. While Algeria has had a fraught relationship with other African nations in the region, they are an important force economically and could play a more prominent role in promoting regional peace and security. A democratic transition in Algeria would be a paradigm-shifting event for the region, but one that will likely follow the uncertain, uneven path of all such transitions.

“Naming and Faming” as a New Way to Fight Corruption Across the Continent

Mr. Odeh Friday and Ms. Dadisai Taderera

Corruption continues to be at the heart of Africa’s challenges. In 2019, we saw confirmation that multiple corruption charges will be brought against former President Zuma of South Africa, the arrest of the governor of Nairobi and many other county officials for economic crimes, and the conviction of two former Prime Ministers of Algeria for graft, to name but a few well-known examples. Indeed, more than half of African citizens felt corruption was getting worse in 2019, with as many as 80 percent paying a bribe for basic public services in some countries. And it is Africa’s poorest people who are most affected by this graft.

Traditional anti-corruption approaches in Africa are not working. They are too problem-focused, too “supply-driven,” and too centered around institutional reform. In 2019, a new way of thinking about these issues emerged: a solutions-oriented approach, led by citizens and grounded in the idea that it is individuals who can shift norms.

Integrity Icon is a campaign led by the Accountability Lab across Africa to move away from “naming and shaming” and toward “naming and faming” honest government officials. Integrity Icon harnesses popular, media-driven approaches to flip the narrative around corruption, rebuild hope, and lift up role models to encourage the younger generation to push back against corruption.

Any citizen can nominate a bureaucrat with integrity. With the support of prominent judges, the campaign then selects the top five nominees and promotes them on broadcast and social media. Citizens can vote for their favorites through WhatsApp, SMS, and online. Integrity Icon then crowns the selected “Icons” at prominent national ceremonies. In 2019, the winners ranged from an incredible community health facilitator in South Africa to the cleanest policeman in Nigeria to an unstoppable energy coordinator in Mali.

This is just the beginning. Now the campaign is working with the Icons to build coalitions, mentor incoming civil servants, and jointly push for reforms within governments. Corruption saps hope and undermines trust. Integrity Icon does exactly the opposite, and allows citizens to feel like they can be part of a different future. In 2020 Accountability Lab is bringing Integrity Icon to Philadelphia, in part because there is much the U.S. can learn from Africa around these issues. If 2019 showed us anything, it is that Africa needs a change in approach when fighting corruption. To move beyond eye-catching headlines and ensure sustainable change, we need to catch people doing the right thing.

Kenya's Rising Debt Crisis: The Greater Need for Evidence-Driven Policy Decisions

Ms. Diana Warira

According to a World Bank report published in October 2019, Kenya risks going into debt distress. Despite this warning, the Kenyan Parliament recently approved the National Treasury's application to raise the debt cap above 50 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). The country's public debt currently stands at nearly 6 trillion Kenya Shillings, and the government's revenue collection strategy does not seem to be improving the situation. At the citizen level, Kenyans are digging deeper into their pockets to stay afloat as the cost of living continues to soar due to high taxation and the rising cost of living—and there is no solution in sight.

It is in such a harsh economic climate that the government should prioritize the use of evidence to guide decisions relating to financial policies. Critical issues to investigate include the implications of raising public debt above 50 percent of GDP; alternatives to heavy borrowing to ensure that Kenya does not sink deeper into debt distress; the impact of high public debt on local businesses and investments; and, the effect of public debt on the overall quality of life for Kenyans.

Of particular interest is whether Kenya's Parliament is fully exercising its oversight role over the Executive and effectively leveraging evidence from monitoring and evaluation of the operations of the National Treasury. Legislators need to evaluate the Treasury's implementation of its Medium-Term Debt Management Strategy and determine whether they have confidence in the Treasury's ability to effectively manage the country's public debt and not sink the nation into crisis.

Similarly, if the research and data are available but are not being utilized, then governments should be held to account as to why this is the case. These are pertinent issues to reflect upon as Kenya hopes for a better financial and economic outlook in 2020. As the U.S. continues to strengthen its economic ties with Kenya and other African countries, there is need for more conversations on how to strengthen the use of monitoring and evaluation data by parliaments in assessing government performance. Parliaments and governments should also prioritize relevant research to ensure they make the right policy decisions and use resources effectively.

