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By Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard

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Dr. Stephanie M. Burchard is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.



Liberia National Police Headquarters. (Source: Interpol Photo Gallery, <http://www.interpol.int/layout/set/gallery/Media/Images/Member-countries/Africa/Liberia/Liberia/Emergency-Response-Unit-in-training-3-1>, accessed 20 July 2016.)

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Israeli Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu inspects a guard of honor on his arrival at Entebbe airport Uganda, Monday, July 4, 2016. Netanyahu was on a four-nation Africa tour to Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. (Source: AP Photo/Stephen Wandera.)

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People protest over the closure of The Post newspaper in Lusaka, Zambia, Wednesday, June 22, 2016. Zambia's government has closed the country's largest independently owned newspaper over unpaid taxes, but the paper's owner says the move is meant to shut him up before elections in August. (Source: AP Photo/Moses Mwape.)

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A couple leave on a motorbike as they flee from the area of previous fighting in the Jabel area of Juba, South Sudan, Saturday, July 16, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/SamirBol.)

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History of Conflict in Liberia

For most of the period from 1989 until 2003, civil war consumed Liberia. As a result of conflict, more than 250,000 people were killed and 1 million displaced. During the [first civil war](#) (1989 to 1997), rebel groups toppled the repressive government of former Master Sergeant Samuel K. Doe. Doe was executed by rebels in 1990, and fighting broke out between different factions over control of the government. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) authorized a regional deployment of forces in 1990 in an attempt to keep the conflict from spreading across West Africa. The UN also contributed an observer mission in 1993. After several attempts to reach an agreement among competing factions, a brokered, fragile peace resulted in the election of Charles Taylor, a former rebel leader, as president in 1997.

Peace was, unfortunately, short lived, and conflict broke out again in 1999, after rebels backed by the Guinean government invaded Liberia in the north. Fighting continued until 2003, when U.S. and ECOWAS forces intervened to stop rebels from taking over the capital Monrovia. Taylor was forced into exile, and the comprehensive peace agreement (CPA), which included security sector reform as a key feature, was signed shortly thereafter.

Security Sector Reform

The UN Mission in Liberia ([UNMIL](#)) was established in 2003 to help implement the CPA. At its largest, UNMIL included 16,115 troops. UNMIL was conceived of as a [multidimensional](#) peacekeeping operation. Its mandate was expansive. The mission was to engage not only in traditional peacekeeping activities but also to assist with reform of the police, the criminal justice system, and political institutions while being mindful of human rights issues, [gender mainstreaming](#), and child protection. Reform of the police alone has been a massive undertaking. Even before the civil war, the Liberian National Police (LNP) had a [poor reputation](#) among the population for their aggressive and corrupt tactics. During the civil wars, the LNP were downright predatory.

Alongside the government of Liberia, UNMIL was tasked with reforming the LNP to increase its professional capacity, expand its ability to police beyond the capital and other major cities, and promote trust between the police and the community. In 2003, UNMIL started recruiting new forces and removing ex-combatants from the ranks. Currently, the LNP numbers approximately [4,100](#), but this number is believed to be approximately half of the size the country needs to adequately provide domestic security.

The results of police reform in Liberia have been mixed. The vetting process employed during recruitment drives has been criticized as inadequate. Based on surveys of LNP forces, a 2016 [article](#) concluded that the LNP was generally competent and aware of police procedures, but many individual members lacked basic reasoning and memory skills. In addition, [corruption](#) within the police continues to be a problem.



Liberia National Police Headquarters. (Source: Interpol Photo Gallery, <http://www.interpol.int/layout/set/gallery/Media/Images/Member-countries/Africa/Liberia/Liberia/Emergency-Response-Unit-in-training-3-1>, accessed 20 July 2016.)

