The HORN Bulletin is a bi-monthly publication by the HORN Institute. It contains thematic articles mainly on issues affecting the Horn of Africa region.

INSIDE

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The HORN International Institute for Strategic Studies is a non-profit, applied research, and policy think-do tank based in Nairobi, Kenya. Its mission is to contribute to informed, objective, definitive research and analytical inquiry that positively informs policies of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Its vision is a progressive Horn of Africa served by informed, evidence-based and problem-solving policy research and analysis.

Kenya v. Somalia Maritime Dispute: ICJ Judgement and Implications for Kenya-Somalia Relations

By Kizito Sabala, Ph.D.

Abstract

This article makes two important arguments: first, that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgement which settles the Somalia-Kenya maritime dispute will have far-reaching political, security, and social-economic implications on foreign and diplomatic relations in the region and beyond; and second, that the two countries need to engage in post judgement negotiations if they have any plans of exploiting the natural resources (oil, hydrocarbon and aquatic resources including waterways) that are available in the contested area. However, negotiations will have to overcome numerous internal, extra-regional and historical challenges that have characterized relations between the two countries in the past.

Introduction

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) that gave a verdict on the Somalia-Kenya maritime dispute in October 2021 will have far-reaching political, security and social-economic ramifications on foreign and diplomatic relations in the region and beyond. The ICJ was established as the judicial arm of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in June 1945 and commenced work in April 1946. The judgement which was delivered on October 12, 2021, in the Hague (the Netherlands) by a 14-member bench, came seven years after Somalia submitted the dispute to the Court for determination. This followed a period of failed bilateral negotiations between the two countries to settle the dispute.

However, the Judgement does not prevent the two countries from engaging in post-judgment negotiations. Without an understanding and a mutually accepted agreement between the two Horn of Africa nations, it will be difficult to exploit these resources if the status quo remains and the reactions to the ruling by Kenya and Somalia is anything to go by. It means the dispute over the delimitation of the maritime boundary which dates back to 1999 will continue for unforeseeable time with negative strategic implications. The sea boundary row started in 2012 after Somalia accused Kenya of illegally awarding exploration rights in the waters to Total and Eni, the two multinationals in the energy sector globally. In 2009, the countries had agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) backed by the UN to settle the boundary dispute through negotiation.
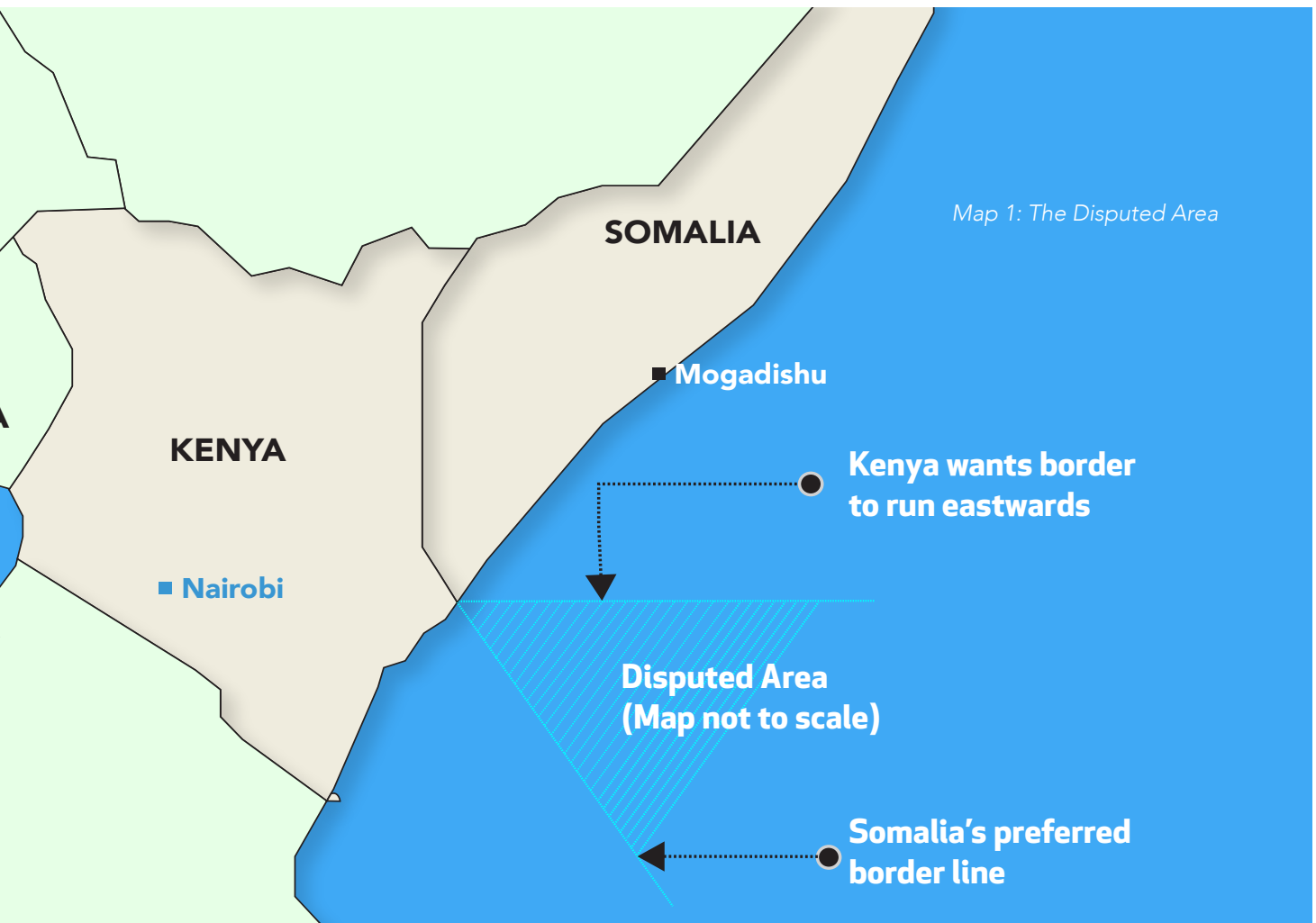
On August 28, 2014, Somalia filed a case against Kenya concerning the delimitation of maritime spaces dispute that the two states claim in the Indian Ocean. Specifically, Somalia requested the Court:

> *"to determine, on the basis of international law, the complete course of the single maritime boundary dividing all the maritime areas appertaining to Somalia and to Kenya in the Indian Ocean, including the continental shelf beyond 200 [nautical miles]".*

After the matter landed at the ICJ, there were efforts to resolve the dispute by the two countries but unfortunately, all of them failed. These include the invitation to Somalia by Kenya to enter into "provisional arrangements of a practical nature" on May 25, 2016 as they await the agreement on boundary demarcation. On February 2, 2017, the Court ruled that it has jurisdiction to hear the application filed by Somalia. Between June 18, and December 18, 2018, Somalia made its submissions and Kenya replied. Thereafter, the ICJ assumed full control of the process and noted that the verdict will be binding to both parties.

The Contested Area

Generally, the disputed area is in the coastal region of the two countries and part of the Indian Ocean (Map 1). It is triangular-shaped and extends for more than 100,000 square kilometres (40,000 square miles). The area is said to contain four maritime gas and oil blocks and it is rich in aquatic resources particularly the tuna fish. The area can also be developed to support shipping services. The maritime boundary spans both the territorial 200 nautical miles and the 470 km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) where applicable and the continental shelf of two states which can extend beyond the 200 nautical miles.

Map 1: The Disputed Area

SOMALIA

Mogadishu

KENYA

Kenya wants border to run eastwards

Nairobi

Disputed Area
(Map not to scale)

Somalia's preferred border line

The Main Issue

The main issue of contention between Kenya and Somalia is the Maritime borderline. Somalia argued that the borderline should continue in the same direction as the land while Kenya maintained that the boundary should take a 45-degree turn on the shoreline and run in a latitudinal line. This option put a larger portion of the disputed area under the control of Kenya which it has enjoyed since its first proclamation of the EEZ in 1979. On the other hand, the position of Somalia means that the entire disputed area will be part of its territory.

The Judgement in the Maritime Delimitation in the Indian Ocean Case (Somalia v. Kenya)

The announcement by ICJ on September 24, 2021, that it was going to deliver its judgement on October 12, 2021, prompted Kenya to proclaim that it was withdrawing from the Hague based court on grounds of bias, lack of impartiality and unjust process. It is not yet clear whether Kenya went ahead and formally notified the court about its intention to withdraw. Kenya also believed that the ICJ did not have the jurisdiction to hear the case and it was one-sided arbitration likened to the use of pseudo-judicial processes that are aimed at undermining the country's territorial integrity. In a strongly-worded statement, Kenya noted that it will not be bound by the judgement and neither will it respect or obey the orders that will be issued by the Court. Since the case began, Kenya has constantly raised reservations on the presence of Judge Abdulqawi Yusuf on the bench, a Somalia citizen who has previously represented the country at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. In addition, the country has maintained that the ICJ was engaged in a flawed judicial process that did not respect its sovereignty.

Other factors that may be influencing Kenya's position is the genuine feeling that Somalia seems not to appreciate the support the country has extended to it since 1991 when Mohamed Siad Barre and the country descended into chaos. For instance, from 2002, Kenya hosted the peace talks that culminated in the establishment of the transitional government in 2004. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed was sworn in as President of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia in Nairobi because the capital Mogadishu was not safe to host the ceremony. This was the first time Somalia was attempting to have a national government since 1991.

In addition, the failure of the government of Somalia to exercise full control and authority on its territory allowed the al Shabab militants to thrive and conduct several attacks in Kenya including abductions of tourists. This not only challenged Kenya's authority on its own soil but it undermined the tourist sector which is one of the leading foreign exchange earners of the country. This forced the Kenya Defence Force (KDF) to intervene in 2011 in an operation dubbed *"Operation Linda Nchi"*. The activities of al Shabab have since been reduced; a situation that brought some semblance of stability in several parts of Somalia. Despite all this support towards stabilizing the country, Somalia instituted proceedings against Kenya at the ICJ and Kenya felt that its efforts were not being appreciated.

The Main Judgement

According to Article 94 of the UN Charter, *"each Member of the United Nations undertakes to comply with any decision of the International Court of Justice in any dispute to which it is a party"*. During the hearing, the ICJ rejected the claim by Kenya that there was an existing agreed maritime boundary between them and Somalia and instead suggested a line that split the disputed area into two (See Map II). The main judgement in the Kenya-Somalia case is contained in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4. The ruling in paragraphs 2 and 3 were unanimously agreed upon by the bench while that in paragraph 4 was by a majority decision.

- First, it was ruled that the starting-point of the single maritime boundary delimiting the respective maritime areas between the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Republic of Kenya is the intersection of the straight line extending from the final permanent boundary beacon (PB 29) at right angles to the general direction of the coast with

> "Kenya also believed that the ICJ did not have the jurisdiction to hear the case and it was one-sided arbitration likened to the use of pseudo-judicial processes that are aimed at undermining the country's territorial integrity

the low-water line, at the point with co-ordinates 1° 39' 44.0" S and 41° 33' 34.4" E (WGS 84);

• Secondly, that, from the starting-point, the maritime boundary in the territorial sea follows the median line described at paragraph 117 [of the Judgment] until it reaches the 12-nautical-mile limit at the point with co-ordinates 1° 47' 39.1" S and 41° 43' 46.8" E (WGS 84) (Point A, Map II); and

• Thirdly, from the end of the boundary in the territorial sea (Point A), the single maritime boundary delimiting the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf up to 200 nautical miles between the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Republic of Kenya follows the geodetic line starting with azimuth 114° until it reaches the 200-nautical-mile limit measured from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial sea of the Republic of Kenya is measured, at the point with co-ordinates 3° 4' 21.3" S and 44° 35' 30.7" E (WGS 84) (Point B, Map II);

Interpretation of the Judgement

The court ruling stated as follows.

*'The Maritime boundary between the parties having been determined, the court expects that each part will fully respect the sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the other in accordance with international law"*

The ruling means that the boundary will be based on a line of equidistance, rather than the parallel line of latitude. It implies that the new maritime boundary must flow on a line of equidistance and will exclude a significant portion of an area that Kenya claimed in the previous boundary that flowed eastwards on a line of parallel latitude. In a nutshell, the ruling divides the contested region roughly into half of the territorial claims for both.

If this judgement is implemented, it simply means that Kenya will lose the unfettered sovereignty over this region that it has enjoyed for decades. Kenyan sailors, seafarers, marine scientists, and fishermen have conducted their activities in this region with no restrictions. It also means the ports of Mombasa and Lamu may become less attractive to international maritime traffic.

Overall, the ruling hugely favours Somalia and in a nutshell, the judgement of the United Nations (UN)'s top Court means that Kenya will have to surrender part of the disputed ocean which it has been occupying on the basis of the presidential proclamation of 1979. This is the very reason why Kenya has stated categorically that it will not respect the ruling. Kenya has observed that the case directly favoured one country against the other and this could easily lead to insecurity issues in the region.

A sketch Map II showing the adjusted maritime borderline between Kenya and Somalia (Credits: ICJ)
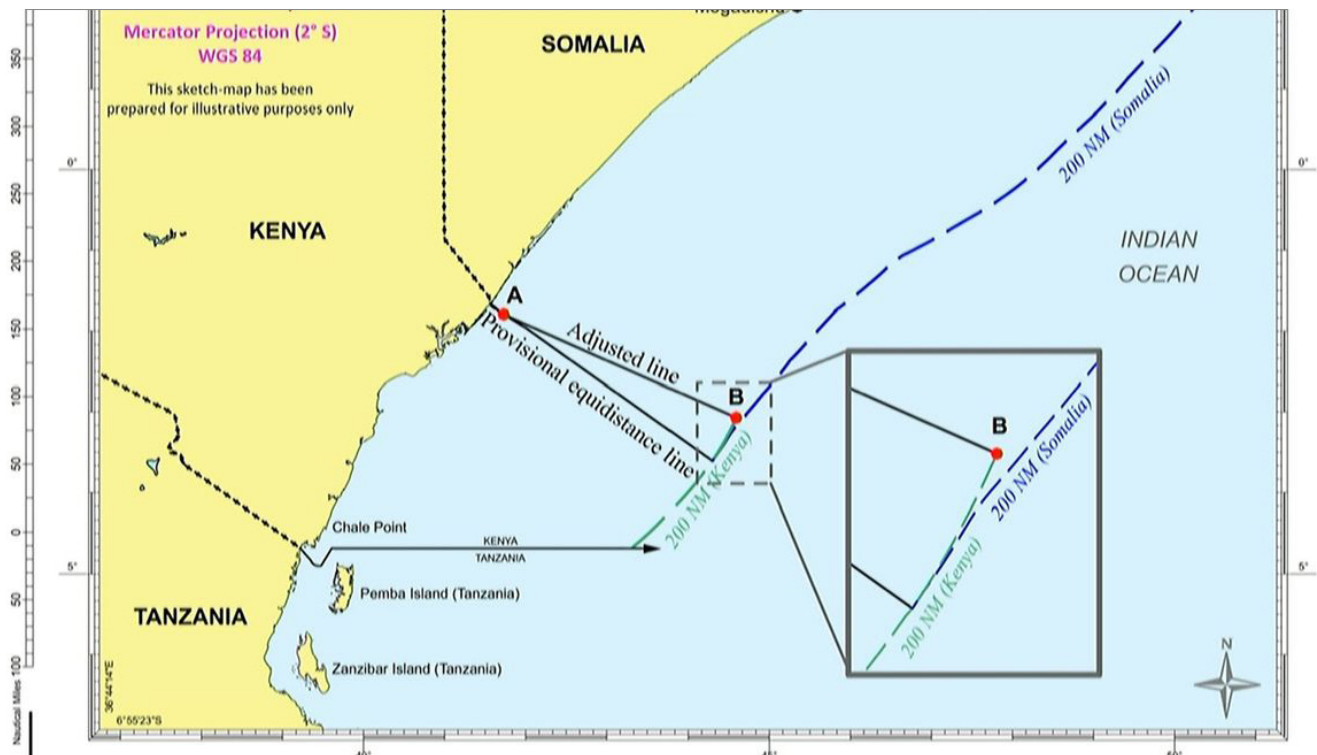
Overall, the ruling hugely favours Somalia and in a nutshell, the judgement of the United Nations (UN)'s top Court means that Kenya will have to surrender part of the disputed ocean which it has been occupying on the basis of the presidential proclamation of 1979

Possible Scenarios and Implications of the Judgement

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgement that settles the Somalia-Kenya maritime dispute will have far-reaching political, security and social-economic ramifications on foreign and diplomatic relations in the region and beyond. These implications will be affected by internal factors within the two countries, including regional and extra-regional interests. Internal factors will include the decision by the political elite on how they want to respond to the matter. For instance, in Kenya, several leaders have urged the president to dispatch troops to the disputed area to secure it while others are calling for dialogue. The same scenario prevails in Somalia.