Africa's Migration: Embracing Free Movement of Persons Amidst a Changing Migration and Refugee Climate in the United States

Ms. Agnes Igoe, Mr. Thomas Karrel, and Dr. Jamie Van Leeuwen

Migration in and out of Africa dominated headlines in 2019, highlighting conflict zones and long-term cultural divides in countries like Somalia, Sudan, and South Africa. However, behind the headlines, Africa—through the African Union and the continent's various Regional Economic Communities (RECs)—continues to undertake interventions to champion a migration development agenda that is quite progressive and often under-reported. Uganda hosts the largest refugee population in Africa, third in the world, with more than 1.3 million refugees and asylum-seekers (2019 UNHCR). At the same time, Uganda has one of the most progressive refugee protection policies in the world. Uganda's 2010 Refugee Regulations allow refugees freedom of movement and the right to work, establish a business, own property, and access national services such as education and healthcare.

In contrast, October 2019 was the first month in history that the number of refugees resettled in the United States hit zero. The U.S. State Department issued an admissions ceiling of 18,000 for 2020, the lowest in 30 years and far below the current number of displaced people already in the U.S. resettlement pipeline. As pivotal national governments such as the United States are moving toward protectionism and closing off borders, African countries are widely embracing policies advocating free movement and community engagement.

Establishing a humane and coordinated system for sustained migration between and among countries is a complex international challenge. Encouragingly, 76 percent of Americans have a favorable view on immigration according to a 2019 Gallup poll, and 81 percent support a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants meeting base requirements, very much in line with Uganda's policies.

Cross-cultural migration helps transfer skills, manpower, and innovation to spark growth in developing economies, and is critical to facilitating international coordination. In our increasingly interconnected world, policies supporting more fair and humane migratory systems become increasingly important to regional development and sustained collaborations across all sectors. African countries are embracing immigration policies that could inform others.

**CONFLICT PREVENTION,
PEACEBUILDING, AND SECURITY**

State Violence and Violent Extremism in Africa: Proposing a New Approach

Dr. Marc Sommers

2019 witnessed an enlargement of influence by violent extremist organizations (VEOs) in Africa. In West Africa, Jihadist activities increased in Burkina Faso and Mali. Boko Haram conducted grisly attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger. Al-Shabaab continues to roil East Africa, from Somalia and Kenya to Tanzania and Uganda. In southern Africa, militant violence afflicts northern Mozambique. In these and other African nations, VEOs target youth for recruitment, ignite humanitarian crises, leave many thousands dead or displaced, and expand their ability to maneuver, destabilize, and influence. They are formidable. Unfortunately and all too often, African governments respond to VEO attacks by demonstrating an unintended knack for boosting their efforts.

According to Nordås and Davenport, “governments facing a youth bulge” —including virtually every African and Middle Eastern nation— “are more repressive than other states.” Indeed, “the relationship between youth bulges and state repression is direct.” In addition, there is “a strong link between repressive [state] security tactics and the rise of extremism” (RESOLVE Network, 2016). States that throttle youthful citizens, in short, inadvertently help their enemies. Nevertheless, donors, practitioners, and researchers engaged in countering violent extremism often sidestep the topic of state repression. Government sensitivity about violent state forces is common. State terror also can terrify citizens into silence.

Helping African governments realize that positive engagement with youth is a winning strategy calls for specialized research and programming together with sustained and coordinated advocacy by the U.S. government and other international actors with African states.

Here is a proposed way forward. First, employ trust-based research to probe a common phenomenon: why some youth in one village or neighborhood leave for violent extremist groups—while those in similar locations nearby do not. Second, use the research results to inform 1) advocacy strategies to work for authentic, meaningful reform of local and national government policies and practices that repress and exclude youth (UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security is an important additional advocacy tool); and, 2) the design and delivery of programs targeting youth who are vulnerable to VEO recruitment drives. Practitioners should collaborate and partner with these same young people.

Ramping up engagement and sharpening advocacy efforts with African governments is necessary to weaken VEOs and strengthen youth-state relations. Particularly in countries where it is too dangerous for citizens to speak out.

Ethiopia-Eritrea Peace Accords Lose Steam in 2019: Is Peace Still a Prospect?