While UNMIL was given the bulk of security sector reform responsibilities, the CPA stipulated that the United States was to assist in reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). The United States had played a key role in the peace process by providing troop support, maintaining a strong diplomatic presence in the country, and participating in the drafting of the CPA. The U.S. Government enlisted the American company DynCorp to implement a large-scale reform of the AFL. The army was formally decommissioned and reconstituted as a much smaller force. After vigorous debate, it was decided that the country could afford only 2,000 troops and that these forces would not be oriented toward external defense. The army's main [functions](#) would be to "patrol borders, control immigration, and manage criminality." Almost 14,000 soldiers were decommissioned and given a [severance](#) package. Vetting of new recruits was reportedly difficult but exhaustive. Approximately [75 percent](#) of applicants were rejected.

Conclusion

After more than 12 years of reform, responsibility for providing citizen security and safety has been handed over to the government of Liberia. The process of creating virtually new police and military institutions has been difficult and time-consuming. The underlying lack of basic education in the country poses a significant obstacle to professionalism of the police. Corruption is an ongoing problem. Nonetheless, the comprehensive approach taken to security sector reform is laudable. It remains to be seen if gains will persist beyond the drawdown. Continuing international support and assistance are of the utmost importance to consolidate Liberia's reform successes.

The 2017 election further complicates this picture. Security for previous elections in 2005 and 2011 was provided by UNMIL. The current number of police and military forces is less than half the size of the UNMIL mission. In addition, it has been impossible to fully integrate all the ex-combatants into the Liberian economy because of their large number. There are concerns that they could easily be mobilized for violence. Previous elections were beset with administrative problems and threats of violence. In the absence of a capable and trusted electoral security, violence is a very real possibility.

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Israeli Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu inspects a guard of honor on his arrival at Entebbe airport Uganda, Monday, July 4, 2016. Netanyahu was on a four-nation Africa tour to Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. (Source: AP Photo/Stephen Wandera.)

Historical Ties and New Challenges

Israel's relations with African nations were [generally positive](#) in the 1950s and 1960s, as a number of African nations gained independence and sought international recognition. But relations soured following the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War, which was accompanied by Israeli occupation of the Sinai and West Bank. Israel's actions were interpreted by a number of African liberation leaders as being similar to the colonial policies they had just fought against. Attempting to redeem its reputation, Israel offered funds to the Organization of African Unity in 1971 to bolster "[liberation movements](#)," in addition to the aid it provided to the medical and agricultural sectors.

Relations continued to sour as Israel developed closer ties with apartheid South Africa and as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) sought the support of other regional blocs (including sub-Saharan Africa) for its oil embargo. [By 1973, following the Yom Kippur War](#), most African nations had broken off ties with Israel, cementing the Arab League's soft power advantage in the region, which continued until the mid-1980s. Declining patronage from Middle Eastern countries and fluctuating peace processes (including the Israeli withdrawal from Sinai in 1982), coupled with a new generation of African leadership, have allowed Israel to restore and develop full diplomatic relations with [40 countries south of the Sahara as of 2010](#).

Further bolstering the status of Israel among African countries is the nature of the emerging threats to African security. In the past Israel's policies towards Palestine and the Palestinian Liberation Organization may have been interpreted as oppressive. Today, however, Israel's experience combating radical extremist groups and insurgencies makes it a valuable partner for African states coping with terrorism and rebel groups. During his visit to the four East African countries, Netanyahu emphasized that Israel was a [committed partner](#) for African states seeking to secure themselves and in the fight against terrorist groups like al-Shabaab.

Courting the United Nations and Developing New Markets

Israel stands to gain in a number of ways from a renewed focus on partnering with African countries. Perhaps most concretely, Africa is an emerging market for Israeli goods. In Kenya, PM Netanyahu was accompanied by [70 Israeli business executives](#), representing [50 different companies](#), "hoping to sell Africa everything from Israeli-made plastic wrap, sprinklers and irrigation pipes to software, CCTV cameras and ... [even cantaloupe seeds](#)." Israeli exports to Africa [grew more than 250 percent](#) in the past decade. Because exports to Africa account for [a mere 2 percent of total Israeli exports](#), the growth

potential, particularly as Africa's middle class develops, is evident. A number of Israelis have invested in the continent's oil, mineral, and real estate industries, although at times the close relationships between these investors and their host governments [have been scrutinized](#).