Diplomatic Implications

There is no doubt that diplomatic relations between Kenya and Somalia were strained further following the ICJ judgment on the maritime dispute between them. In the recent past, diplomatic relations between the two countries have been frosty. They worsened when each country recalled its ambassador June 2021 when Kenya reopened its mission in Mogadishu. Since the verdict was delivered, neither Kenya nor Somali has threatened to recall its ambassador or sever the diplomatic relations. However, this silence will not go on for long. There is an expected reaction from both parties once the reality of the verdict sinks in and its implication is analyzed. Meanwhile, the non-invoking of any of these actions gives hope for post-verdict dialogue. However, should the two countries opt to sever ties, then it will be more challenging to bring them to the negotiation table.

The maritime border dispute between Kenya and Somalia has seen the involvement of international partners. Some have openly taken sides in the matter. For instance, the United Kingdom and Norway are said to be rallying behind Somalia. On the other hand, countries such as the United States and France are said to be supporting Kenya. Although the Eastern African neighbors have not come out openly to indicate their position on the matter, gradually but surely, the division among the external actors will be reflected within the region.

Security Implications

Perhaps the domain that is likely to suffer the most as a result of the strained relations between Kenya and Somalia is the security sector. According to some analysts, the Court's judicial overreach is the most recent threat to peace in Africa's Indian Ocean zone. Presently, the two countries and the region at large is still grappling with serious insecurity challenges perpetuated by the existence of the al Shabab; and worsened largely by the absence of an effective government in Somalia. This situation is what prompted AMISOM to intervene in 2010.

Should the relationship between the two countries deteriorate further, then the security of over 3,500 Kenya's troops serving as part of the AMISOM in Somalia will be more threatened. They will be more exposed to al Shabab militants and are likely to be victims of frequent terror attacks. If Kenya decides to pull out its troops, it will have serious repercussions for both Kenya and Somalia. First, the Mission will be weakened, gains made since 2010 reversed, and regional instability heightened. Kenya will become more vulnerable to terror attacks while Somalia will descend into abyss.

Kenya's contemplation to send troops to the contested region could intensify security in the region. Unconfirmed reports suggest the country intends to beef up security to secure the area which it regards as part of its territory. President Kenyatta vowed that Kenya has an inherent right to protect, by all available means, its territory and it will not allow anyone to 'take an inch' of its territory under the slogan, 'not an inch less; not an inch more'. On the judgement, President Kenyatta reiterated that it was only adding salt to an existing wound since it may greatly contribute to the instability in the region.

In his statement, President Kenyatta made it clear that the country will not respect the Courts decision and that he will do all it takes to ensure he protects Kenya's territorial integrity.

"At the outset, Kenya wishes to indicate that it rejects in totality and does not recognize the findings in the decision"…"Kenya wishes to state that it rejects in totality and does not recognize the findings in the decision"…"International tribunals have jurisdiction only to the extent of consent by a State," and "I do not intend to abrogate my solemn oath; and, I will do everything possible as President and Commander-in-Chief, to preserve the territory of this our great Republic and bequeath the same, intact and unencumbered, to the next President when my term expires in less than a year's time."

On other hand, Somalia, through President Mohamed Farmajo, urged Kenyan authorities to respect the Court's ruling:

"The Federal Government of Somalia hereby confirms that we accept the Court's decision in line with the international laws and norms. We hope the Kenyan government will respect the supremacy of international law and will forgo their misguided and unlawful pursuits. Instead, we hope that Kenya will treat the Court's decision as an opportunity to strengthen relations between the two countries and enhance cooperation between the two peoples. Somalia did not choose to become Kenya's neighbour. It was Allah, the Almighty decision and we have no choice but to co-exist in a peaceful and neighbourly manner".

Therefore, if Kenya decides to station troops in the contested area, Somalia will be forced to react. Even though Somalia is weak to engage in any military actions, it may seek support from its allies to help it protect what it believes is its territorial waters. Such an appeal is likely to attract a positive response particularly from allies who are interested in the resources in this area but also in the country at large. Such a move is likely to lead to long-protracted tensions and occasional fights between the two armies, a situation that will not allow any of the two countries to exploit the resources in the area. Thus, it is important to negotiate a way forward than resort to a military venture.

> *"Kenya wishes to indicate that it rejects in totality and does not recognize the findings in the decision"*

On its part, Somalia has stated that "*it will not allow any illegal fishing within its borders. The country noted that its borders are legally defined and thus any fishing vessel that will touch its borders illegally will meet with its authorities.*"

Economic Implications

At the core of the maritime dispute between Kenya and Somalia, are natural resources within the contested area. These include oil, gas, and marine life particularly the Tuna fish. The area is also a strategic point for the development of shipping services. While small scale fishing to support the livelihoods of the coastal communities will continue, large commercial endeavours will not happen in an environment of tension and uncertainty. Even more unfortunate, none of the two countries will exploit the gas and the oil. The economic interests of external actors are likely to converge and be reflected in decisions in Nairobi and Mogadishu. The area may end up being a ground where external interests are fought through Kenya and Somalia.

It is also important to settle this matter amicably so that the Blue economy or domain can be focussed on. In recent times, the Blue Economy has emerged as one of the sectors with virgin resources that could be exploited to support the growth and development of economies. In this regard, Kenya has taken a very prominent role since hosting the 2018 Global Blue Economy Conference. The country has committed itself to supporting global ocean governance, president Uhuru is a member of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean and the Country will be co-hosting the UN Ocean Conference with Portugal in 2022. Tensions and uncertainty between the two countries on the maritime border will greatly undermine the domain and reverse any gains made so far. In addition, if relations strains the normal trade between Kenya and Somalia will be adversely affected particularly the *Miraa* sector and the air travel.

Spillover Effects of the Judgement

Although the judgement is about Kenya and Somalia territorial dispute, it is likely to torpedo other similar cases, particularly along the Indian Ocean. It may rekindle a review of the 2009 mutual agreement between Kenya and Tanzania that established the common maritime boundary as a straight line through the island of Pemba. It will be studied very carefully as negotiations go on among Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Comoros, and Seychelles, among other countries and territories. For instance, Tanzania is ready to engage with Somalia

A view of the ICJ courtroom on February 2, 2017 at the delivery of the Court's judgment on Kenya–Somalia maritime dispute (Photo Credit: UN/ICJ-CIJ /Frank van Beek)

on the maritime boundary with the United Nations Commission on the Continental Shelf (CLCS) through the UN Commission on the Continental Shelf (UNCCS). Lessons from this judgement may also be useful in settling the dispute between Kenyan and Uganda over the *Migingo* Island.

Policy Options: Post-Judgement Negotiations and Challenges

Although Article 94 of the UN Charter establishes the ICJ expects each Member State to comply with its decision in any dispute to which it is a party, it has not always been the case. For example in the past, countries such as the United States, China, and Russia have refused to recognize its rulings and eventually have withdrawn their acceptance of the court's obligatory jurisdiction. However, there is nothing within the Charter that prevents states in engaging in other means to resolve any dispute if they deem so. This is the reason why President Kenyatta noted that the country is committed to a diplomatic solution to the current impasse. In negotiating the two states can examine other similar cases. For instance, Nigeria, Sao-Tome and Principal have established a Joint Development Authority to regulate their joint exploration ventures in the Bight of Bonny. The establishment of the Authority was preceded by a treaty among the three States.

Dialogue will ensure a win-win situation but more fundamentally they will ensure that the resources in the disputed area are exploited. The two countries need to invest in serious diplomatic initiatives that will involve the African Union, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and Western allies including development partners who are interested in the resources at the disputed area. President Uhuru has indicated the intention to use other means including involving the UN and the AU to ensure that the matter is settled once and for all. With the current situation, there is no way any of the two countries will exploit the resources particularly gas and oil.

Before engaging in negotiation, Kenya needs to take stock of the journey from the time the dispute was taken to ICJ and examine where it erred as a country. There are claims and counterclaims of ineptitude and the use of massive resources with nothing to show for. There are also claims of the country's negotiating team putting up a poor performance including failing to respond to calls to attend meetings. Overall, what seems to be coming out of Nairobi is a team that was aimed at bullying Somalia in the hope that domestic problems in Somalia will work in its favour. Lessons from such an exercise will be important as the country engages in the post judgement dialogue to resolve the dispute once and for all.

There is also a need to study the ruling very careful and understand what it exactly means. This is because there seem to be various interpretations of the ruling. One school of thought seem to suggest that Kenya has lost

significantly a position cemented by the fact Somalia has welcomed the ruling and urged the country to respect the same. The other school suggests that indeed each country could gain from the ruling if they are willing to restore relations.

Whichever positions that each state considers, co-operation and politics in each of the countries will play a crucial role. Co-operation between the two countries will be required when it comes to the compliance of the judgement. Each country will have to in-cooperate the judgement in the domestic law; a development that will require the approval of the parliament. For Somalia that will be relatively easy because they have welcomed the judgement while Kenya has rejected it. Already the issue is highly politicized in Kenya with some politicians urging the Head of the State to consider stationing the military in the contested area. This means that the process of domestication is going to be politically sensitive. Negotiations and co-operation are still desirable because drawing a boundary requires joint teams on delimitation, surveying and mapping. A boundary is only complete when a treaty is signed after the diplomatic and technical actions.

Both countries should refrain from taking a hard stance that may ruin the relationship and risk the attendant repercussions. Since the verdict on October 12, 2021, key political figures in both countries have made statements that are likely to escalate tensions between the two neighbours. Some politicians and government officials from both sides seem to be singing drums of war something that is very impractical to a sensitive matter like border delimitation Families have killed one another due to borders as it has happened at clan and community levels, at the country level it is even more serious and therefore it needs to be handled diplomatically through negotiations. It should be noted that peace is good for Kenya, for Somalia and for the entire Horn of Africa region including the Gulf of Eden and the Red Sea channel. It will be recollected that at the height of piracy on the coastal waters of Somalia, international trade was adversely affected as the prices of commodities skyrocketed due to high insurance premium to safeguard the uncertainty and effects of insecurity in the Gulf of Eden.

Military deployment to secure the area is another option but this paper argues that if this happen, the region will suffer decades of tension and occasional fights between

Judge Joan E. Donoghue, President of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), presiding over the maritime delimitation case between Kenya and Somalia on Tuesday, October 12, 2021 (Photo Credit: UN/ICJ-CIJ /Frank van Beek)

the forces until the matter is negotiated diplomatically. Even if one military is defeated the winner cannot exploit the resources in an environment where you are fearing for an attack to occur at any time. Let the two countries not waste time on weighing the military option because it will not resolve the dispute and they will eventually come back to dialogue. So let dialogue be considered now and not tomorrow.

For Somalia; there exist two options -option one, pursue to engage in a diplomatic negotiation with Kenya and two, seek the authority of the UNSC to enforce the ruling which will definitely escalate tension and conflicts in the sub-region. Article 94 (2) provides for this route. It states that," If any party to a case fails to perform the obligations incumbent upon it under a judgment rendered by the Court, the other party may have recourse to the Security Council, which, if it deems necessary, may make recommendations or decide on measures that should be taken to give effect to the judgment. "

Apart from the political and strategic challenges that faces the negotiation process, the historical contexts and dynamics will come to bear. The verdict has rekindled some old wounds and bad memories. For example, in his statement after the ruling President Mohammed Farmajo said,

> *"Since the day I was elected, we have faced political, diplomatic, security and economic pressure by the Kenyan leadership," he further said, adding that the verdict was a fair indication of the transparency of the court.*

With regards to Kenya, some political leaders and commentators have remembered that the late President Jomo Kenyatta when fighting the 1967-69 *shifta war* said that he will '*never cede an inch of Kenya" and called on citizens to defend its territory with the last drop of blood in their bodies.* The result of the Shifta War (1963- 1967) was provoked by Somalia's territorial claims over Kenya's northern region. It only ended when Somalia renounced its claims and signed the Arusha Agreement on October 23, 1967. The agreement was brokered by President Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), and Milton Obote (Uganda).

Finally, international partners interested in the resources in the disputed area should avoid interference in the dispute until it is fully resolved.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the ICJ judgment read by Judge Joan Donoghue creates an environment where weighty decisions have to be made for future diplomatic and international relations of Kenya and Somalia and the larger Horn of Africa sub-region. The impact of this verdict is going to reverberate beyond the Horn of Africa because it will invite both allies and foes interested in the resources in the disputed area. Moving forward, it seems that it will be in the interest of both countries to seek a negotiated solution beyond the judgement. However, the negotiation is likely to face internal extra-regional and historical challenges that have characterized the two countries relations.

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Intellectual and Ideological Expansion of the Islamic State (*Daesh*) in Africa

By Molly Ellenberg and Prof. Anne Speckhard, Ph.D.

Abstract

Since the fall of their territorial Caliphate, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria [ISIS] (also referred to as the Islamic State, ISIL, and Daesh) has been working to regain territory and rehabilitate their reputation among militant jihadists as a potent, lethal terrorist group. A key part of their strategy has been to spread their ideology throughout the African continent, beyond the North African countries from which they recruited nearly a quarter of their foreign fighter force at the zenith of their activity in Syria. This article provides a brief overview of ISIS's physical expansion throughout Africa before delving more deeply into the reasons why ISIS has increasingly shifted its focus to Africa and its strategies for radicalizing and recruiting fighters and supporters, namely by exploiting existing grievances, especially those exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, related to government corruption and human rights abuses. The article then discusses strategies for fighting ISIS's online recruitment as social media becomes more accessible and popular throughout Africa, focusing particularly on the use of counter narrative videos disseminated through Facebook ad campaigns. The article concludes with a summary of the implications of ISIS's ideological expansion into Africa and directions for future research and policy.