Ms. Hana Alem

Ethiopia and Eritrea formally ended their decades-long border conflict in July 2018 with a joint declaration reinstating full diplomatic relations. This peace agreement ended a 20-year conflict between the two countries that was sparked by the border war of 1998-2000 over the town of Badme. With the signing of the 2018 peace agreement, families divided by the border dispute were reunited and the hope for peace and stability in the volatile Horn of Africa was high.

The optimistic feelings surrounding the 2018 accord largely diminished during 2019. This is attributed to the diverging interests of the two primary signatories, Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki.

Ethiopia was consumed in 2019 with violent protests related to the country's ethnic tensions. In leading Ethiopia's largely ethnically-based federal system, Prime Minister Ahmed has faced opposition from his own ethnic group, the Oromo, which has helped drive uncertainty over his ability to implement the reforms promised at the beginning of his term in 2018. With Ethiopia's 2020 elections nearing, frequent ethnic clashes have bred an environment of instability in a country widely seen as critical to the stability and security of the ever-fragile Horn of Africa.

Eritrea, under the leadership of President Afwerki, spent much of 2019 entrenching itself in the political crisis of Sudan as well as the war in Yemen. Although Eritrea began re-assimilating into the international community following the 2018 peace agreement with Ethiopia, it has since regressed. For instance, Eritrea closed all border crossings between it and Ethiopia. Also, President Afwerki has continued to repress his countrymen's political freedoms—in stark contrast to Prime Minister Ahmed's monumental reforms such as releasing political prisoners and liberalizing Ethiopia's media.

As the promise of the 2018 peace agreement takes a back seat to national issues in both Ethiopia and Eritrea, it is uncertain whether peace between the two will be a priority for either country in the coming year.

South Sudanese Women at the Table: From Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Survivors to Peace Activists and Environmental Stewards

Dr. Marisa O. Ensor

Progress toward peace in South Sudan during 2019 moved in fits and starts, as the parties to the conflict missed many key deadlines set in the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement. Nonetheless, the current peacebuilding phase in South Sudan offers significant opportunities for advancing gender equality, mainstreaming women's perspectives in peacebuilding, and fostering their budding efforts in environmental stewardship. Both the National Action Plan 2015-2020 for Women, Peace, and Security (NAP for UNSCR 1325), and the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement establish numerous provisions promoting women's participation in public life. Gender issues also figure prominently in South Sudan's First State of Environment Report, which considers the role of sustainable resource management as a vehicle for peace.

Beyond these institutional and policy provisions—whose implementation admittedly remains more aspirational than factual—South Sudanese women themselves have consistently played a noteworthy role in conflict transformation. Female civil society leaders acted as official observers in the peace process, women made up 25 percent of the delegates, and one woman served as a mediator. Women constitute the majority of breadwinners in the country, as 58 percent of South Sudanese households are female-headed. They are increasingly making their voices heard in the country's political milieu, speaking out, for example, against sexual and gender-based violence which, nevertheless, remains unabated and is often committed while women and girls perform daily chores such as fetching water, collecting firewood or harvesting crops. Those in civil society have demanded a broadening of the political agenda to include protection, education, health, and attention to environmental issues, especially as they impact livelihood provision.

Transitional justice is another prominent issue of concern to women. Prominent demands of the Women's Delegation that met with members of the UN Security Council during their October 2019 visit to Juba included implementation of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan and measures for reparation and compensation, all of which are elements of the 2018 Revitalized Peace Agreement. Acknowledging women's diverse priorities and peacebuilding contributions in conflict-affected countries like South Sudan is not just a matter of gender justice. Inclusive approaches are known to be more sustainable. Promoting gender inclusion will thus help advance African and U.S. interests in the region by responding more effectively to security threats.

Understanding Pastoral Violence in Nigeria

Dr. Adesoji Adelaja and Dr. Olufemi Vaughan

With 235 incidents resulting in 672 deaths in 2019, pastoral violence has become an important cause of conflict-related deaths in Africa. Nigeria alone accounted for 54 percent of the 2019 incidents in Africa and 60 percent of the fatalities. As a major crossroads of Christianity and Islam, two key world religions, Nigeria is uniquely exposed to conflicts with religious undertones. For example, since 2010, the Boko Haram insurgency has plagued Nigeria. More recently, violent attacks by pastoralists (Fulani herdsman) skyrocketed, surpassing Boko Haram's attacks in both number and lethality in 2018 and 2019. While Boko Haram has received significant research attention, pastoral violence has not. Therefore, as part of the Nigeria Policy Initiative (NPI), our project with the Wilson Center's Africa Program, with Drs. Justin George and Titus Awokuse of Michigan State University as co-authors, we completed three research papers on pastoral violence in Nigeria in 2019: 1) explanations for increased Fulani-herdsman violence; 2) relationships to Boko Haram; and, 3) unique impacts on farming communities. Published in 2019 by Michigan State University and Amherst College, versions of these papers are under review by various journals.