No concrete deals have emerged from PM Netanyahu's visit. According to the *African Business Review*, however, during the trip, "executives discussed Magal Security Systems Ltd.'s bid to help Kenya [build a wall](#) across the Somali border with the 'smart fencing' it pioneered in the Gaza Strip," in addition to planning "[irrigation projects](#) across Africa by Netafim Ltd., mining ventures with Israel Chemicals Ltd., and wind turbines pitched by solar energy specialist Gigawatt Global Ltd."

Military Trade and Political Support

Israel has seen a significant surge in its sales of military equipment to sub-Saharan Africa in recent years. While overall Israeli weapons exports declined [by \\$1 billion from 2013 to 2014](#), over that same period deals with African countries rose from \$223 million to \$318 million. This hike is all the more striking in light of the sales from just a few years before: in 2009, Israel sold just [\\$77 million](#) worth of arms to African countries.

Although data on arms sales are somewhat unreliable, it has been confirmed that between 2006 and 2010, Israel delivered "[major weapons](#)" to Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, the Seychelles, South Africa, and Uganda. A number of these countries are barred from obtaining weapons from the United States by the "[Leahy Law](#)," which prohibits sales of such products to countries whose armed forces commit human rights abuses. In addition to arms and weapons sales, Israel has been involved in the training of several African militaries and brokering of arms sales between African governments and other nations.

In addition to bolstering the Israeli economy, PM Netanyahu's visit also appeared to have a political aim—garnering support for Israel's agenda in the [United Nations General Assembly](#). "Like any other nation, [Israel constantly checks the horizon](#), trying to push its economic, strategic and diplomatic interests, looking for new friends and new markets," one African pundit noted, concluding that the Israeli Prime Minister is "looking for precious African friends on UN votes for Israel."

While any vote-garnering is speculation at this point, there are tangible development assistance programs that surround the PM's visit. At the end of June, the Israeli government approved the opening of offices of Israel's Agency for International Development in all four countries visited by Netanyahu on this trip. Israel is also launching a \$13 million dollar aid program focused on improving "[economic ties and cooperation with African countries](#)."

Conclusions

Israel again seems to be courting partnerships with sub-Saharan African countries. The rising threat from rebel groups and terrorism on the continent has helped it foster ties with a new generation of African leaders. In addition to providing new markets for Israeli goods (including military equipment), these partnerships may serve to advance Israeli political positions at the United Nations General Assembly.

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Donor Darling or Cause for Concern?

Compared with its neighbors, Zambia is a southern African success story. It has avoided the civil wars that have challenged neighboring Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Mozambique. In fact, it is the only country within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) that has [twice](#) peacefully transferred power to an opposition party through democratic elections. In addition, following the privatization of copper mines in the 1990s, the nation experienced strong economic growth, reaching an average of [7 percent](#) GDP growth from 2010 through 2014.

Despite this positive history, Zambia today is beset with political and economic challenges, many of which have peaked during the short tenure of current President Edgar Lungu. Elected in a [close race](#) in January 2015 following the death of then-President Michael Sata, Lungu has overseen the implementation of a controversial mining royalty bill, an increased crackdown on media freedom, and increased repression against political opponents.

It's the Economy

For most Zambians, the tumultuous economy is a daily concern. Economic growth contracted to [3 percent](#) in 2015, while Zambia's currency, the kwacha, lost [45 percent](#) of its value against the dollar, before [rebounding](#) this year. This downturn is due to Zambia's overreliance on copper exports, which account for [70 percent](#) of the country's export earnings. In 2015, global declines in the price of copper occurred simultaneously with the implementation of new [royalty laws](#) requiring mine operators to pay up to 20 percent of profits to the government. Unable to cope, international mining companies cut more than [10,000 jobs](#) in Zambia. Although the government ultimately [lowered](#) the royalty fee, [Moody's](#), [Standard & Poor's](#), and [Fitch](#) credit ratings agencies all downgraded Zambia's debt to below junk status.