Physical Expansion: ISIS Affiliates in Africa

Before considering ISIS's intellectual and ideological expansion, it is important to understand where ISIS is physically active in Africa. ISIS has six primary *wilayat* – provinces – in Africa. Libyans comprised an early group of foreign fighters to travel to Syria 2011, and many allied themselves with ISIS when it split with Jabhat al-Nusra in 2013. By 2014, ISIS affiliates were occupying areas in Libya with up to 6,500 mostly Libyan fighters. ISIS in Libya was weakened by 2018, but its strength has plateaued since them, indicating that it was not affected by ISIS Central's defeat in 2019. Nearby, ISIS in Algeria was established in 2014 after a group from al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb broke off and pledged allegiance to ISIS Caliph Abu Bakr al Baghdadi. Military crackdowns have led to a sharp decline in attacks in Algeria since 2017. ISIS's Sinai Province also pledged allegiance to al Baghdadi in 2014. The Sinai Province was responsible for an attempted assassination of the Egyptian Interior Minister and the murder of over 300 people praying at a mosque, both in 2017. Despite a continued military campaign against the Sinai Province, one that has been plagued with allegations of human rights abuses, the Sinai Province continues to commit regular attacks and capture territory, undeterred by the weakening of ISIS Central. ISIS also has a non-province affiliate in Tunisia, which broke off from an al Qaeda-aligned group of fighters that unified following the Tunisian revolution in 2010 and 2011. Counterterrorism operations by Tunisian forces, with assistance from the United States, however, resulted in a steep decline in, albeit not an elimination of, ISIS-linked attacks in Tunisia between 2016 and 2019. In 2019 and 2020, ISIS fighters in Tunisia increased their attacks, including suicide bombings and stabbings of security forces.

The Islamic State West African Province [ISWAP] is based primarily in Nigeria, with expansion into Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. ISWAP is ISIS's most lethal African affiliate and was established in 2015 after Boko Haram's leadership swore bayat and rebranded themselves as ISWAP. Interestingly, Boko Haram's late leader, Abubakar Shekau, was expelled as ISWAP's governor for his excessive violence against Muslim civilians and his use of women and captured girls as suicide bombers. Under new leadership, ISWAP focused on attacks against military targets and community outreach in order to win civilian supporters. In recent years, however, ISWAP has returned to its old ways, committing violent attacks against civilians throughout the Lake Chad region.

The Islamic State in the Greater Sahara [ISGS] is considered by some to be a wing of ISWAP, though it operates relatively independently in Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. ISGS grew steadily from 2014 until 2016, when ISIS Central recognized its pledge of allegiance. The group has continued to grow in brazenness and lethality, including an attack against U.S. and Nigerian special forces soldiers in Niger in 2017. Between 2019 and 2020, ISGS committed 18 attacks which killed more than 400 soldiers from Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

ISIS's Somalia province is based in Puntland and is primarily comprised of a small group of fighters who broke off from al Shabab, which is affiliated with al Qaeda. The group has not slowed its activity since the death of Abu Bakr al Baghdadi in 2019, though it remains a less lethal threat than al Shabab in Somalia. Indeed, in addition to campaigns by security forces, the latter has actually targeted the former in attacks since its inception.

The Islamic State Central African Province [ISCAP] has two different wings in Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC]. The DRC wing originated as a Ugandan militant jihadist insurgent group called the Allied Democratic Forces [ADF], which has been active in local conflicts since its members fled to the DRC in the mid-1990s. The group was weakened by a campaign by the Congolese military in 2014, but has since rebuilt itself, killing nearly 3,000 Congolese civilians between 2014 and 2019. In Mozambique, an independent insurgency

The Islamic State provinces and al Qaida's areas of operation in Africa (Photo Credit: Center for Global Policy)

of largely rural youth from a Muslim minority group, fueled by feelings of discrimination and marginalization by the secular government, began to develop in 2017. By 2019, its attacks were claimed by ISIS Central as actions of ISCAP. The two ISCAP wings have escalated in violence ever since, both apparently more closely tied to ISIS Central than to each other (Warner et al., 2020).

The Importance of Africa to ISIS

Since the fall of the territorial Caliphate, ISIS has continued to mount attacks in Iraq and Syria but has increasingly shifted its focus to its provinces, particularly in Central and South Asia and in Africa. Africa holds particular import to ISIS for a myriad of reasons, largely related to the wealth of opportunities which Africa holds for ISIS. First, at the most basic level, Africa is home to a massive recruiting pool for ISIS. Africa's youth population is large and growing, and almost 60 percent of all Africans are younger than 25 (Kariba, 2020). Youth alone does not make someone vulnerable to militant jihadist radicalization and recruitment, of course, but a large population of young, disaffected men and women with little hope for the future and little trust in the existing local, national, and global systems and institutions is ripe for exploitation by terrorist groups like ISIS and its affiliates (Adelaja & George, 2020). In addition to seeing potential future fighters in the African population, ISIS also sees in Africa a reliable past source of fighters. Approximately 10,000 of the 40,000 men and women who traveled to join ISIS in

Iraq and Syria came from Africa, particularly North Africa. This number includes six to seven thousand fighters from Tunisia, 12 to 15 hundred from Morocco, 600 from Libya, and 170 to 225 from Algeria (Benmelech & Klor, 2020). Thus, ISIS can consider its investment in Africa to be a safe bet.

Africa also provides ISIS an opportunity to spread its ideology by unifying and regionalizing the goals of existing insurgencies. The establishment of ISCAP provides a salient example of this (Warner et al., 2020). By unifying distinct insurgencies that were already active in Mozambique and the DRC, ISCAP was able to attract foreign fighters from elsewhere in Africa to their new, less localized cause. After the establishment of ISCAP, there was a noticeable shift in rhetoric by the leadership in both Mozambique and the DRC from the political to the religious with respect to ideological goals and concrete objectives, thus making their cause more relatable and attractive to potential fighters from other Central African countries and beyond. Additionally, the establishment of ISCAP allowed ISIS to set up a base in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, which provides them access to other areas of South and East Africa, namely South Africa and Tanzania, even without official affiliates operating in those countries (Darden & Estelle, 2021). Hence, the unification and regionalization of local insurgencies is of ideological and tactical use to ISIS.

Finally, expansion throughout Africa provides ISIS with an opportunity for counter messaging. Since its inception, ISIS has been keenly aware of its public image, carefully crafting slick propaganda content to be disseminated across social media in the form of videos, memes, and online articles (Awan, 2017). This prowess in online recruitment was partially responsible for the unprecedented number of foreign fighters who traveled from all over the world to fight for and live under ISIS's Caliphate (Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2020a). ISIS leadership certainly understands that the loss of the Caliphate and the capture of thousands of fighters has been damaging to their image as a uniquely effective militant jihadist group capable of operating a functioning proto-state. Despite their attempts to spin their defeat as evidence of the West's unending war against Islam, pushing supporters to mount attacks in coalition countries and to donate money to help ISIS men and women escape from Syrian Democratic Forces [SDF] prisons and camps, ISIS knows that it must also prove itself once again against naysayers and disenchanted former followers (Kaczkowski et al., 2021; Winter, 2019). News of victories

across Africa therefore allow ISIS's propagandists to shift attention away from losses in Syria and Iraq and toward the new frontiers of West and Central Africa (Azman, 2020; Candland et al., 2021). This strategy was evidenced by the increase in media coverage of ISGS activity by ISIS Central in 2019 and 2020, as well as a beheading video from Tunisia, which was published in March of 2019, shortly after the fall of Baghouz (Warner et al., 2020).

ISIS Expansion into Africa

Winning Hearts and Minds

Of course, boasting about battle victories is not the only way that ISIS recruits new African supporters and fighters. ISIS, like many militant jihadist groups that have been active in Africa, has been successful in the strategy of winning hearts and minds. One way to win hearts and minds is simply to provide food and services to people who do not have them and have otherwise felt neglected by their governments. The governmental gap, especially in poorer, more rural areas, has been exacerbated by COVID-19, allowing militant jihadist groups, including ISIS affiliates, to step in to provide food and medical care (Columbo & Harris, 2020). Provision of these services allows militant jihadist groups to win the affection and appreciation of the people they are serving, while at the same time highlighting the fallibility of secular, Western-supported governments.

Although ISIS was able to provide many services when they controlled large swaths of territory in Syria and Iraq, its affiliates do not marshal the resources nor reign over nearly as much physical territory in Africa, especially in comparison to other active groups, such as al Shabaab. Therefore, their strategy of ideological expansion through winning hearts and minds relies more on the exploitation of grievances in order to verbally prove their superiority to the status quo, rather than physically proving their superiority through provision of services.

> Since the fall of the territorial Caliphate, ISIS has continued to mount attacks in Iraq and Syria but has increasingly shifted its focus to its provinces, particularly in Central and South Asia and in Africa

When mainstream imams are seen as allowing their communities to be targeted and abused, extremists are able to argue that moderate, "state-sanctioned" Islam is neither valid as a religious practice nor sufficient to empower its community

Alas, there are all too many grievances for ISIS to exploit in Africa, just as there were in Iraq and Syria. Feelings of political exclusion and marginalization are ripe for exploitation; ISIS can offer disaffected youth, even those who are not particularly religious, the opportunity to gain a sense of purpose and meaning through militant jihad (Collinet, 2021). People may also be swayed by ISIS's claims that the West is at war with Islam if they have been disadvantaged by foreign, largely Western, economic influence in their areas or corrupt leaders who seem to be in league with the West. Indeed, much of Africa's natural resources have been plundered over centuries by European and American colonizers and corporations and African leaders who did not share the wealth with their people, leading Africans to feel that they have been robbed of material wealth and humiliated by foreign powers (Awojobi, 2014; Ogar, Nwoye, & Bassey, 2019; Lister, 2020). ISIS's promises of dignity, equality achieved through religious rule, and the opportunity to fight for one's people and avenge their humiliation can therefore be incredibly powerful (Kruglanski et al., 2014).

Corruption, human rights abuses, and violence committed by government-linked actors similarly highlight the failures of the status quo which ISIS seeks to upend. Again, feelings of humiliation and powerlessness can be overwhelming, leading vulnerable people to buy into the claims of ISIS and its affiliates that they will provide pure, Islamic governance where corruption is punished harshly, and law enforcement follows the standards of *shariah* (International Crisis Group, 2019), even though in the Caliphate that was not the case. Corruption was rampant in the ISIS Caliphate, as religious rules were arbitrarily enforced often with overly brutal punishments for minor infractions (Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2020b). Finally, ISIS's argument for their form of extremist religious governance can be especially persuasive if mainstream religious leaders appear passive or even complicit in political exclusion, social marginalization, foreign influence, corruption, and human rights abuses. When mainstream imams are seen as allowing their communities to be targeted and abused, extremists are able to argue that

moderate, "state-sanctioned" Islam is neither valid as a religious practice nor sufficient to empower its community (International Crisis Group, 2017). Thus, ISIS and its affiliates exploit the legitimate grievances of vulnerable populations and are able to do so most effectively when mainstream religious leaders are perceived as not responding effectively to those grievances.

Utilizing Local Networks

Despite the growing use of social media for radicalization and recruitment to violent extremist groups of all different ilks, in-person ties are still key to militant jihadist expansion in Africa (Speckhard & Shajkovci, 2019). ISIS affiliates are able to spread their ideological message, as well as publicize the material benefits for joining their group, by way of networks comprised of family and friends. ISIS recruiters are also able to take advantage of the existing communities that may be susceptible to radicalization and recruitment, particularly madrasas, mosques, youth associations, and businesses (Estelle & Darden, 2021).

With regard to existing recruitment pools, ISIS affiliates have greatly benefited from the ideological foundations that are already in place in many madrasas and mosques. Given the gap in services provided by governments, Gulf countries, particularly but not exclusively Saudi Arabia, have stepped in and funded Islamic schools across Africa. These schools largely teach the *Salafi* and *Wahhabi* strains of Islam (Antwi-Boateng, 2017; Solomon, 2015), which ISIS takes a step further into takfiri practices, declaring other Muslims who do not adhere to their interpretations of Islam as apostates who may be killed. Thus, it is important to note that neither Salafism nor Wahhabism is inherently violent, and most people who practice these conservative strains of Islam do not endorse violence and are not supportive of groups like ISIS. However, ISIS and other militant jihadist groups have built their ideologies off of these strict interpretations of Islam and of shariah. Thus, people who already adhere to such a strict interpretation of Islam may be more susceptible to the way that ISIS twists that interpretation to have their grievances mobilized into political violence.

This is especially true if their religious education has not equipped them to understand why ISIS's ideology is unIslamic and they are unable to refute ISIS's claims. Therefore, they may fall prey to so-called scholars who boast their knowledge of the Quran and Sunnah, knowing that their audiences are unable to correct the recruiters' claims.

Social Media

In-person ties certainly dominate the current ISIS radicalization and recruitment milieu in Africa, but social media should not be discounted by those seeking to prevent and counter these groups (Ogunlana, 2019; Chiluwa, Chimuanya, & Ajiboye, 2020). As previously noted, ISIS has become notorious for its skill in spreading propaganda and recruiting followers, financiers, and fighters via social media. In its heyday, ISIS would blanket the internet with professional-quality propaganda content, translated in dozens of languages. Then, using social media's immediate feedback mechanisms, ISIS recruiters would reach out to anyone who liked, shared, commented on, or otherwise engaged with that content. They could then build a relationship with those

people, eventually directing them away from mainstream platforms and onto encrypted applications where they could communicate more freely regarding travel to Iraq and Syria or mounting attacks at home (Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2020a). Although ISIS's online activity has dwindled somewhat in recent years, their capability for encouraging supporters to mount attacks and to send money to other attackers should not be overlooked. Similarly, their capability for radicalizing and recruiting locals in areas where their affiliates are active is still strong.

When local militant jihadist groups pledge *bayat* to ISIS Central, their social media capacity improves exponentially (Sinkó, 2021). New affiliates are given high quality media equipment such as cameras and computer programs to which they did not previously have access. They are also trained by seasoned ISIS propagandists as to how to best utilize their new equipment. Once they begin to create their new propaganda content, including videos of victories in battle and glossy e-magazine articles, the affiliates have access to a wider online audience than they ever had before, as ISIS Central's news and propaganda outlets share and retweet their content (Zenn, 2019). They can use this new audience to

ISGS fighters clash with al Qaida-affiliated JNIM near Talataye, Gao Region in Mali. Since 2018, the borders between Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso has seen a rise in violence from jihadist groups, including ISGS (Photo Credit: al Naba Publication)

ISIS's argument for their form of extremist religious governance can be especially persuasive if mainstream religious leaders appear passive or even complicit in political exclusion, social marginalization, foreign influence, corruption, and human rights abuses

recruit more fighters, raise money, and simply gain clout, bragging to potential supporters about how notorious they have become online. Numbers of likes and online followers can be powerful recruiting tools in and of themselves.

Some may argue that internet and social media penetration is still too low in Africa for ISIS's usual ways to make a real impact. This view may be shortsighted, ignoring the rapid growth of such penetration throughout Africa. Facebook penetration in the countries where ISIS is most active has grown quickly over the past three years, as evidenced in Table 1.

Table 1. Facebook Penetration in Africa, 2018 versus 2021 (Source: NapoleonCat.)

Country	2018 Facebook Penetration (%)	2021 Facebook Penetration (%)
Mali	7.5	10.6
Niger	1.8	2.6
Burkina Faso	5.6	10.2
Nigeria	10.7	15.9
Mozambique	7.2	8.9
DRC	2.8	4.8
Egypt	36.2	48.8
Libya	63	93
Somalia	8.3	14
Algeria	49.9	59.8

The Breaking the ISIS Brand Counter Narrative Project

Given the rapid growth of Facebook and other social media use throughout Africa, especially in the areas where ISIS is the most active, it is prudent to create effective strategies for countering ISIS's online radicalization and recruitment efforts in Africa. One such strategy is the Breaking the ISIS Brand Counter Narrative Project, established by the International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism [ICSVE]. This project uses videos of over 270 in-depth psychological interviews with male and female ISIS defectors, returnees, and imprisoned cadres to disrupt and dispute ISIS's online propaganda. With the interviewees' consent (often with their faces blurred and/or their names changed), the videos are cut into short video clips and interspersed with footage from ISIS propaganda, during which the ISIS images are juxtaposed with the actual ISIS insider's genuine personal narrative in which they describe what initially attracted them to ISIS, why they decided to join, and what they ultimately found in the terrorist group.