In "Terrorist Attacks and Transhumance Violence," we test the existence and directions of causality between Boko Haram and Fulani-herdsman attacks. We find that a key explanation for increased Fulani-herdsman violence is reduced grazing resources and opportunities due to the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria's Northeast. In "Explaining Transhumance Violence," we statistically investigate other explanatory factors for increased pastoral violence in Nigeria. We find that deteriorating climate and resource conditions in traditional grazing sites in Northern Nigeria (push factors), together with development and climate factors in new destination grazing areas (reverse-pull factors), also help explain increased pastoral violence. In "Agricultural Impacts of Pastoral Violence," we find that increased pastoral violence significantly reduces total agricultural output and outputs of specific staple crops. It also reduces the cattle holdings of resident farmers by increasing cattle thefts and losses and reducing cattle acquisitions.

In essence, we provide statistical evidence that climate, development, and security problems explain the increased pastoral violence that continued to beset Nigeria throughout 2019. When herdsman, pressured by climate and security threats, encounter crop farmers' opposition, their concern about the loss of access to grazing opportunities due to intensified agricultural development helps spur violence. Much of the public debate about violence by Fulani herdsman has had religious undertones, with many citizens in the Middlebelt and the southern regions of Nigeria believing in conspiracy between Boko Haram and Fulani herdsman. Our studies highlight the significant impacts of herdsman violence on agriculture and the need for public policies to address the underlying climate, development, and security problems faced by herdsman.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo's Ebola Epidemic Continues Amid Conflict

Mr. Ian Gorecki

2019 saw mixed progress in the fight against Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The epidemic in North Kivu and Ituri provinces continued, with the DRC Ministry of Health counting 3,340 cases of Ebola and 2,207 deaths—the second-largest Ebola epidemic in history. The conflict in this region continued to complicate the response, with National Public Radio reporting over 100 health workers killed or injured during the year.

However, 2019 also saw progress in the development of Ebola countermeasures. DRC health officials authorized the deployment of an additional, experimental Ebola vaccine. The DRC's Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale (INRB), with international support, conducted a trial of Ebola treatments, including some based on research conducted by Dr. Jean-Jacques Muyembe-Tamfum, INRB head and Ebola discoverer. Dr. Muyembe-Tamfum is a leading authority on Ebola containment, and has led the DRC's response to its nine previous Ebola outbreaks—most of which were quickly contained. He has also shared lessons learned and best practices with other African governments combating Ebola outbreaks, and the DRC provided technical support to West African countries' health systems during the 2014-2016 outbreak in that region. Dr. Muyembe-Tamfum was recently given a patent for pioneering the first treatment for Ebola.

Despite these advancements, the epidemic persists. The role of the DRC's ongoing conflict cannot be overlooked. Health workers are unable to reach vulnerable populations, and have been forced out by violence directed at them by armed groups—some of whom have an economic motivation to prolong the epidemic and the resources it draws. Civilians who deeply distrust the government and the UN often hesitate to trust health officials. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, donors have spent nearly USD\$600 million to combat this outbreak, including USD\$196 million from the U.S. However, this is only a temporary solution which fails to address the underlying insecurity and lack of governance which prevents access to quality health care. The DRC's broken health system also stretches beyond the northeast, and has implications beyond Ebola. UNICEF reports that a measles outbreak since January 2019 has killed over 5,000 people. A World Health Organization report noted that malaria killed eight times that number in 2018.

The attention that Ebola has brought to the DRC's unresolved conflicts is an opportunity for policymakers to consider why years of effort have failed to end the violence, and how the DRC, regional partners, and the international community can change their approach to peacebuilding. Until then, health workers in the DRC will continue to face violence, and people will continue to die of diseases that could have been prevented, contained, and treated.