In a country in which [60 percent](#) of the population lives below the poverty line, and [42 percent](#) live in extreme poverty, economic instability is a political touchstone. In [October](#) and [December 2015](#), miners in towns along Zambia's copper belt rioted over lost jobs and lowered pay. In [April 2016](#), police in the capital struggled to contain violence targeting immigrants during [riots](#) that began after rumors spread that Rwandans were behind recent ritual killings in the city, but which analysts attributed to frustration with Zambia's economic struggles.

Dedining Political Freedom

In response to growing frustrations, the Zambian government has attempted to limit the expression of dissent. In 2015, [Freedom House](#) ranked Zambia's media as "not free," citing government harassment of journalists during both Sata's and Lungu's presidencies. These concerns were exacerbated when Zambia's largest independent newspaper, *The Post*, was [shut down](#) by the government on June 23, 2016. Although the Zambian Revenue Authority claimed the closure was due to unpaid taxes, the paper's editor published [a legal order](#) showing that *The Post* should have been permitted to continue publication while the outstanding tax issue was settled in court. As one of the last remaining papers critical of the PF, *The Post's* closure has narrowed political discourse within Zambia.



People protest over the closure of *The Post* newspaper in Lusaka, Zambia, Wednesday, June 22, 2016. Zambia's government has closed the country's largest independently owned newspaper over unpaid taxes, but the paper's owner says the move is meant to shut him up before elections in August. (Source: AP Photo/Moses Mwape.)

The PF has also used its position to secure legal advantages for itself in the upcoming election. In February 2016, Lungu appointed [six judges](#) to the Constitutional Court, the body with the final say over the interpretation of the constitution, including presidential elections. The opposition protested that three of these judges had [close, personal ties](#) to Lungu that could sway their decision in the event of a contested election. In addition, [opposition groups](#) argued that a new law granting Electoral Commission of Zambia officials immunity from prosecution for actions taken during elections would provide cover for the officials to illegally alter the results to support the PF. Finally, in early June, opposition groups loudly registered their alarm at the publication of an alleged [PF strategy document](#) that outlined plans to use police to illegally monitor polling stations and coerce voters to mark PF ballots.

Conclusion

Harassment of the opposition is not new in Zambia. As *Africa Watch* noted in [August 2013](#), then-President Sata was known for authoritarian tendencies that aggravated political violence in the country. But Lungu is campaigning from a weaker position, challenged both by the fragile economy and newly signed [constitutional changes](#) that require the winning presidential candidate to receive more than 50 percent of the votes—a feat Lungu [failed](#) to achieve in 2015. Although it is unsurprising that the PF is seeking every advantage to ensure victory in August, steps to curtail political freedom in Zambia risk marring the country's enviable record of free and fair elections, as well as the PF's own legitimacy.

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A couple leave on a motorbike as they flee from the area of previous fighting in the Jabel area of Juba, South Sudan, Saturday, July 16, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/SamirBol.)

Although soldiers on both sides of the conflict had been relocated to Juba in April under a newly reformed unity government, they failed to integrate and maintained separate camps and command structures. In this war-torn country, the prevailing fear was not if violence would erupt between the rival factions but when. In the days following the fight, the primary concern has been whether the violence will spread and reignite the country's destructive civil war. Although a number of proximate factors, including the wide availability of weapons, a stalled peace process, and a limping economy, contribute to the ongoing violence in the country, the 2011 Transitional Constitution and the late 2015 announcement of an increase in the number of South Sudanese states are structural drivers of instability.