The speakers describe the traumas and injustices they endured under ISIS, warning others not to follow the same path. One-minute-long counter narrative videos are used in Facebook ad campaigns, and longer (three to seven minutes long) videos are posted on Facebook, YouTube, and TheRealJihad.org. TheRealJihad.org is a website run by ICSVE which includes the full collection of counter narrative videos, blog posts by Islamic scholars refuting the militant jihadist ideology, and links to online and on-the-ground counseling and deradicalization resources. The website is available in English, Albanian, and Arabic, and serves as the landing page for the Breaking the ISIS Brand ad campaigns. These counter narrative videos have proven impactful in Facebook ad campaigns in Europe (Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2020c), the Middle East (Speckhard et al., 2018), and elsewhere (Speckhard et al., 2020), as well as in focus groups with Somali American youth (Speckhard, Shajkovci, & Ahmed, 2018; Speckhard, Ellenberg, & Ahmed, 2020), and in

one-on-one interactions with teenagers considering joining ISIS and with an ISIS emir himself (Speckhard & Shajkovci, 2017).

The International Center for the Study of Violent Extremism has also run several such campaigns in areas of Africa where ISIS is active, particularly but not exclusively in North Africa. A snapshot of the results of these campaigns are presented in Table 2, which highlights the reach number (i.e., the number of people on whose Facebook feeds the ads appeared), the number of complete video views, and the number of views of TheRealJihad.org that originated in that particular country, regardless of whether that view was a direct result of watching one of the Facebook campaigns (although the majority are).

Table 2. Reception of Breaking the ISIS Brand Facebook Ad Campaigns in Africa (Source: Authors)

Country	Reach	Complete Views	TheRealJihad.org Views
Algeria	5,566,486	105,680	195,911
Burkina Faso	563,714	6,582	6
Egypt	799,655	16,541	24,956
Kenya	1,403,253	37,139	30
Libya	2,145,833	46,059	109,849
Mali	620,160	3,534	86
Mauritania	40	1	31
Morocco	2,215,011	63,144	60,107
Mozambique	21	0	0
Niger	260,095	1,803	71
Nigeria	225	2	206
Somalia	1,224,274	16,132	16
South Africa	139	1	27
Tunisia	6,432,052	103,289	147,556
Uganda	15	0	16
Zambia	5	0	0
Total	**21,230,978**	**399,907**	**538,868**

Implications

The focus on defeating ISIS in the Middle East alongside fertile recruiting grounds in Africa has allowed the group to expand physically and ideologically in Africa. There is no doubt that the defeat of the territorial Caliphate was a devastating loss for ISIS, but those seeking to counter further terroristic action around the world should not dismiss their growth in Africa as an important part of ISIS's global strategy. The present article points to some specific implications related to such growth which should be considered by governments and other agencies and organizations working to prevent and counter violent extremist radicalization, recruitment, and action. First, the use of social media has not eclipsed the importance of in-person recruitment. In West and Central Africa in particular, local, in-person networks are still critical to ISIS affiliates' recruitment strategies. Therefore, local, trusted leaders must take an active role in fighting back against the militant jihadist ideology and providing alternative outlets for local youth to gain a sense of personal significance in their lives. Second, ideological expansion of militant jihadism benefits from government corruption, human

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American troops train soldiers near Agadez, Niger on April 12, 2018. Over the past decade, the US, France, and EU have increased security assistance in the Sahel region mainly due to transnational threats – violent extremism and migration (Photo Credit: Tara Todras-Whitehill/The New York Times)

rights abuses, and lack of public services. This is not a new or unique finding. All over the world, violent extremist groups of all ideologies exploit the existing grievances of the vulnerable people whom they seek to radicalize and recruit (Oyewole, 2015; Callaway & Harrelson-Stephens, 2006). Human rights abuses serve as evidence that those people are being targeted and that they must fight back in order to protect themselves. Government corruption is portrayed as proof of the fallibility if not illegitimacy of the current system. Lack of public services provide a gap into which violent extremist groups can step in and prove their superiority to that current system. This finding is not easily remedied, however. As scholars frequently observe, it is not enough to proclaim that corruption and abuses must stop in order to curb terrorism; actual changes must be made. Lastly, increased internet and social media penetration will be useful for ISIS affiliates.

ISIS Central has already become infamous for its skill in internet-based radicalization and recruitment, and the vast recruitment of foreign fighters from North Africa, as well as other regions of the world where internet penetration is high, is evidence of the utility of this 21st century propaganda strategy, with internet recruitment alone apparently possible in recent years (Speckhard & Ellenberg, 2020a). As other areas of Africa gain access to the internet at similar levels of their North African counterparts, ISIS affiliates are sure to ramp up their social media activity. Increased social media penetration is not exclusively negative with regard to militant jihadist violent extremism, however. It will also allow local and international organizations to widely disseminate counter narratives which disrupt militant jihadist propaganda and are able to reach vulnerable audiences.

Other social media critics also noted that Omar al-Bashir had killed over half a million Sudanese in a bid to retain power. However, there appeared to be a desire to hold him accountable for financial wrongdoing, namely ownership of foreign currency and unlawful wealth

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Aid Conditionalities and Development in Rwanda: Between Traditional Donors and China

By Veronika Čáslavová

Abstract

This article analyses Rwanda's approach management of development assistance, which has proved to have a crucial role in Rwandan post-conflict development. In detail, it focuses on the political conditionalities attached to Official Development Assistance (ODA) in the context of assistance provided by traditional donors to Rwanda in the period from 2000 till 2019. It also examines China's engagement in Rwanda and the constraints attached to the Chinese alternative to the ODA. This is analysed in connection with Rwandan developmental patrimonialism established under the rule of President Kagame.

Introduction

Rwanda has come a long way since the 1994 genocide. Like any state and society in a post-conflict stage, Rwanda has faced numerous challenges. One of the top priorities for a country that lost close to one million people in 100 days, was to get the national economy back on track and to work on national development. Over time, Rwanda has become one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa. Of note, the international development assistance has played a central role in this evolvement.

The development aid (also called development assistance), comes from various international actors and entities, most often from the developed countries, otherwise known as *donor states*. They are usually accompanied by international organisations like the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), or the World Bank (WB). The biggest contributors to development aid are gathered under the OSCE's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). To this day, it has more than 30 member states, six observers (the IMF and WB amongst them) and seven participant states (OSCE, 2021). These countries and organizations are also called *traditional donors*. The DAC monitors the international distribution of development aid and sets its standards. Development assistance fulfilling these standards then falls into the category official development assistance (ODA). The ODA from the traditional donors is delivered under specific conditions, mainly the democratization of the recipient country, transparency, and endorsement of human rights and civil society.

In recent years, there has been an increased influence of other donor states operating outside the DAC-set standards, and whose aid comes (at first sight) without such conditions. The most visible new donor is China, accompanied by Russia, Brazil, and India – the BRIC countries (Harborne, 2012). Swelund (2017) and Williams (2015) argue that China could challenge the traditional donors and create a competitive environment, especially on the African continent.

The following analysis focuses on the increasing role of China in Africa, particularly, its activity in Rwanda. Rwanda has been selected as a special case given its rapid economic growth and a characteristic way of aid redistribution even though it remains a landlocked country with resource shortage and with significant aid dependency. Hence, it is not a surprise that Rwanda is searching for a suitable and most importantly sustainable alternatives of financing.

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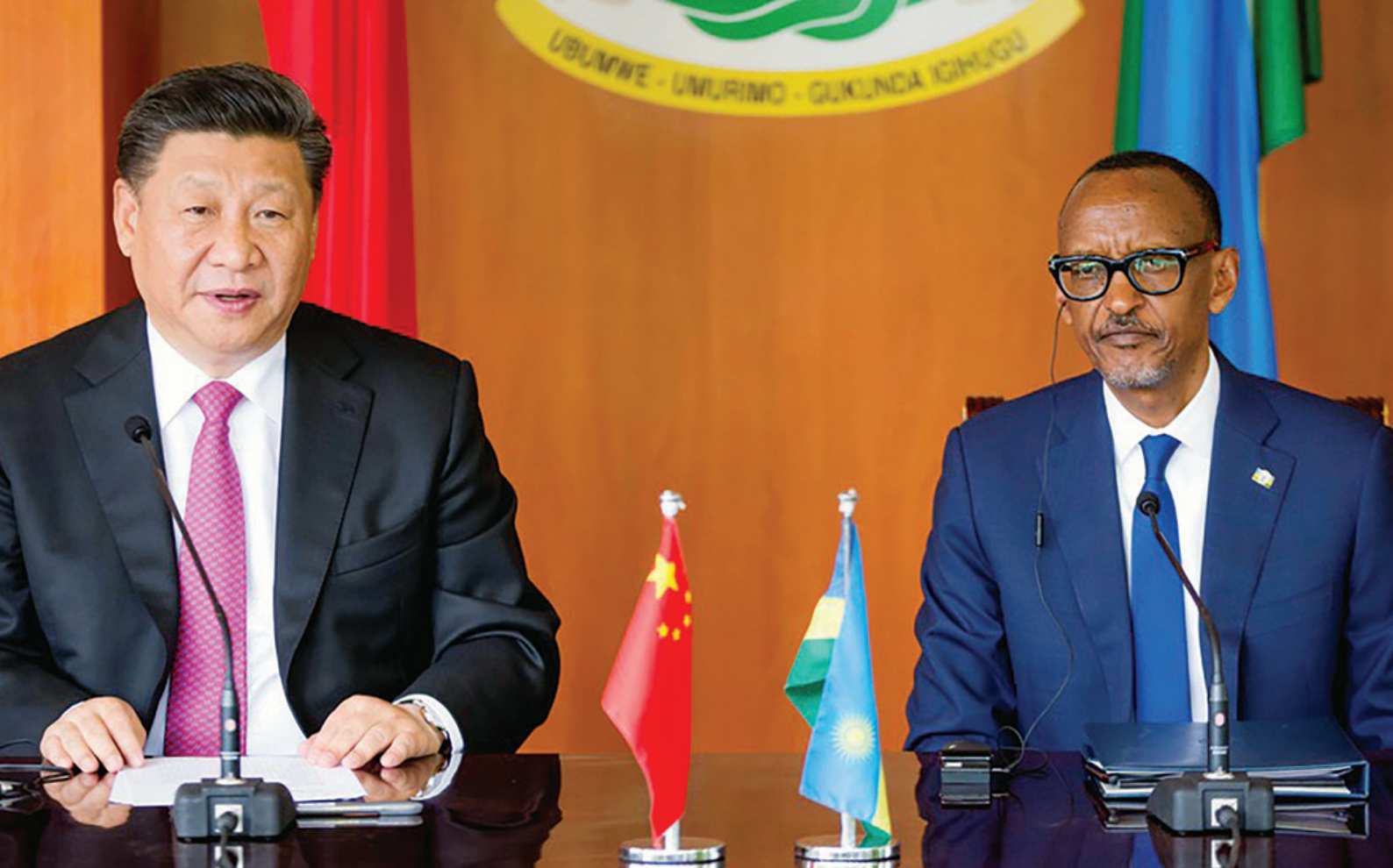
Xi Jinping with Rwanda's President Paul Kagame in 2019. China has been advancing unconditional aid to Africa in the recent times which is in contrast to most aid from traditional donors. (Photo Credit: Jean Bizimana / Reuters)

The article focuses on two specific aspects. First, on the evolvement of Rwandan political and economic system towards the so-called developmental patrimonialism, and secondly, on the conditions assigned to Rwanda by traditional donors in comparison to its cooperation with China.

ODA: Its Drivers and Attached Political conditionality

As mentioned above, the nature of international aid and its conditions have developed throughout last decades. For the purposes of this research, the DAC's definition of ODA is used. Thus, by ODA, it is understood financial flows from donor countries to the recipient countries enlisted on DAC list based on per capita income which are:

i. *"provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and*

ii. *concessional (i.e. grants and soft loans) and administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as the main objective." (OSCE, 2021)*

The DAC's specifications, enabling measuring ODA, have also changed during the past decade. It does not, however, change the broad understanding of ODA or its nature, and it is not crucial for the presented research. What is important to stress is the fact that military aid or promotion of donors' security interests, as well as primary commercial transactions, do not fall into the ODA category and cannot be understood as such (OSCE, 2021).

What are the drivers for the donor states to deliver ODA to developing countries? Grimm (2011) summarizes these motives in four categories. The first and the most obvious is the normative motive, most significantly represented by altruism of governments, aiming to lift poverty, and on the other hand pursuing self-interests, like keeping one's position in the context of international distribution of influence. That is closely connected to the political motives, which manifest themselves mostly in diplomatic relations and could be connected to the set conditionalities. From a more practical point of view, becoming a donor allows you to enter the recipient's market more easily. Grimm (2011, p. 21) interprets this as the economic motive. Last but not least, we must not forget the almost Hobbesian reasons for the development assistance – that is the strategic motive, ensuring stability in the region by endorsing the development of the

recipient country. Strategic motive is thus often tied to the security implications. This theory is endorsed by Karen del Biondo. She argues (2015) that from the triad of security, commercial and historical interests, the security interests in recipient country are the most crucial factor for donor states, especially those from the European Union.

The system of development aid has been developing side by side with the political conditionalities especially in the 1990s (Crawford & Kacarska, 2017). According to Roessler (2005, p.210), during the 1990s decade "twenty-five of forty-seven African countries experienced some type of donor pressure in the form of explicit political conditions for aid or loans." Indeed, the promotion of democracy and human rights has been explicitly stated as one of the EU's foreign policy goals in the late 1990s (del Biondo, 2015). In the particular case of the United Kingdom, ODA was tied to a good governance agenda in the recipient state, promotion of political accountability, legitimacy, competence, and pluralism (Baylies, 1995). This aid conditionality was given mainly by its perception as a tool for conflict resolution, most widely used after the Dayton Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Duffield, 2010). Brown (2015) then describes the role of aid conditionalities in democracy promotion. The original thought was that the aid allocations would be dependent on the level of the recipient country's democratization. Such an idea was however proved inefficient due to the close connection between development and democratization. The aid conditionality thus developed into the "carrot and sticks" system, the "sticks" being the aid suspension.

At the turn of the century, we may observe a further deepening of this system, following the idea of democracy promotion through development assistance, introducing yet another phenomenon into the equation. Human security, connected to the development stage of the country and the growing concerns about migration, created the environment for the so-called development-security nexus (Duffield, 2010) where the donor's motivation is mostly driven by its security and strategic interests. The promotion of democracy and good governance, tied to the provided development assistance, should thus ensure a prosperous and secure environment and as a consequence, fulfilling the security interests of donor states. That means strong international pressure on domestic political changes.

At first sight, it may seem that developing countries do not have much of a choice other than to accept these conditions, receive the promised developmental assistance, and consequently fulfil the democratization conditions in order to avoid the aid suspension. However, there are two breaking points. The first one is the issue of the frequency of the executed aid suspension. The results are most noticeable in the del Biondo's (2015) and Crawford and Kacarska's (2017) research. It is apparent that Western donors incline towards aid suspension only in the utmost cases, mostly after military coups. Until then, they prefer to keep their interest and diplomatic relations in place, usually accompanied by a rhetorical warning. While this aspect of aid conditionality is covered quite well in the literature, the second issue is increasingly becoming more apparent.

Second, is the issue of alternative sources of financing and developmental assistance. In the context of sub-Saharan Africa, it is mainly the case of China. While China's role as a global economic player is being explored within the scientific community, there is another level to its nature of aid. That is, the effect of China's engagement on the democratization processes in the recipient's states.