U.S.-AFRICA RELATIONS

The Mixed Record of U.S. Commercial Diplomacy

Mr. Grant T. Harris

In 2019, the United States established a new development finance institution to support U.S. companies doing business abroad. The United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) is sure to be one of the Trump administration's brightest legacies. Nonetheless, the U.S. record on commercial diplomacy remains mixed, for reasons both longstanding and specific to this administration.

The DFC represents a positive step as it will provide increased lending capacity and flexibility to back U.S. companies investing in developing countries. The Trump administration also launched its "Prosper Africa" initiative in 2019 to counter Chinese and Russian influence in the region with policies that increase U.S. investment. At the same time, U.S. commercial diplomacy has been inconsistent. Before embracing the new DFC, President Trump sought to eliminate its predecessor agency, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. And while Prosper Africa could be a helpful addition to the Obama Administration's initiatives to increase U.S.-Africa trade and investment, it will underperform without support for the U.S. State Department and other agencies vital to promoting companies operating on the continent. Uneven commercial diplomacy also predates the Trump administration. The U.S. Export-Import Bank (EXIM) faces persistent uncertainty in its reauthorization and until recently was functioning at reduced capacity, unable to lend amounts greater than USD\$10 million. Likewise, commercial advocacy for U.S. companies is perennially fickle.

Meanwhile, other countries have prioritized policies that aggressively support their businesses. China, for example, has grown its commercial presence on the African continent, with the Chinese EXIM bank extending more than USD\$149 billion in loans, outpacing the U.S. EXIM bank 37 to 1 in loans to Africa. There are also approximately 110 export credit agencies around the world helping their companies win deals in markets abroad. Indeed, preparatory documents for the new U.S. agency concede that even though Africa "represents a critical market," the U.S. private sector "has lost ground in recent years to increasingly sophisticated competition."

The DFC is a promising step, but more needs to be done to support American companies investing and operating in Africa and other regions. To ensure a level playing field and help them compete requires strong and consistent policy, high-level leadership, diplomacy, and advocacy. Without such leadership and resources, no amount of rhetoric about economic opportunity in Africa will be enough.

New U.S. Ambassador Arrives In South Africa

Dr. Terence McNamee

On November 12, 2019, President Donald Trump's nominee for ambassador to South Africa arrived in the country. The position had been vacant for three years.

Prior U.S. envoys to Pretoria have had either strong political reputations or weighty African expertise; sometimes both. Since 1994, the only other lengthy period that the post was empty was eleven months, following the promotion of then ambassador to South Africa, Jendayi Frazer, to the post of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.

The new ambassador is Lana Marks. She is a designer of luxury handbags, close friend of Trump, and a member of his wealthy private club in Florida. Marks has no experience in government or diplomacy. The same can be said of about four in every ten of Trump's ambassadorial picks during the first two years of his presidency. Marks's may prove one of the more consequential.

South Africa is no longer "the story" that for decades—from the repressive lows of apartheid to the dizzying heights of Mandela's presidency—gripped Washington. But much of Africa still turns on what happens in its southern tip.

South Africa is the continent's most advanced economy. Its companies are heavily invested throughout the region, acting as drivers of growth, impacting states and societies in myriad ways. As the only African member of the G20, BRICS, and the European Union's 10 global strategic partners, South Africa also has international clout.

In symbolic and practical terms, Washington has been damaged by its three-year hiatus from South Africa. U.S. criticism of South Africa's deepening ties not just to China but latterly Russia, too, is taken less seriously these days.

South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, a democrat who believes in free markets, has made strides in reversing the huge institutional and economic damage wrought by his predecessor. But the strides are tenuous. The success (or failure) of his reforms will determine South Africa's course for a generation.

If Ambassador Marks inserts herself constructively in this agenda, South Africa's democratic consolidation will be better for it. And the U.S. will regain some of its lost credibility.

The effect on America's diminished standing in this part of the world if she does the opposite is obvious.

U.S. Army Africa — “A Trusted and Reliable Partner”

Major General Roger Cloutier

In 2019, United States Army Africa, the land forces component of U.S. Africa Command, continued to strengthen relationships with African partner nations, while supporting U.S. national security interests in Africa.

U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) conducted 193 theater security cooperation activities in 33 African nations. It also completed a series of exercises that enhanced the capabilities and capacity of African partner countries that support United Nations and African Union peacekeeping and peace support missions. Thirty-three African nations and six European and global partners participated in these exercises throughout the year.