Extent of the Crisis and Triggering Factors

The current political crisis erupted in 2013, when [President Kiir dissolved his cabinet](#), which included Vice President Machar, on the suspicion that Machar was planning a coup; the ouster plunged the country into a destructive civil war. When the country [celebrated its fifth anniversary on July 9](#), it did so as the site of one of the world's most critical humanitarian crises. An estimated [2.6 million people](#), amounting to nearly 25 percent of the country's population, have been displaced by the civil war. The conditions on the ground are so dire that South Sudan has been given the highest classification of humanitarian disasters (Level 3) by the UN, joining those [in Syria, Yemen, and Iraq](#). The violence has claimed more than [50,000 lives since December 2013](#), meriting the deployment of more than 12,000 UN peacekeeping troops. Although the conflict's roots are political, the violence has frequently [pitted Dinkas loyal to Kiir against Nuer loyal to Machar](#), reflecting the extent to which ethnicity has been politicized in the world's newest country.

The conflict has escalated so rapidly in part because of the wide availability of weapons inside the country. Before South Sudan's independence, it was estimated that there were between [1.9 and 3.2 million small arms in circulation](#). Given the intensity of the violence, it is likely that these numbers have only increased in the years since independence, as attempts at [imposing an arms embargo](#) have failed, allowing South Sudan's government to purchase more than [\\$20 million worth of weapons last year](#); [self-defense militias have proliferated](#).

The precarious economic situation further increases the general insecurity in the country. Oil revenues, thought to account for more than 98 percent of government revenue in South Sudan, [have been reduced drastically](#) because of low global prices and lowered production. The drop in oil prices is beyond the government's control, but the decline in production is a result of insecurity [surrounding the oil fields](#). The country has entered into a vicious cycle of instability and economic stagnation. As a result, civil servants have not been paid in months, and those citizens who receive steady paychecks find that their money does not go as far because of [inflation and depreciation](#). All these factors have pushed the country to the brink, but there are longer term, constitutional features that must be addressed to establish peace in South Sudan.

Designed to Fail

Since the nation's independence, South Sudan's constitutionally prescribed political and legal system failed to establish a strong foundation for the country. Under the 2011 Transitional Constitution, power was centralized in the presidency to a degree that some characterized as "[more commonly associated with autocracies than democracies](#)." The President has the authority to unilaterally [dismiss federal justices and disband the legislature](#), and checks and balances are limited. Debates over the constitution created divisions between Kiir and Machar that instigated conflict. Before being dismissed from office, Machar had proposed constitutional reforms that [called for term limits](#) and reducing the unilateral power of the executive.

The constitution continues to be a source of conflict, even after years of war. In December 2015, President Kiir further demonstrated the extent of centralization of authority when he announced that the country's [10 states had been dissolved and replaced by 28 new states](#). Although the proliferation of administrative units might be construed as an effort to decentralize power in the country, [Kiir's handpicked selection of the 28 new governors](#) and the lack of clarity about what sorts of authority the states would possess suggest that the reform is merely a proliferation of administrative units. Research conducted at the [University of Pennsylvania](#), drawing on other examples from sub-Saharan Africa, found that the creation of these local government structures counterintuitively centralizes power in the federal government. The weak provisions of the 2011 South Sudanese constitution created conditions under which the executive was able to [expand opportunities for patronage](#) by adjusting the country's institutional makeup, raising the stakes in the country's winner-take-all political system. The immediate reaction by Machar and his supporters—condemning the change as a violation of the [peace agreement signed between the two parties](#)—illustrates the reform's centralizing effect.

Conclusion

The continued political manipulation of the provisions of the constitution has dire consequences for the future stability of South Sudan. A mixture of proximate triggering factors and institutional weaknesses make it likely that the skirmishes between rival factions in Juba may once again devolve into wider violence. While providing resources to those affected by the humanitarian crisis and brokering a more tenable peace agreement, the international community may also wish to focus on the need for a more balanced constitutional design in the country.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

URBANIZATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: PERILS AND POTENTIAL