The following chapters focus on the aid conditionalities imposed by the traditional Western donors to Rwanda, the gradual growth of Chinese influence, and the phenomenon of developmental patrimonialism in the context of the Rwandan democratization process.

Developmental Patrimonialism in Rwanda

In the previous section, the concept of aid conditionality and its aim for democratization were presented. In this section, the article focuses on another aspect that may arise as a consequence of development assistance – developmental patrimonialism.

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Martin Williams (2015) describes various effects of vast development assistance. According to him, such financial flows could create a competitive environment among the recipient's countries political elites and enforce the struggle for power. However, he envisions such a scenario mainly in resource-rich countries which is not the case for Rwanda. The alternative option presented in his research is more likely to be applicable in our case. Political elites in the recipient country remain in power thanks to these financial flows since it allows them to buy off political opponents and facilitate political compromises. These elites are then able to keep the power and most importantly, maintain stability in the country. However, such behaviour and system may lead to the so-called developmental patrimonialism.

Building upon Max Weber's patrimonialism as a traditional form of rule based on personal loyalty ties between a leader and his administration, developmental patrimonialism can be described as a specific form of neo-patrimonialism, a concept in political economy. Authority system gathered around the leader is combined with or operates from behind some sort of formal governance. Access to the market and business is of critical importance. Tim Kelsall (2011a) confirms Williams' assumption, that access to financial resources strengthen such kind of "political behaviour" and thus, in the case of developing countries, speaks of developmental patrimonialism. Its main components are:

- *"a strong visionary leader (often independence or war-time hero)*

- *a single or dominant party system*

- *a competent and confident economic technocracy*

- *a strategy to include, at least partially, the most important political groups in some of the benefits of growth*

- *a sound policy framework, defined as having broadly pro-capitalist, pro-rural bias"* (Kelsall, 2011b).

Current Rwandan president Paul Kagame, ruling the country from 2000, can be classified as a strong, perhaps also visionary, leader. Since his engagement in Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), as one of its leaders, he has remained in top governmental positions. First as a Minister of Defence after the 1994 genocide and as a Vice-President to Pasteur Bizimungu, and since 2000, as a president of Rwanda. He is backed by the RPF, which has since

transformed into a political party. The party won the last parliamentary elections as RPF Coalition with more than 70 % of the vote. The RPF has been in power since 1994 (Wiley, 2018), and plays a dominant role on the Rwandan political scene. In 2015, a constitutional referendum was held resulting in a constitutional amendment, effectively allowing President Kagame to rule until 2034 (McVeigh, 2015).

As for the inclusion, we may for example mention the parliament seats reserved for women, youth and disabled (altogether 27 out of 80 seats). Through such participation, these groups are, at least formally, included in the policy decision making (ibid). Given the focus of the presented article and the fact that ODA still constitutes a large part of the country's income, the economic technocracy is illustrated by the Rwandan aid management system and related official documentation, which is coordinated under the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN). In coordination with the Government of Rwanda (GoR) it set four development priorities: education, transport, health, and agriculture (Grimm & Hackenesh, 2017). The development itself is a key feature in Rwanda Vision 2020, as well as in Vision 2050. Indeed, the revised version of Rwanda Vision 2020 (2012) presents the aforementioned developmental priorities in detail, as the Vision's pillars. The Vision 2020 also contains 47 specific indicators of its fulfilment (MINECOFIN, 2000, p. 28-29), which makes it quite an elaborative document, suitable for presentation to international donors.

Interestingly enough, the document also states decentralisation as one of the national aims (MINECOFIN, 2000). Nevertheless, it is the governmental bodies that maintain the management of aid, such as MINECOFIN, Development Partners Coordination Group or The Budget Support Harmonisation Group, all under the governmental coordination and with their respective working groups. The fact of governmental supervision

> Both, Rwanda Vision 2020 and the PRSP, or later the EDPRS, accent the significance of Rwandan agriculture and rural development, side by side with the importance of private-sector transformation and its strengthening

is proving to be important in the context of growing Chinese engagement, described further. Yet another important fact in this context is that already in 2000, the reduction of aid dependency constituted one of the Vision's major objectives (ibid).

Another document required by the traditional donor's community is the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). These papers are issued by the GoR in coordination with major donors. The first PRSP was published in 2002 and was welcomed by the traditional donor community. It was addressed "as the framework for development interventions by all stakeholders" (Hayman, 2006, p. 41). This particular issue will be described further in the context of fulfilling aid conditionalities. The Rwandan national PRSPs were lately complemented by the national Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), firstly issued in 2008.

Both, Rwanda Vision 2020 and the PRSP, or later the EDPRS, accent the significance of Rwandan agriculture and rural development, side by side with the importance of private-sector transformation and its strengthening. These types of documents are appreciated by traditional donors in particular since it emphasises the recipient country's aim to efficiently use the ODA, first approached in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. In 2006, the GoR also adopted the national Aid Policy as another official document. This document clearly states three crucial criteria for Rwanda regarding developmental assistance. They are (1) low transaction costs/use of country systems, (2) alignment with the Rwandan government's development strategy and (3) no or limited conditionalities (GoR, 2006). These criteria reflect the accent on national ownership, also introduced in Paris Declaration.

Moreover, Rwanda seems to present itself as a stable country with a well-developed aid management system and central redistribution, with a strong and long-termed leader. Above this, since 2009 the GoR has regularly issued Donor Performance Assessment Framework, reporting to the ODA. Such an approach to aid management is one of the aspects that contributes to Rwanda's "safe-investment" aura and keeps the DAC member donors in. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned aspects also signify that Rwanda is undergoing a
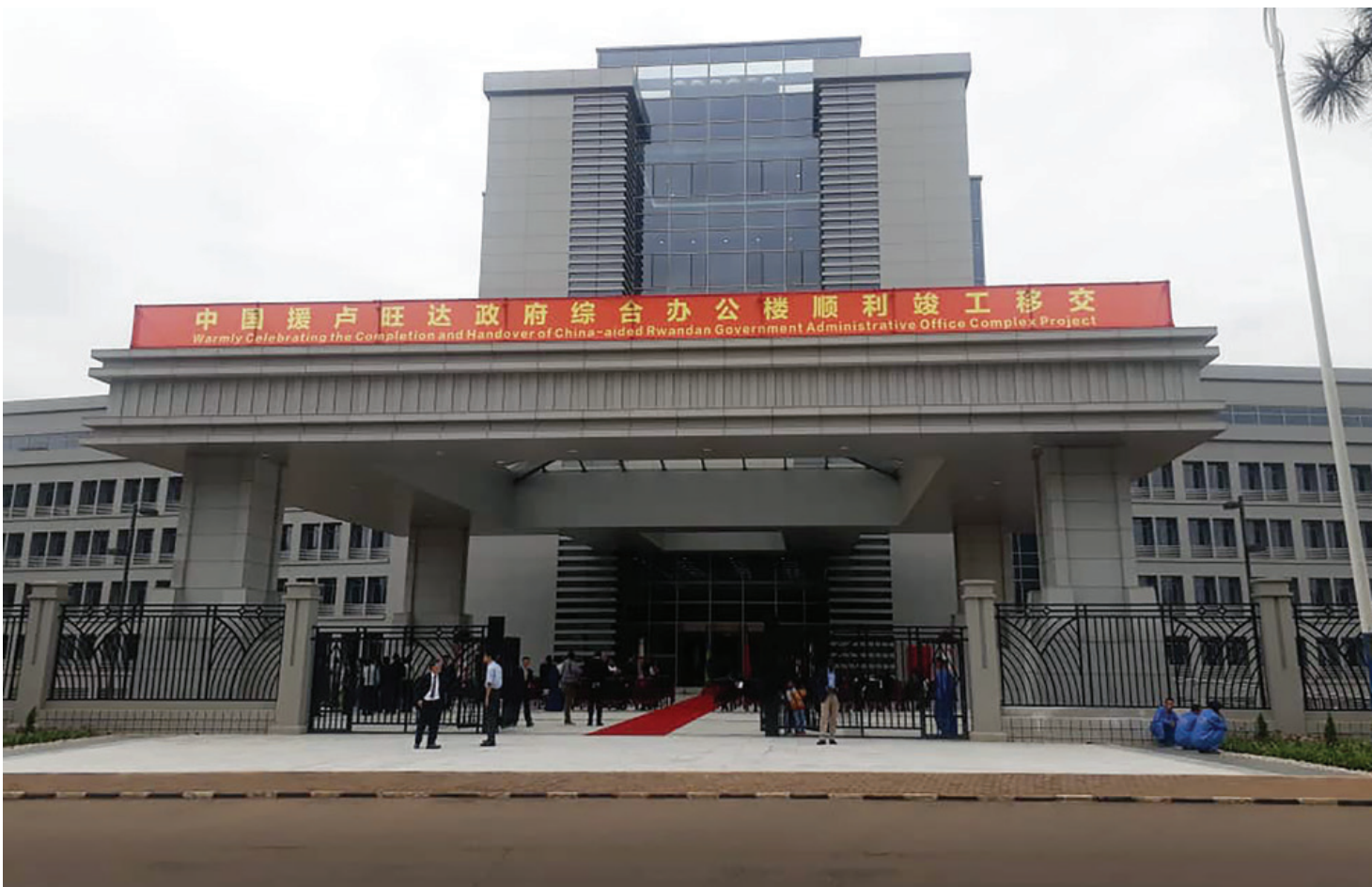

The new office complex, a $27 million donation from China to Rwanda in Kimihurura (Photo Credit: Kigali Today)

developmental patrimonialism era. As Kelsall (2011b, p. 3) states, this type of governance can be compatible with strong economic performance, as it can be seen in Rwanda, but it can also be temporary.

Traditional Donors in Rwanda: The Nature of their Aid and Aid Conditionalities

Development assistance and international aid to Rwanda can be traced to the pre-genocide era. As mentioned in the beginning, this article examines the development era under Paul Kagame's rule. Given the availability of data, ODA flows between 2000 and 2019 will be presented. Data for 2020 and 2021 are not available yet and it may be assumed that they will be likely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, since we are examining the Rwandan redirection from traditional Western donors towards China, the author analyses only state-like donors. Therefore, institutional donors like EU, IMF and World Bank will not be included.

In the examined time frame, the United States, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany and Belgium were identified as the biggest contributors to ODA flows to Rwanda. Particularly interesting are then ODA flows from Canada with peeking in 2010, but with minimal expenses in the rest of the period. In the last decade, Sweden can be considered as one of the rising donors in Rwanda. France, as a traditional power-engaging country in the sub-Saharan region, contributes to the ODA flows to Rwanda only minimally, in comparison to other DAC members. This could be a result of the strained relationship between France and Rwanda. It was only this year, that France revised its role in the 1994 genocide and that French president Macron arrived in Kigali with an apology. In the future, we may perhaps expect further development of mutual relations. Last but not least, another significant contributor is Switzerland, whose ODA contributions exceeded the French during the past decade. Switzerland's experience with participatory approach and decentralization is particularly intriguing for Rwandan official representatives.
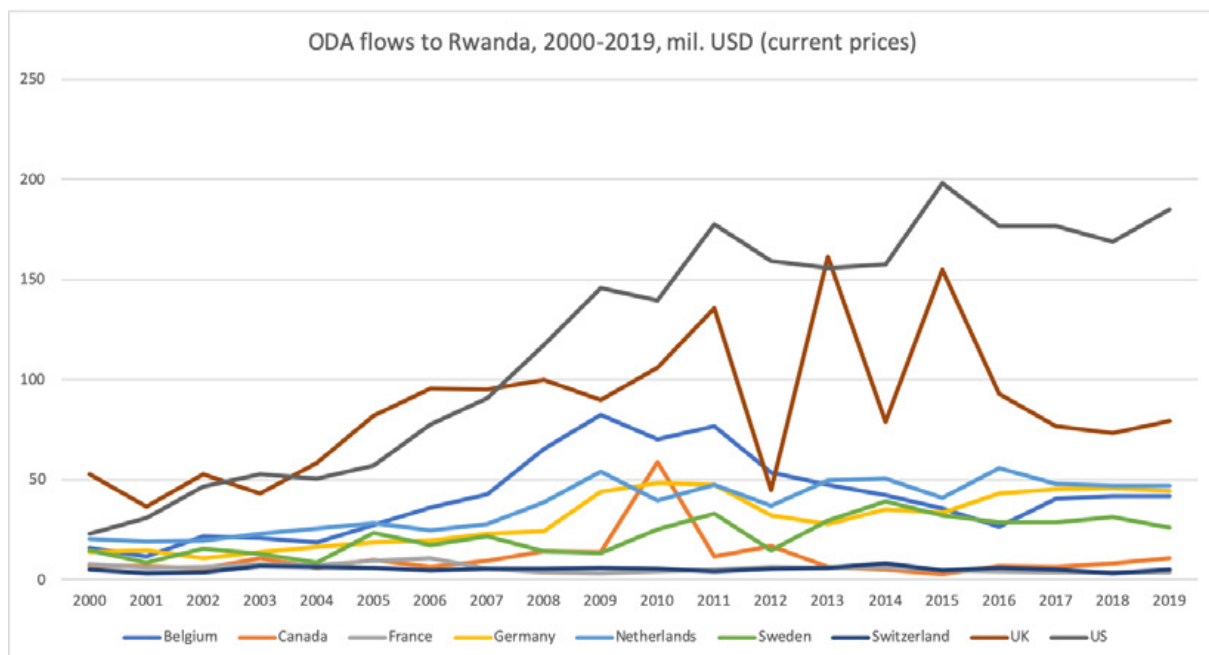
Graph 1: ODA flows to Rwanda in period 2000-2019 in millions of USD (current prices). (Data Source: OSCE.Stat; Graph by Author)

The motivation to engage in Rwanda may vary, as it was previously explained in general terms. Nevertheless, the objectives throughout the DAC member's spectrum are nearly the same. Priority for the US is clear – stability in the region. That should be accomplished through a reduction in poverty. Thus, the Rwandan Poverty Reduction Strategy is considered to be a crucial document. The approach of the United Kingdom is almost identical, with a special

accent on education. Germany and Belgium are unique cases due to their past involvement in Rwanda. Both countries promote "Do no harm" strategy and prefer to work directly with the Rwandan population, rather than go through governmental channels. Reduction of poverty remains also their priority. The Netherlands is no exception and aims to strengthen peace, stability and security in the region (Hayman, 2006, p. 48). In general

terms, traditional donors finance mostly capacity-building in the recipient country, rather than specific infrastructural projects.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Rwandan PRSP and EDPRS are consulted and reviewed by traditional donors and they constitute the first form of aid conditionality. The first PRSP covers the area of democratization and good governance most broadly, even though its conclusions and set objectives are quite general. This may be given by the effort to satisfy the majority of the international community since each of the donors focuses on various areas. EDPRSs issued in 2008 and 2013 are focused on the aspect of accountable governance, rather than on the democratization itself. Several mentions considering democracy and human rights and good governance can also be found in Rwandan Vision 2020. Specifically, we talk about a Rwandan commitment to reach "a State respectful of democratic structures and processes and committed to the rule of law and the protection human rights in particular" (MINECOFIN, 2000, p. 15).

But on what basis can be identified specific conditionalities given by traditional donors? Though there are mutual efforts to strengthen aid coordination and extensive DAC reporting, mutual agreements remain to be a privilege to individual countries. Therefore, not every bilateral agreement between the traditional donor and Rwanda is public. From the ones available, it is possible to derive several conclusions.