Additionally, USARAF completed five medical exercises that enhanced United States Army medical readiness and strengthened the skills of participating African military and civilian medical personnel.

As we look toward 2020, USARAF is excited to lead African Lion, a multinational exercise scheduled to take place in Morocco, Senegal, Spain, and Tunisia. This will be the largest multinational exercise on the continent in recent memory. The exercise aims to increase interoperability and readiness of our African, European, and global partners. It will involve simulated and live maneuvers, peacekeeping operations and flight training, as well as medical and dental assistance projects.

USARAF will also train tactical combat casualty care in Cameroon, Tanzania, and Nigeria. In 2019, Chad and Uganda, as a part of this training, were certified by the internationally-recognized National Association for Emergency Medical Technicians, which now enables them to export this training to other African nations.

USARAF’s enduring efforts complement U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Department of State, and international efforts to strengthen African partner defense capabilities. Strong partnerships and sustained engagements support capable, professional African land forces that respect human rights and the rule of law.

African security and stability matters not just to the people who call Africa home, but also to the United States, its allies, and the global community. USARAF support to operations, security cooperation events, exercises, and sustained engagements demonstrates that the U.S. Army is a trusted, reliable partner for African militaries.

From Syria to the Sahel: The Trump Effect

Ms. Vivian Lowery Derryck

Lost in the furor over President Trump's abrupt October 2019 order to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria was its ripple effect on other militaries, particularly in Africa. U.S. military leadership hotly disputed the wisdom of the order, citing loss of hard-fought territory secured by Kurdish allies; victory for Assad as he recaptured lost territory; Russia's opportunity to insert itself further into the Syria conflict; and, escaped ISIS fighters dispersing across the Middle East and into the Sahel.

Yet when the President ordered the withdrawal, despite their fundamental disagreement, U.S. military leaders followed the orders of their commander-in-chief.

Similarly, in former Navy Secretary Spencer's (forced) letter of resignation over President Trump's reversal of a military court's conviction of a Navy Seal, he acknowledged the prerogative of the commander-in-chief to intervene, but also politely referenced the military's unwavering adherence to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Both responses offer a teachable moment for fragile democracies, with long-lasting reverberations in Africa where the U.S. has some 34 bases and 6,000-8,000 troops.

Kudos to the U.S. military for adhering to the president's constitutional authority. Its swift implementation of his order strengthened an essential pillar of democracy at a time when many fundamental democratic institutions, including civilian control of the military, are being assaulted worldwide.

The U.S. military's constitutionally-grounded response to the Syria directive should strengthen support for civilian-commanded military in mature African democracies like Benin, Botswana, Ghana, Senegal, and Zambia. The response staunchly reinforces militaries that respected their constitutions in tense, regime-change situations such as Malawi in 2012 and the Gambia in 2017. And it reminds militaries in fragile regimes, like Sudan, of the fundamental principle of a professional, civilian-commanded military that protects its citizens.

Yet President Trump's Syria decision increased turmoil in the Sahel with an influx of fresh jihadists, and complicated U.S. military training and advising of African militaries. Worse, African counterparts now question the durability of U.S. commitments.

To counter ISIS and rebuild trust, African militaries and U.S. counterparts must partner with local citizens to strengthen communities and build resilience. Through such collaboration the U.S. military may reaffirm its sense of mission in Africa while reinforcing the fundamental democratic tenet of civilian control of military power.

AFRICA'S EVOLVING ROLE IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

Turkey-Africa Relations in 2019

Dr. Elem Eyrice Tepeciklioglu

Turkey faces important challenges in various foreign issues; yet, its Africa policy has been relatively successful. Turkish foreign policy towards Africa in 2019 was molded by two important developments.

First, Turkey increased its efforts to dismantle overseas schools associated with Fethullah Gülen and replace them with the Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV). The foundation was established in 2016 prior to the failed coup d'état orchestrated by the Fethullahist Terrorist Organization (FETÖ).^{*} Together with the Ministry of National Education, TMV was given the sole authority to establish Turkish schools abroad. The Turkish government has now reportedly assumed control of most of the FETÖ-linked schools in Africa. While countries that receive significant Turkish aid such as Somalia were quick to close those schools, some of Africa's major powers, including Nigeria and South Africa, have been reluctant to follow suit in transferring FETÖ-linked schools to the TMV.