Commitments to enhance good governance, respect for human rights and civil society engagement prevail across several agreements. An explicit mention of this can be found in the 2012 Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Rwanda. Principles of good governance and respect for human rights and international obligations are presented as mutual commitments between Rwandan and UK governments. Moreover, Rwanda has made the commitment "to respect and progressively fulfil economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights, as enshrined in African and international human rights instruments" (MoU, 2012, p. 2). Only a year ahead of this, Human Rights Watch called for a revision of the UK approach to Rwanda, based on a multiple accusations of human rights violations, highlighting Rwandan 2010 presidential elections, in which Paul Kagame gained 93 per cent of votes and engagement of Rwandan troops in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (Tertsakian, 2011). Sweden made democracy and human rights one of its priorities in Sweden Strategy for

It is clear, that despite the bilateral nature of agreements, traditional donors act in accordance and present implications for potential human rights violations or other breaches of the agreement

Development Cooperation with Rwanda for 2010-2013. It explicitly states that Sweden will enhance these priorities through capacity building and stresses the importance of respect for human rights. The Sweden Strategy is also one of the most explicit donors in terms of potential decrease or suspension of development assistance in case Rwanda disrespects human rights including freedom of expression and freedom of the press (Ministry for Foreign Affairs Sweden, 2010).

Even though the Belgian Indicative Cooperation Programme also describes the capacity building as one of the principal instruments of development assistance, it is rather a special case as the Belgian law on International Cooperation limits direct bilateral cooperation to six sectors. Thus, the question of democratization and human rights is hidden under the "governance sector". Nevertheless, similar to Sweden, Belgium clearly states that "serious violation of the principle of democracy, rule of law or human rights could lead to the suspension" of such development assistance (ICP, 2011).

It is clear, that despite the bilateral nature of agreements, traditional donors act in accordance and present implications for potential human rights violations or other breaches of the agreement. An interesting point here is that in these agreements, we will not find a detailed description of such a breach. The reasons can be threefold. First, it is logically assumed that DAC members act accordingly to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union etc. Secondly, it would not be possible to cover every single case of human rights or democracy violation in such focused agreement as is the agreement upon development assistance provision is. Thus, the reaction of the donors could be limited by such listing. Thirdly, detailed specifications of such violations would be simultaneously binding for the donor states. In other words, donors would also have to act in situations, where they would act otherwise due to their broader strategic interests. Indeed, del Biondo (2015) states that Rwanda

is viewed as a regional partner and suspensions of aid or other type of sanctions are not that often, as Rwanda is regarded as a key partner in achieving regional stability.

On the other hand, when such suspension comes, it is coordinated. In 2012, aid to Rwanda was suspended by the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, one of the biggest ODA contributors to Rwanda. This suspension was a result of allegations of Rwandan troops and Rwandan-trained rebels involvement in the DRC's conflict (DW, 2012, Ravelo, 2012, Morrow, 2012). In 2014, Belgium joined these European countries and suspend its development aid, based on Rwandan failure to meet "the democracy target." Besides, on the Rwandan support of M23 rebels in DRC, Belgium was mainly concerned by the restriction of freedoms, especially of press freedom (Uwiringiyimana, 2014).

China as an Alternative: What Does it Finance and What are the Constrains?

Describing and explaining China's activity is a particularly demanding task due to the lack of official and accessible data. First of all, most of China's contracts are confident and it only rarely releases information about specific details or conditions. And secondly, China is not a DAC member, thus it does not have the obligation of reporting to DAC/OECD (Grimm et al., 2010). This creates another shortage of data. However, this article has built upon previous research and data gathered by AidData is a research lab at William & Mary's Global Research Institute.

The dataset maps ODA-like financial flows between China and Rwanda. Data are available for a period from 2000 till 2012. The time frame refers to the period when transactions or projects were dealt with and signed, not to the exact start and end of those planned projects.
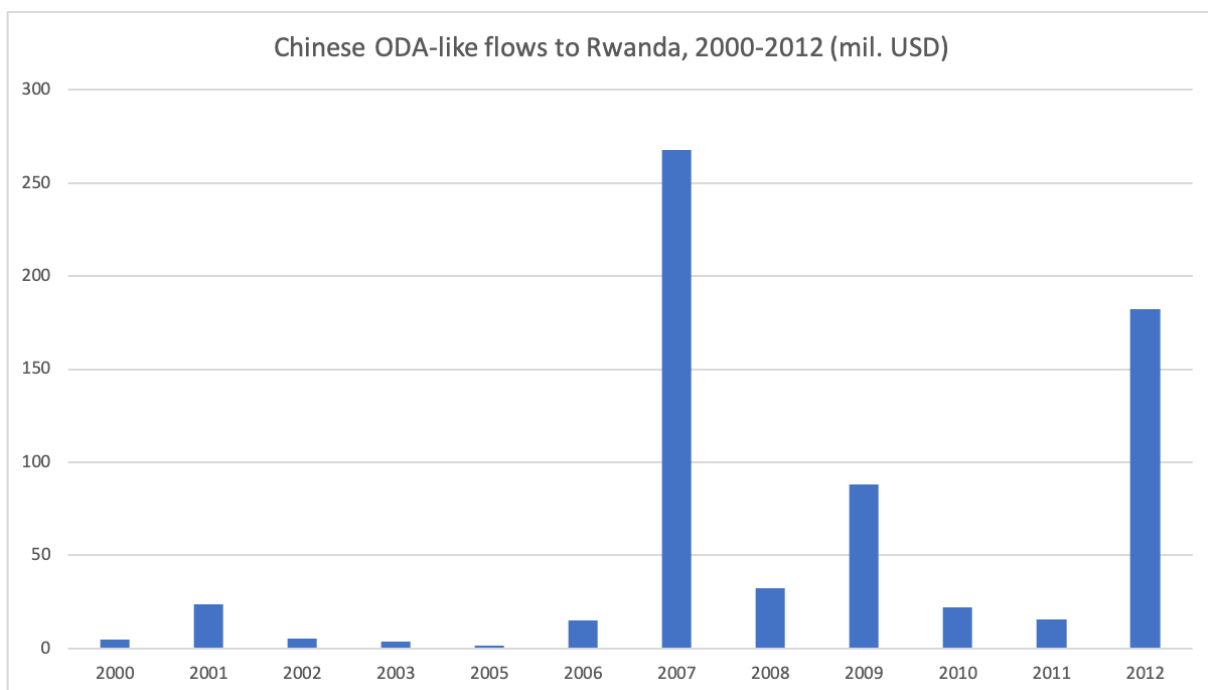
Graph 2: ODA-like flows to Rwanda in period 2000-2012 in millions of USD. (Data Source: Aiddata.org; Graph by Author).

China operates in Rwanda mostly through its Chinese Development Bank and Export-Import Bank, both of them national agencies, in the form of grants, loans and debt relief. These financial flows are funding individual and specific projects, most often constructions in the transport infrastructure. Four out of 25 specific/allocated financial flows then went to a sector of Government and Civil Society. In 2005, it was the case of USD 30 million grant and USD 1.5 million loan for the construction of a new governmental building – Rwandan State House. In

2006, China began the construction of new headquarters for the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was implemented by Beijing Construction Engineering Group Co., Ltd. That is one of the constraints of Chinese development assistance – it comes free of democratization-related conditions. However, it comes with Chinese firms and workers (see Lilisimba & Parashar, 2021; Grimm et al., 2010). The fourth case comes at the scene in 2008. Chinese ambassador to Rwanda handed over a 60-million RWF worth of office equipment and

electronics directly to the governing party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front. These laptops, desktop computers, stereo equipment, and more were donated directly by the Chinese ruling party, the Chinese Communist Party.

This text does not propose, that such contracts would be counter-democratic *per se*. It aims to illustrate the Chinese-Rwandan relationship in the context of aid conditionalities from DAC donors and their pressure for democratization and human rights protection.

Another example of financial flow is the 2007 loan to Rwanda for the construction of fibre-optic infrastructure. This was facilitated by the Chinese Export-Import Bank and Huawei Technologies Co., Ltd., a private sector firm with strong affiliation to the Chinese government, was chosen as an implementor. This particular example once again shows that Chinese conditions concern only their own economic and strategic interest. Through such engagement, China is gradually penetrating not only Rwandan markets and economy but also its critical infrastructure.

As for the further development of this relationship, in 2017, Rwanda officially joined the Chinese grand strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and that Rwanda has already completed one of the assigned projects (Malik, Parks, Russell, Lin, Walsh, Solomon, Zhang, Elston & Goodman, 2021). The mutual agreements continued also in recent years. During his first visit to Rwanda, Chinese president Xi Jinping signed 15 agreements connected with trade, development, investments etc (Kagire, 2018). In 2020, Rwandan and Chinese representatives signed a USD 60 million grant, with no specific project chosen (MINECOFIN, 2020). What is known is that this financial incentive should be used as one of the Rwandan development priorities (explained above).

To conclude the presented constraints of Chinese development assistance, import of labour force and pre-agreed tenders for Chinese firms, we should mention Grimm's thought on Chinese seek of political support in the international community. The only (confirmed) political conditionality from China towards its partners (in

While DAC members prefer to engage in Rwanda through capacity-building, China provides specific projects, in most cases in one package with Chinese firms and workers

this case Rwanda) is the recognition and support of the One China policy, meaning that recipient states should not recognize or should withdraw from the recognition of Taiwan (Grimm et al., 2010, p. 62). Rwanda remains to be such a partner and it seems, that the development cooperation will only grow stronger.

Conclusion

The aforementioned facts lead us to several conclusions. First, it is evident that the nature of Chinese development assistance and one of the traditional donors is quite different. While DAC members prefer to engage in Rwanda through capacity-building, China provides specific projects, in most cases in one package with Chinese firms and workers. Secondly, the aid conditionality also differs. While China's only political condition attached to the provision of development assistance is the recipient's agreement with One China policy, traditional donors require respect for human rights, freedoms and enhanced democratization process. A serious breach of them then results in aid suspension.

Based on Rwandan national strategies and visions, it seems that Rwanda prefers infrastructural development rather than a conditionality-attached capacity building. In its seeking of the end of aid dependency, Paul Kagame deepens the Rwandan relationship with Rwanda. In fact,

he stressed several times that "China gives what Rwanda needs" (Grimm, 2010) and that "China relates to Rwanda as an equal" (Shaban, 2018). He also recently stressed that the Chinese model of development is perhaps more suitable for Rwanda than the model proposed by the West (Norbrook & Smith, 2019). Nevertheless, it appears, that Rwanda has so far managed to find a well-balanced mix of these two approaches.

Can we expect a Rwandan abandonment of traditional donors? The author of the presented article suggests that this will not be the case. The regular flows by ODA still constitute a large part of Rwandan national incomes and nourish established developmental patrimonialism. Cutting out the DAC members would have big implications not only on the national budget but also on the income of privileged political elites. On the contrary, Rwanda needs to keep its image as the haven of stability in the Great Lakes Region, at least in the middle term. With this approach, traditional donors will still act according to their broader strategic interests and will suspend their assistance only in the cases of grave breaches of human rights and democracy. However, a strong implication for the traditional donors comes out – it is perhaps the time to revise their strategic priorities and policies and decide, whether they are able and willing to compete with China in Africa.

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Africa–Middle East Strategic Cooperation in a Globalized World:
Rethinking the Future

By Mumo Nzau, Ph.D

Abstract

In the past decade or so, substantive documentation on the nature, extent and context(s) of Africa–Middle East relations has come to the fore. Yet despite the depth and breadth of analysis projected in these works, there still lacks a proper holistic scope and directionality in so far as the future strategic dynamics of Africa–Middle East relations is concerned. Yet Africa and the Middle East have continued to be plagued by political instability, violent conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, poor and/or weak governance structures and assorted humanitarian crises. This article responds to this gap by teasing out and examining a number of critical issues that are likely to shape strategic cooperation between Africa and the Middle East as the two regions forge forward into a globalized 21st Century. The main argument herein is that there are numerous domains of convergence for strategic engagement between the Middle East and Africa in a globalized world, which if well rethought and refocused, will be of mutual and holistic benefit to the countries and peoples of both regions going into the future.

Introduction

The 21st Century has brought with it new ways and means for states and peoples across regions to communicate, exchange and interact in ways that they hardly did before. These are the new found issues and processes that are profoundly shaping international relations in the modern world. One cross-cutting feature herein is the phenomenon of globalization; a double-edged sword that if consciously and strategically handled can be of great benefit for peoples within and across regions. It is against this premise that this article examines strategic cooperation between Africa and the Middle East. The discussion begins by shedding light on the conceptual and analytical premise against which the article is anchored, before undertaking a retrospective account for Africa–Middle East relations. The analysis then delves into an examination of the issues, interests and challenges in Africa–Middle East relations; and subsequently, zeroing-in on the core issue herein: re-thinking future Africa–Middle East strategic cooperation in a globalized world. Finally, the article 'ties it up' with conclusions and recommendations on the future outlook of Africa–Middle East strategic cooperation.

Conceptual and Analytical Framework

Different states continue to pursue different interests over time and space. States, depending on their endowments, have many and varied ways and means at their disposal in the pursuit of these interests. Yet the nature of the 21st Century international system is such that it is a highly interconnected web of international actors, structures and processes. As a result of transnational, intra-regional, cross-regional and global movement, interaction and exchange of assorted goods, services, people, ideas, capital and technology has become the norm rather than the exception. For the most part, states desire that such transnational, intra-regional, cross-regional and global movement, interaction and exchange (of assorted goods, services, people, ideas, capital and technology) always works to their benefit, as informed by their national interest calculations and end-objectives.

Nonetheless, under such conditions, outcomes are not always guaranteed. In this way, at times they do make gains, while on others, they do not. In other words, depending on many and varied factors, at times these dynamics are not always favourable to all states' national

interests all the time. Subsequently, different states have either to compel (that is, force others to behave in certain ways), compete (favourably or unfavourably) with others, or cooperate (that is, bargain, negotiate and strike compromises and agree to make joint commitments) on particular issues, in order to meet their strategic objectives. Each of these alternative courses of action (to compel, to compete or to cooperate) comes at a cost (sunken, reputational and audience costs) and need proper strategic judgement in order to yield desired results. Cooperation and healthy competition is most desirable even for the states with the greatest ability to coerce their way into attaining the outcomes they desire, in as far as their interaction with others in the international system is concerned.

The main argument here is that in a globalized world, there is more room for not only strategic cooperation but also mutual gain for both Africa and the Middle East if only the two regions can consciously work together to overcome the common challenges that have for a while now, prevented them from realizing such an outcome. A liberal institutional approach to Africa–Middle East strategic cooperation is most desirable here. African states and their Middle East counterparts stand to gain holistically in a future globalized international system if they capitalize on well enforced and sustained multilateral platforms of healthy competition, exchange and

cooperation. These platforms ought to be premised on sound and stable political will, foresight and commitment in order to endure and materialize. It is notable however that globalization as a phenomenon that also comes with a downside. The forces, ways and means as well as contents of globalization have continued to enable various regions across the world to control, access and exchange people, goods, services and ideas. What Africa and the Middle East must capitalize on are the healthily competitive and mutually benefiting opportunities that a globalized international political economy has to offer. Violent extremism, terrorism and the globalized structures for transfer of finance and technologies that support them and hence destabilize both regions are the bad and undesirable ideas that they do not need.

Africa–Middle East Relations in Retrospect: A Brief Account

In many respects, both the Middle East and Africa have a shared past and similar socio-political and cultural experience. Africa and the Middle East are no strangers to each other. From the olden times of theocratic empire builders, through to the slave-trading dynastic kingships and sultanates of the pre-colonial era geographical proximity, trade and commerce, language, religion and other forms of non-material culture spurred interaction among the inhabitants of the two regions for centuries on

end. Thereafter, European colonialism variously changed the governance and political economy landscape of the two regions. For instance, when the Ottoman Empire collapsed following the defeat of Turkey in the First World War, many parts of the Middle East fell mainly under the direct colonial occupation and/or trusteeship mandate of European powers, mainly Britain and France. In similar fashion, most of Africa was under colonial occupation right from the latter years of the 19th C

entury, through to the mid-to-late 20th Century. It is also noteworthy that during the early decades of political independence, many countries both African and the Middle East turned into theatres of Cold War proxy interests and deadly conflicts as well. In macroeconomic terms throughout this period most of Africa and the Middle East fell under the classification of 'Third World' or 'Less Developed Countries' economies, generally lagging behind and struggling to catch-up with the industrialized and advanced 'Northern' economies of North America, Western Europe and Japan (Tijani, Njoku & Jones, 2010).

Nonetheless, despite many points of convergence in the historical experiences of the two regions, a number of dissimilarities have stood out. Indeed, both Africa and the Middle East are not uniform entities in the holistic sense. For instance, while it is true that Islam (as a faith) and Arabic (as a language) and Pan-Arabism (as an ideology) are core defining and uniting features of the Middle Eastern socio-cultural fabric, these are far from the ideal 'uniform affair.' It is worth noting that parts of Northern Africa, which fell under the early influence of Middle East, do fall under these spheres of cultural and socio-political influence. In fact, this is what gives the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as a distinct sub-regional classification character at least in geostrategic terms. Yet in reality many sectarian, political and society-specific differences and divergent worldviews around them paint a totally different picture. The same applies to the greater Sub-Saharan Africa where many and varied shades of indigenous African belief systems (African Traditional Religions), Christianity and Islam paint a wide socio-cultural mosaic in a continent that has for decades sought to cement and actualize its Pan-African dream amidst many challenges and odds alike.

Nonetheless, there were many points of confluence between Pan-Arabism and Pan-Africanism especially when its come to the general push for a new international economic order (NIEO) by countries of the South, as well as the global campaign against various forms of

racial segregation and discrimination especially against Apartheid South Africa and by extension, resolving the contentious issues to do with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict among others (Abengunrin, 1983). It is worth noting that among the Arab Leagues 22 Members States, nine are in Africa. It came as no surprise that in his vision for Egypt's foreign relations, Gamal Abdel Nasser perceived Egyptian leadership around three spheres of influence- the 'Islamic world,' the 'Arab world' and Africa (Nasser, 1954). It is this kind of background that saw Northern Africa become strongly involved in the broader Pan-African project, right from the establishment the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) in 1963, through to the prominent role played by President Muammar Gaddafi in the establishment of the African Union four decades later (Huliras, 2001).

Yet, due to the varying backgrounds and orientations, some parts (and/or countries) of Africa have had closer ties with their Middle Eastern counterparts than others. This particularly applies to the countries of Northern Africa such as Morocco, Mauritania, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt; and to some extent, Sudan which tend to be associated with the Middle East North Africa sub-regional category (Abderrahim & Aggad, 2018).

However, many other countries in the two regions continued to engage and interact bilaterally with each other not only through trade, commerce and exchange but also within various multilateral platforms of cross-region international cooperation. One such multilateral platform is the Arab-Africa Summit under the rubric of the African Union (AU) and the League of Arab States (LAS; also known as the Arab League). In fact, it is worth noting that the First Africa-Arab Summit was held under the auspices of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the League of Arab States (LAS) in Cairo Egypt on 9th March 1977 (AU, 2020). In that Summit, the Head of State of both African and Arab Countries underscored the existence of common interests in the socio-cultural,

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political and economic spheres between the two regions. Further, they resolved to overcome the hurdles that hindered Africa-Arab cooperation and to consolidate the foundational safeguards behind the same.

However, after the 1977 Summit, there was a prolonged lull in this platform of engagement. It was after three decades that the Second Africa-Arab Summit was held in Sirte Libya, on October 10, 2010. The outcome of the Summit was the Sirte Declaration in which the African and Arab leaders affirmed their desire and commitment to cooperate towards development, peace, justice and security between the two regions. True enough, the African Union and Arab League did try to live up to this promise. Indeed, since Sirte in 2010, the two regions held two more Summits: the 3rd Africa-Arab Summit, held in Kuwait City, Kuwait (November 2013); and the 4th Africa-Arab Summit, held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea (November 2016). The 5th Summit was scheduled for Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in 2019 but has since been postponed twice mainly due the COVID-19 Pandemic, and is scheduled for 2022 (AU 2020).

Issues, Interests and Challenges in Africa–Middle East Relations

Just like in other parts of the globe, relations between the Middle East and Africa are characterized by the movement and exchange of people, capital, goods and services. Indeed, many issues and interests permeate relations between Africa and the Middle East. In terms of people-to-people relations in general, several things bring the two regions together. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia houses the two Holy Mosques as well as other Islamic holy sites which are visited by Muslim faithful from all other the world including Africa. In similar fashion, Israel too is home Muslim Holy Mosques and sites as well as highly visited and revered Judeo-Christian places of worship and Holy Sites which are also visited by thousands of pilgrims all year round. By extension, these spheres of cultural exchange and interaction also include tourism and leisure travel to and from different

destinations both in Africa to the Middle East. The other major realm of activity is investment, trade and commerce both at the level of individuals (people to people) and states (government to government). The most critical resource that other countries import from the Middle East is oil. Key oil exporting economies in the Middle East include countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (which are Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates), in addition to Iran (Yousef, 2004) .

Since the early-to-mid 20th Century through to the 21st Century, the Middle East has continued to be key source of energy not only for Africa but also the globe. Middle East exports to Africa include traditional artifacts, assorted textile products as well as domestic goods including household appliances and consumables. While a number of African countries are ranked among the top producers of oil, most others import crude oil, gas and different petrochemicals from the Middle East. Further, there are a number of African countries that import security and/or defence assets from Middle Eastern countries such as Israel and Turkey though these account for relatively small percentages of expenditure. On their part, African countries export many raw (primary) and mostly semi-processed products to the Middle East. These include live animals such as camels, cattle and shoats with the Republic of Sudan being one of the highest exporters to the Middle East. Other products that find their way from Africa to the Middle East include tea, coffee, cocoa, cotton, sugar, timber, assorted nuts, grains and citrus fruits, gums, spices and resins; as well as industrial raw materials, compounds and minerals that range from crude oil, copper, bauxite, phosphates, cobalt, nickel, uranium and many others (Springborg, 2020).

In 2018 for instance, trade volumes between the United Arab Emirates and Africa (both in exports and imports) amounted to USD 45.1 billion; followed by Saudi Arabia at USD 22.8 billion. Other major trading partners that year were Turkey with trade volumes with Africa valued at USD 21.5 billion followed by Qatar, at USD 2.5 billion, Israel at USD 1.7 billon and Iran at USD 900 million.

Every year thousands of job seekers from Africa travel to the Middle East in search of one form or another of gainful employment. For instance, in 2019 alone, there were 1.6 million African migrants in Saudi Arabia, 1.1 million in the UAE; 200,000 in Qatar, 10,000 in Turkey and 400,000 in Israel. A sizeable number of these people are migrant workers serving across different sectors in Middle East countries. It is noteworthy for example that up to 64 percent of remittances to the greater Horn of Africa in 2019 originated from the Gulf region countries with the bulk of it going to Egypt, Eritrea and Ethiopia. In the same token, there are notable Middle Eastern investments (government and private) across different sectors in African countries. These range from the financial/equity markets to agriculture, transportation, mining, manufacturing, sports, tourism and hospitality. In 2018 for example, UAE investments in various African destinations amounted to USD 16.6 billion, while Turkey's investments were valued at USD 6.5 billion (UNCTAD, 2018; UNDESA, 2019; Tiziana, 2020).

From the above discussion, it is evident that in general terms; trade, commerce and exchange between Africa and the Middle East have been on the increase over the years, particularly since the beginning of the 21st Century. However, a number of countries in the Middle East have lately developed a keen interest in Africa compared to others. Since the 2000s, Africa has increasingly stood out as a potential source for investment on two major fronts: energy and infrastructure. A number of scholars and commentators have argued that owing to this state of affairs, Africa has increasingly become a theatre for great power competition over access, control and exploitation of what have been termed "immense energy resources" including off-shore oil and gas deposits; and as a promising destination for grand capital investments especially in the realm of a fast developing infrastructural sector in many parts of the continent. Some scholars have termed this the "Second Scramble" for Africa (Donelli & Giseppe, 2020).

While it is true that many Middle East states have for decades on end enjoyed bilateral diplomatic ties with their African counterparts, it is also true that some of these countries have gone out of their way to expand their spheres of strategic influence on the continent. Compared to the rest, Turkey has 43 embassies in Africa as at 2021, followed by Saudi Arabia and UAE (with 28

United Arab Emirates (UAE) mock flag in UAE. UAE is increasingly becoming an important player in Africa (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

each), then Qatar and Iran (with 23 each), while Israel has 12 (Van den berg, & Meester, 2019; Tiziana, 2020). Turkey also initiated the Turkey-Africa Summit which has been held every 6 years since 2008; hence, 2008, 2014 and 2020 (Republic of Turkey, 2021). This state of affairs paints a picture of increased competition for control and influence in Africa. True enough, Africa remains unexploited and/or untapped in many respects. Many African countries are now keener more than ever before, on expanding their infrastructural base in order to uplift living standards, spur economic growth and engender manufacturing and general industrialization. Against this background, the continent's trade routes and geostrategic sea lanes of communication such as the Read Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Mediterranean Sea to the north, have been on the strategic radar of Middle Eastern powers (Tiziana, 2020a). It is for this reason for example that countries such as Turkey have been keen on strengthening ties with post-conflict economies such as Somalia, while others such as Saudi Arabia has have sought to increase their military presence (just like other world powers including the US and China) in Djibouti (EER, 2019).

However, in the midst of these arguably expanding and deepening spheres of interaction between the Middle East and Africa, are underlying challenges accentuated by what appears to be unhealthy competition and potential conflict. True enough, political and ideological differences between Middle East powers such as Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UAE (depending on the issue at hand) have been played out and echoed not only intra-regionally within the Middle East but also elsewhere, including in Africa (Hiebach, 2020). At the same time, both Africa and the Middle East (and the growth and industrialization potential they hold) have continued to be plagued by political instability, violent conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, poor and/or weak governance structures and assorted humanitarian crises.

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At least 20 African countries and a sizeable number of Middle East countries are fragile, poorly governed and conflict riddled. Countries such as Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon have known no peace following many years of civil war and general turmoil (Eaton et al, 2019). Terror groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS/ISIL) and a host of allied and/or associated Islamist and/or jihadist groups in the region and beyond (including in Africa) have killed and maimed thousands of innocent people, caused much destruction and led to wanton human suffering. Africa has not been spared either. Several dozen off-shoots of both Al-Qaeda and ISIS have continued to destabilize entire sub-regions and/or parts of countries in West Africa, the Maghreb north, Eastern and more recently, even Southern Africa (Slayton, 2015; Warner, 2017). Such groups include Al-Qaida in the Northern Maghreb, al Qaida in West Africa, the al Shabab and Boko Haram, just to mention but a few. These terror groups have continued to harm innocent people and to destabilize entire sub-regions on the continent right from the Maghreb North in addition to Egypt, West Africa and the Sahel, Eastern and Central Africa, through to Southern Africa, in places such as Cabo Delgado Province in northern Mozambique.

The conflicts in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel-Palestine and the direct and/or proxy differences that from time to time pit Saudi Arabia against Iran and by extension Qatar, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates against each other tend to paint the Middle East as a potentially unstable and unpredictable region where turmoil is the norm rather than the exception. Subsequently, one in 57 people in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region alone, lives as a refugee. According to UNHCR, the sub-region has 8.8 million refugees and 18.9 Million IDPs (UNHCR 2021). It is for this reason that Africa and Middle East countries have increasingly been seen as the 'suppliers' of an undesired overhead cost burden on the European Union, as well as the wider Western Europe and North America; due to the thousands of illegal immigrants who have been making dangerous voyages across the Mediterranean and through other routes into Europe and beyond. The argument made here is that if both regions can overcome these challenges, then they can gain out of strategic cooperation with each other in a globalized world. I contend herein therefore, that at this point in time, there still lacks a proper since of holistic scope and directionality in as far as the strategic dynamics of Africa–Middle East relations are concerned, and this needs to be rethought and/or recast going forward.

Re-Thinking Future Africa–Middle East Strategic Cooperation in a Globalized World

At this juncture, it is critical however to go straight to the core question herein: "How will future Africa–Middle East strategic cooperation in a globalized world sustainably materialize?" The first step in this direction is about entrenching cooperation through Africa–Middle East multilateral structures. Such platforms as the African-Arab Summit and with it, the General Cooperation Meetings between the AU Commission and the League of Arab State provide ready and fertile grounds for the making of joint commitments on how the two regions can help overcome the greatest obstacles to their common quest for sustainable human development and industrialization; and these are: political instability, violent conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, poor and/or weak governance structures and assorted humanitarian crises. So long as Africa and the Middle East are unstable and ungovernable, meaningful strategic cooperation will remain a lofty goal. Swathes of ungoverned space in the Middle East and Africa alike provide fertile grounds not only for socio-political and economic retrogression but also but also safe havens and operational latitude for

extremist and terrorist organizations. Once Africa and the Middle East overcome the fundamental hurdles of governance, then matters of economic cooperation will add value, flourish and sustain as the two regions forge into the future.

The first step into the future is centred on the critical question of governance, which Africa and the Middle East must incrementally seek to address. Countries in both regions must introspect and critically ponder over the ways in which they have acted (either directly or indirectly) to destabilize each other (Vertin, 2019). It is true for example that some countries in the Middle East have funded and/or albeit covertly facilitated subversive and/or destabilizing groups in parts of Africa, to the detriment of the countries concerned. At the same time, foreign Jihadist fighters in the Middle East have been recruited and trained in African countries. Others have covertly taken sides in internal conflicts in Africa hoping to make quick gains when the elements they are supporting gain power in countries such as Somalia, Egypt, Nigeria and Mozambique among others. Such clandestine undercutting more often than not, end up destabilizing countries and open up more spheres of civil strife (Nzau, 2020).


President Uhuru Kenyatta receives a message of goodwill from the Custodian of The Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia in 2019 (Photo Credit: State House Kenya)

GCC Investment Across Africa

Within the wealthiest GCC states, competition to build influence across Africa is rife as they seek to achieve prominence globally, accrue economic allies and seek to establish themselves as the economic gatekeepers to Africa.