Second, Turkey increased its military cooperation with African countries in 2019. Although Turkey's Africa policy initially focused on the use of soft-power instruments, it recently started to integrate various hard-power tools.

Turkey lacks the economic might to make huge investments and provide the same infrastructure services in African countries as China does. Nor does Turkey have the potential to offer technology transfer or capacity-building opportunities in agriculture, health, and information and communication technology as do Brazil, India, or Japan. While some public institutions are involved in various projects in cooperation with Turkish NGOs and businesses, they provide mostly emergency relief and implement short-term projects.

Hence, Turkey should focus on the fields in which it has a comparative advantage. Specifically, cooperation with African countries in the education and military sectors provides Turkey a unique advantage over Africa's more established partners.

Contrary to Ankara's official rhetoric, recent developments reveal that Turkey seeks to expand its military involvement in Africa. In 2017, Turkey established its largest overseas military base in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. The deal Ankara signed with Khartoum that same year to restore Sudan's historic port city on Suakin Island is widely viewed as another attempt by Turkey to expand its military footprint in the region.

^{}Wilson Center Editor's Note: FETÖ, known as Hizmet by its participants, is designated as a terrorist organization by Turkey, Pakistan, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The United States and the European Union do not recognize that designation.*

Undermining Hope in the Horn: U.S. Partners Export Their Conflicts to the Region

Dr. Ann L. Phillips

In 2018, hope in the Horn of Africa rested on new leadership in Ethiopia and Somalia, inspiring optimism the region had not seen in decades. This hope was bolstered in 2019 when Sudan's President al-Bashir was ousted by protesters demanding democratic governance.

Nonetheless, in Sudan the military and old guard remain potent, Ethiopia is riven by ethnic clashes, and Somalia is struggling with disputes over federalism and a rejuvenated al-Shabaab insurgency. Adding to these challenges, Gulf States plus Turkey and Egypt have exported their own rivalries into the region, further stoking instability in the Horn.

- In Sudan, the Saudis, Emiratis, and Egyptians have been cool toward the democratic transition, and are concerned the new civilian government might withdraw Sudanese troops from the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and end economic cooperation agreements.
- In Somalia, Gulf States pressured the young government to choose sides in their rivalry. When thwarted, they championed opposing sides in the power struggle between Somalia's states and federal government.
- Ethiopia risks becoming the epicenter of the Gulf's regional rivalry as Prime Minister Abiy welcomes Gulf aid and investment. Unlike Sudan and Somalia, Ethiopia has withstood pressure from Riyadh and Abu Dhabi to sever relations with Iran.
- Eritrea remains the sole bulwark of authoritarian rule in the Horn, which the Saudis and Emiratis support. They built military bases from which to conduct their military campaign in Yemen and were instrumental in lifting UN sanctions against Eritrea.

In sum, actions by the Gulf States, Egypt, and Turkey threaten not only Somalia's viability but also the fragile transitions in Sudan and Ethiopia. The U.S. provides substantial military and other support to all the countries that are undermining stabilization and successful transitions in the Horn. If Washington is committed to Somalia's territorial integrity, Sudan's transition, and Ethiopia's reform, its high-level support is hardly visible. The absence of clear policy and concerted action suggests Washington has either no interest or little leverage to check the deleterious actions in the Horn of its Gulf, Egyptian, and Turkish partners, and is no longer the region's primary security actor or advocate for reform.

Africa's Foothold in Film and Media

Ms. Shahrazad Hired

2019 was a great year for Africa's creative sector, highlighting and underscoring the critical role that it increasingly plays in economic growth and global entertainment.

In April 2019, Nigeria and France signed a historic movie distribution agreement, allowing Nollywood—the second-largest movie industry in the world—to reach global audiences, such as the Cannes Film Festival. Notably, this partnership provides knowledge exchange and skills transfer to Nollywood, including through technical training. In November 2019, the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) organized the Kigali Audio Visual Forum and established a USD\$30 million innovation fund with the African Development Bank, both aimed at developing and building the capacity of the creative sector. Rwanda is also in the process of establishing the Rwanda Film Office project to foster film production and expand audiovisual companies in the country. In December 2019, The Gambia launched the Youth and Trade Roadmap whose mission is two-fold, namely strengthening the creative industry through building the capacities of small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and stimulating economic opportunity through skills and value-chain development.

U.S. companies are also investing in Africa's creative industry. Netflix's *Lionheart* is not only a blockbuster hit but also the first original film to be produced in Nigeria. *Mama K's Team 4* is an upcoming show and the first African animated children's show from Netflix, produced with Triggerfish Animation Studios—a South African film studio. Netflix continues to engage with Africa's creative sector, both producing and acquiring original content. But Netflix is not alone. HBO, Disney, Fox, and Warner Brothers are also developing African content, a testament to the global value of the industry.

The creative industry is valued at USD\$2 trillion globally and over USD\$4 billion in Africa, totaling 3 percent of global gross domestic product and employing 1 percent of the world's population. The 2019 ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)—the largest free-trade area in the world, with a single market of over 1 billion consumers—provides both opportunity and promise for African countries looking to increase the contribution of the creative sector to their economies. Following the lead of countries like Nigeria, Rwanda, and The Gambia, and entertainment groups such as Netflix, African governments and U.S. companies should invest in and develop Africa's creative industry. Key stakeholders would do well to provide skills development and educational training for African youth in this sector as it is a driver for economic growth and job creation.

Undoubtedly, film and media allow people to share their stories and own their narrative. The expansion of Africa's creative sector will not only spur inclusive growth on the continent but also share African content on a global level.

Ghana: Embracing 2019 as the “Year of Return” of Africans from the Diaspora

Ms. Gamuchirai Mhute

During a visit to Washington D.C. in September 2018, Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo introduced the “Year of Return, Ghana 2019” initiative to people of African descent in the diaspora. His announcement commemorated 400 years since the first arrival of enslaved Africans to the U.S. in Jamestown, Virginia. Goals of the president’s initiative included offering diaspora Africans the opportunity to learn about the history and culture of their ancestors, celebrating the resilience of the victims of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade who were scattered and displaced throughout the world, and promoting Ghana as a key travel destination for the African Diaspora in order to boost Ghana’s economy.

The Ghana Tourism Authority launched an impressive media campaign to promote the initiative, involving African and international celebrities as well as traditional leaders. The 2019 campaign also included music festivals, wellness workshops, educational symposiums, fashion workshops, and storytelling. In addition, the government made it easier for diasporans to travel to Ghana by waiving visa requirements, permitting indefinite stays, and even granting citizenship. The Ghana Tourism Authority estimated that the campaign would boost tourism by approximately 40 percent in 2019 and generate a projected USD\$925 million in revenues. This initiative is not a new concept for Ghana. After gaining independence in 1957, Ghana welcomed people of African descent to visit, stay, and invest. During the 1960s, Ghana welcomed several African-American civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Muhammad Ali, Maya Angelou, and W.E.B Du Bois—who lived in Ghana from 1961 until his death in 1963. The 1980s were also significant for tourism in Ghana as a result of World Bank and International Monetary Fund support for private sector involvement.

Leaders from the African-American community have embraced the initiative. Congressional members Gwen Moore of Wisconsin and Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas were among those in attendance at President Akufo-Addo’s September 2018 launch of “Year of Return, Ghana 2019.” Congresswoman Jackson Lee connected the initiative with Congress’ 400 Years of African-American History Commission Act. In August 2019, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and 13 members of the Congressional Black Caucus visited Ghana to observe the 400th anniversary of the arrival of enslaved Africans to the U.S. in 1619. The success of the initiative shows both the importance of Africa to the global African diaspora from a historical perspective as well as the diaspora’s potential as a force for pan-Africanism and economic development. Yet, only time will tell if other African countries will follow Ghana’s example and if the initiative will lead to deeper and sustained engagement among the global African diaspora.

The Africa Program

The Africa Program works to address the most critical issues facing Africa and U.S.-Africa relations, build mutually beneficial U.S.-Africa relations, and enhance knowledge and understanding about Africa in the United States.

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The Africa Program focuses on four core issues:

- i. Good governance and leadership
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The SVNP is a continent-wide network of African policy, research and academic organizations that works with the Wilson Center's Africa Program to bring African knowledge and perspectives to U.S., African, and international policy on peacebuilding in Africa. Established in 2011 and supported by the generous financial support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the project provides avenues for African researchers and practitioners to engage with, inform, and exchange analyses and perspectives with U.S., African, and international policymakers in order to develop the most appropriate, cohesive, and inclusive policy frameworks and approaches to achieving sustainable peace in Africa.

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