	Agriculture investments	Telecom investments	Marine terminals
UAE	🟡	🟨	🔺
Saudi Arabia	🔴	🟥	
Qatar	🟢	🟩	
Kuwait	🟣	🟪	
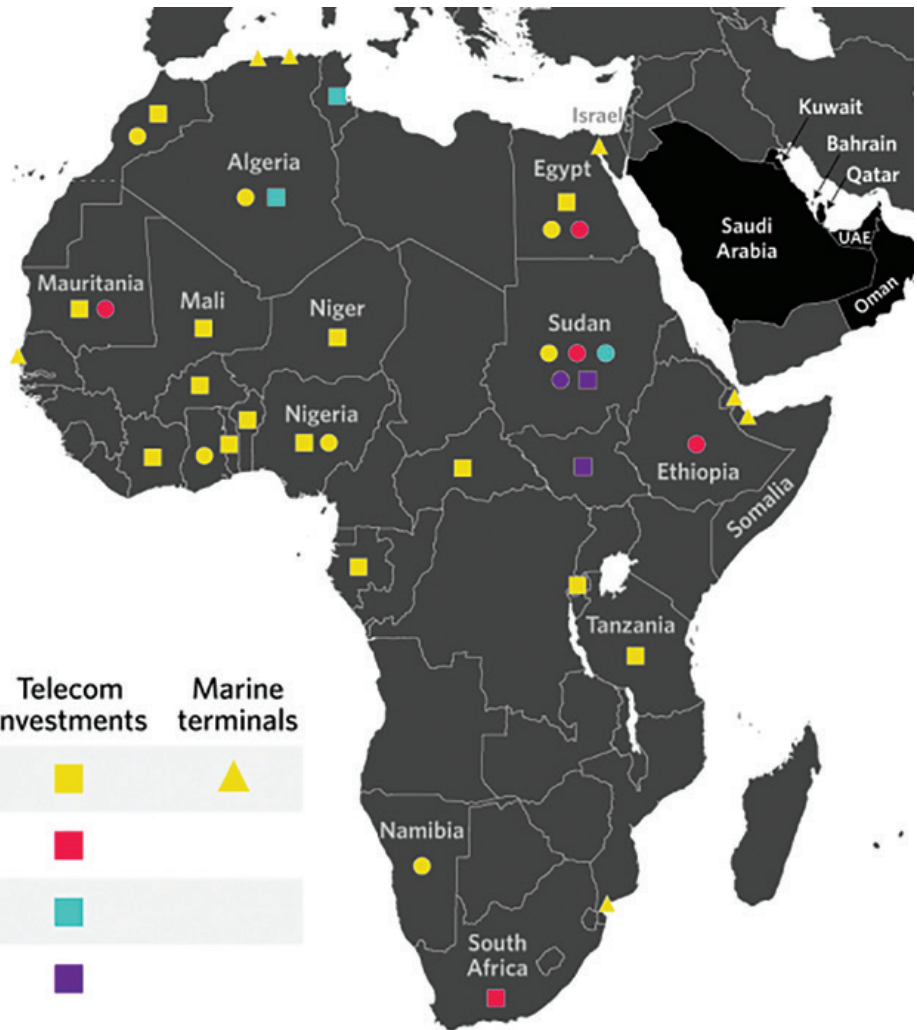
GCC investment across Africa (Credit: Stratfor 2018)

As such, both Africa and the Middle East need to invest in more stability and better in each other's governance. If Africa is unstable, Middle economies will loose out on gains they would have otherwise made from trade, commerce, investment and exchange; and if the Middle East continues to be a hub of instability, Africa will not sustainably sustain from both bilateral and multilateral relations with it either. Similarly, if the Middle East continues to be an unstable realm which will mostly be a source of extremism and other destabilizing elements in Africa, then both Africa and the Middle East will not gain optimally from future strategic cooperation in a globalized world, either way. Therefore, in recasting future strategic Africa–Middle East cooperation, countries in the two regions must commit more sincerity and forthrightness on matters of governance so as to ensure that both regions have a fair chance to tap into the gains of cooperation in various spheres especially through trade, investment, commerce and exchange.

According to the *Global Wealth Report* (IMF, 2019), fifteen countries control at least 84 percent of the world's wealth. Of these 'top fifteen,' none is from either Africa or the Middle-East. Africa controls only 1.1 percent of this wealth, despite holding a market potential of 1.2 billion people (World Bank, 2020). Also, African economies export merchandise worth 6.5 billion USD weekly, yet only a fifth of this constitutes intra-African trade. The Middle East (Western Asia) is normally categorized under the larger Asia Pacific region, which is ranked 3rd in terms of the global share of wealth after North America and Europe, controlling up to 18 percent of total global wealth. Of the top 25 wealthiest economies in Asia, only about 8 are from the Middle East. Yet, the Middle East and Africa combined constitute only 6 percent of the global economy and only about seven percent of global exports originate from Africa and the Middle East combined (Business Sweden, 2020; IMF, 2020). In this direction, there is a lot of ground for mutual gain between Africa and the

Middle East, only if the two regions can consciously work to tap into the opportunities that globalization avails.

The top Middle East export countries are Saudi Arabia, Turkey, UAE, Iraq, Qatar, Israel, Kuwait, Oman, Egypt and Iran; while the two leading economies in Africa are Nigeria and South Africa. Yet among Nigeria's top 15 trading partners in 2020, only Turkey features as a Middle East country and ranked at position 10 accounting for 3.3 percent of Nigerian exports. In the case of South Africa, yet another lead economy in Africa, only the United Arab Emirates (ranked 14th) features among the top 15 importers of South African products in 2020. Nonetheless, in the case of Ethiopia, the Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Israel ranked among its top 15 largest trading partners in 2020 (IMF 2020). In 2020, among the highest importers of Israeli exports, none was from Africa. Of Qatar's top 15 trading partners, only Egypt features, ranked 10th and accounting for around 1.9 percent of Qatari exports. Further, only a little over 10 percent of products from Saudi Arabia end up in Africa. In 2020, Egypt was the largest importer of Saudi products, accounting for around only 3.5 percent of the same. It notable that Egypt is the biggest producer of fish (through fisheries and aquaculture) in the MENA sub-region; accounting for up to 40 percent of total production (Soliman, 2016).

From these statistics, it is possible to argue that as two regions with a common past and similar challenges and/or experiences there is much more potential for greater achievements and mutual gains from strategic cooperation in a globalized world. It is true that Africa is the 'continent of the future' where every other leading investor would want a piece of going into the future. Indeed, Africa holds great promise in terms of investment opportunities for global capital, especially in the fields of housing and transportation infrastructure, health, energy, ICT and mining. It is notable for instance that at least 90,000 people in Sub-Saharan Africa connect to the internet as first time users each day. Further, according

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to the IMF estimates, over the next 10 to 15 years one in every two entrants into the global labour market will come from sub-Saharan Africa (IMF, 2020). In this respect alone, if the Middle East can help Africa stabilize and overcome its security and stability hurdles, the two regions will turn into healthy sources and sustainers exchangers of human capital. This is true given that there is a huge Arab Diaspora in Africa in as much as there is an African Diaspora in the Middle-East and vice versa.

All this positive energy and potential remains untapped. These are the critical areas that should and will shape future Africa–Middle East strategic cooperation in a future globalized world. In re-imagining and recasting this future actors (both state and non-state and ordinary citizens) have to be clear what exactly this would entail. Africa and the Middle East should rethink how best they can mutually gain from healthy trade, investment and competitiveness as they forge into a future globalized world. They must look less at the relative gains outlook and more into the absolute gains potential under healthy competitiveness terms that future cooperation between the two regions would engender.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This article set out to systematically discuss Africa–Middle East Strategic cooperation in a globalized world by making some pertinent propositions on how future engagements on the same can be recast and/or rethought. Upon examining the rich retrospective background and spheres of association and socio-economic interaction between the two regions, the analysis went further to shed light on the issues, interests and challenges in Africa–Middle East relations; before making a strong case for a rethink of future strategic cooperation between the two regions in a globalized world. The article holds that the greatest common drawback for Africa–Middle East future cooperation has to do with political instability, violent conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, poor and/or weak governance structures and assorted humanitarian crises. On the whole, Africa and the Middle East must work together to shed the tag of poor governance and instability that has continued to define them since the beginning of the international system, and instead capitalize on mutually gains from healthy trade, investment and competitiveness as they forge into a future globalized world. The leadership and governance structures in both regions have a critical role to play in navigating and overcoming these challenges in order to enable them tap on myriad gains and opportunities that globalization avails.

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Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We are excited to release our 21st bi-monthly issue of *The HORN Bulletin* (Vol. IV, Iss. VI, 2021). We bring to you well-researched articles and analysis of topical issues and developments affecting the Horn of Africa. We welcome contributions from readers who wish to have their articles included in the HORN Bulletin. At HORN, we believe ideas are the currency of progress. Feel free to contact the Editor-in-Chief for more details at communications@horninstitute.org.

Hassan Khannenje, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief, The HORN Bulletin

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Note:
The views expressed in this Bulletin are those of the authors and they do not necessarily reflect the position of the HORN Institute.

AFRICA–MIDDLE EAST RELATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

This report is a summary of the proceedings of the International conference on Africa–Middle East Relations organized by the HORN Institute on August 25-26, 2021 in Nairobi, Kenya. The main objective of the conference was to assess the nature, extent, and potential impact of the increasing engagements between Africa and the Middle East. More than 300 virtual and 60 physical participants from over 40 countries spread across five continents attended the conference. Participants included representatives of governments, subject matter experts, and policymakers.
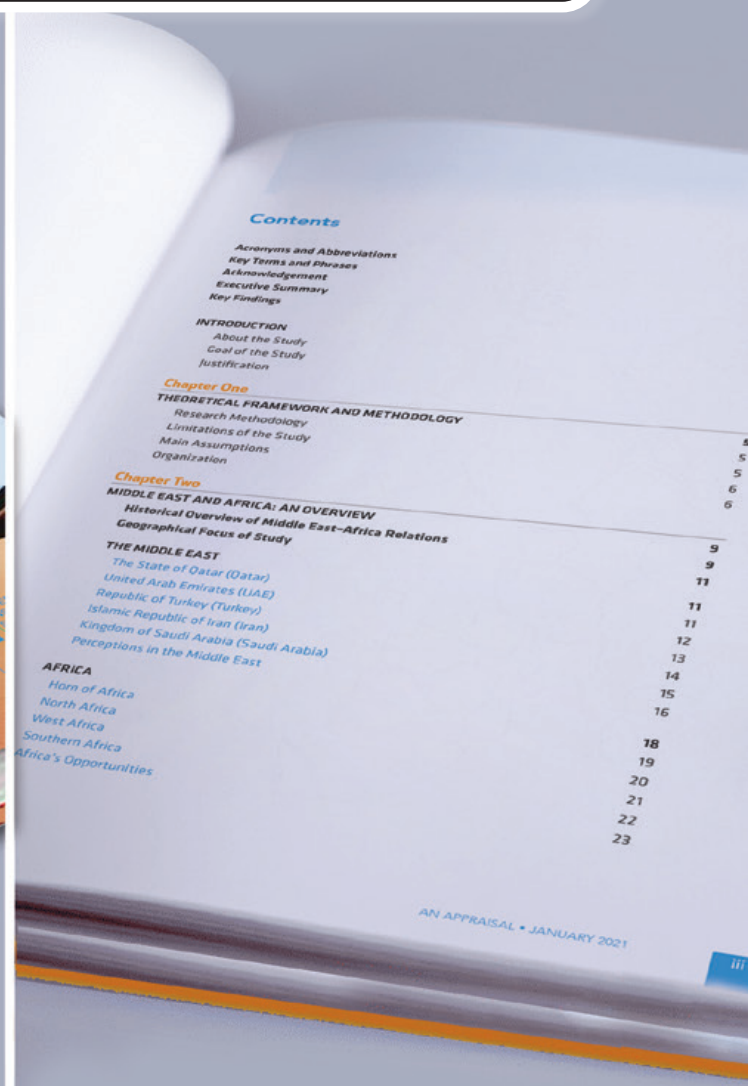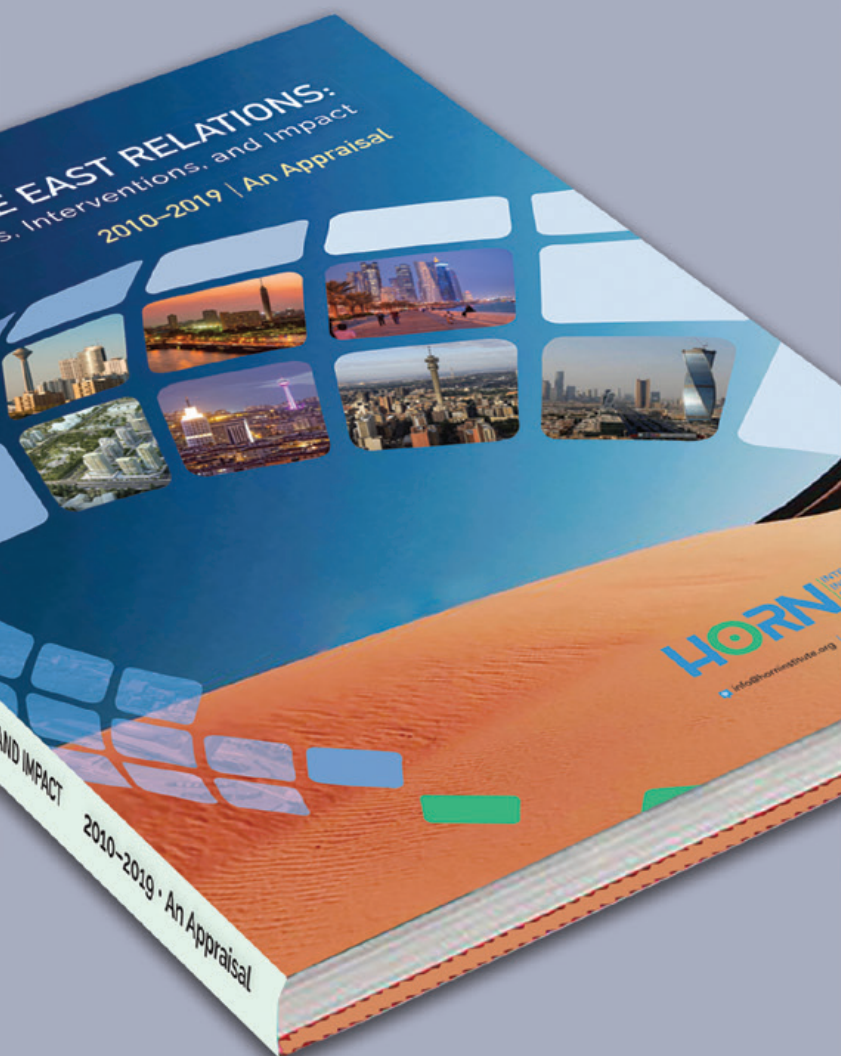
Discussions during the conference centered on the theme: *Shared Peace. Shared Security. Shared Prosperity.* The conference also featured a special session for the official launch of the HORN Institute's study titled '*Africa–Middle East Relations: Interests, Strategies, Interventions and Impact (2010-2019): An Appraisal*'. The study will be available on the Institute's website soon.
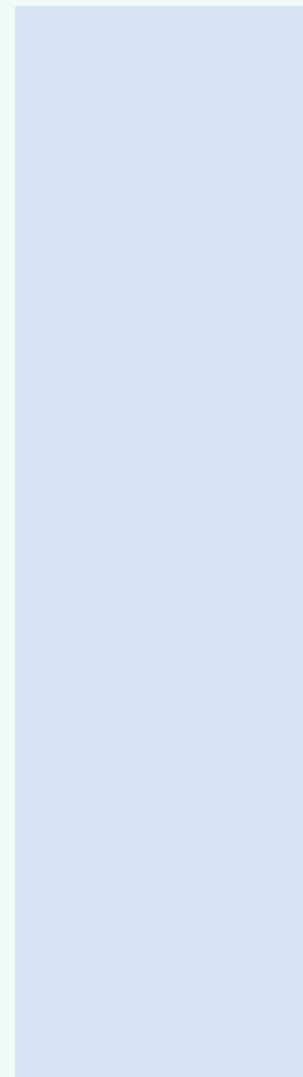
Africa–Middle East Relations
Interests, Strategies, Interventions, and Impact (2010–2019) – An Appraisal

The Study dissects the interplay between geopolitics, ideology, security, and economics in the wake of recent developments in both Africa and the Middle East. It covers the period from 2010 to 2019, and it seeks to increase understanding of these dynamics. The study was launched at the International Conference on Africa–Middle East Relations held by the HORN Institute on August 25-26, 2021 in Nairobi, Kenya. The popular version will be published on the Institute's website at www. horninstitute.org.

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