By Hilary Matfess

Although it remains largely rural, sub-Saharan Africa is rapidly urbanizing. The urban population in the region has been increasing [5 percent a year since the early 1970s](#). A number of factors have contributed to this trend, ranging from [conflict-related displacement](#) to urban [job markets](#). Just as the factors driving urbanization are both positive and negative, so too are the potential outcomes of this phenomenon a mixture of peril and promise. Urbanization is often considered a global economic boon, as cities account for more [than 80 percent of the world's GDP](#). African cities, however, are characterized by low levels of services relative to urban centers in other regions. In 2014, the United Nations (UN) estimated that more than 61 percent of the continent's city-dwellers live in ["slum conditions."](#) Understanding the potential benefits and risks of African urbanization is a critical task for the international community. [more...](#)

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Lagos, Nigeria. (Source: Image taken from Vladimir Odintsov, "On the Influence of Urbanization on the Situation in Africa," New Eastern Outlook, December 28, 2013, <http://journal-neo.org/2013/12/28/rus-o-vliyanii-urbanizatsii-na-obstanovku-v-stranah-afrikii/>.)

ZIMBABWE—DIFFICULTIES MULTIPLY

By George F. Ward

The month of July 2016 has been a difficult one for Zimbabwe. Civic protests, fueled by social media, have continued to grow. The country's economic problems have deepened, and the government has been unable to pay its own employees. Plans for international help with debt relief seem to have gotten nowhere. With one key group of government supporters in open political revolt, gaps in the unity of the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), have been exposed. The question of whether any of these developments will result in political change remains open. [more...](#)



Pastor Evan Mawarire leaves the Harare Magistrates Court Wednesday, July 13, 2016, after the court freed him ruling that police violated his rights. Mawarire was charged with attempting to overthrow a constitutionally elected government by organizing a nationwide strike that shut the country down last week. (Source: AP Photo.)

Ambassador (ret.) George F. Ward is editor of Africa Watch and a Research Staff Member at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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INTERNAL DIVISIONS AGGRAVATE CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

By Sarah Graveline

The fragile ceasefire brokered on July 12, 2016, between South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and then–First Vice President Riek Machar is again at risk as both men face intensified pressure from internal factions. Machar, recently ousted from his position as South Sudan's First Vice President, is being pressed to retake control of his party, the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement in Opposition (SPLA-IO). While the opposition's turmoil benefits Kiir, he faces domestic pressure to resist a proposed African Union–led intervention. Kiir's and Machar's responses to these internal pushes for them each to consolidate power may determine whether South Sudan experiences another outbreak of conflict. [more...](#)



Hundreds of South Sudanese protest in Juba, South Sudan against Foreign military intervention Wednesday, July 20, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Samir Bol.)

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

MISCALCULATING SECURITY: OBSTACLES TO RELIABLE DATA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR STABILITY

By Hilary Matfess

The role of economic development in promoting national security is well-established and [frequently commented upon](#). As Secretary of Defense Gates said in 2010, “economic development is a lot [cheaper than sending soldiers](#).” The United States and its global partners recognize the utility of “soft” development programing in complementing and facilitating “hard” national security objectives. This is particularly true for advancing strategic interests in Africa. [more...](#)

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The UN's Sustainable Development Goals are driving investment in data collection, but the amount and types of data required may be beyond the capabilities of many African governments to collect. (Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focus/sdgs.html>.)

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Benefits for the Taking

Cities often drive innovation and growth in nations. Not only do those residing in cities reap these benefits, they are also passed along to rural and suburban communities through money, called "[remittances](#)," sent to rural communities from urban workers. The "virtuous cycle" created by these remittance flows creates a situation in sub-Saharan Africa in which urban migration "[appears favorable on balance for sending and receiving areas](#)." Remittances make rural communities more stable, as rural residents have a more diversified income stream.

At the same time, more densely populated areas present the opportunity to expand access to social services. The World Bank asserts that the "per capita costs of many forms of infrastructure and social service are generally lower" in cities than in [rural areas](#). Health services and educational activities may also be improved by increased population concentration, if urbanization is well-managed and thoughtfully undertaken.

The importance of capitalizing on the opportunities urbanization affords has been recognized by the international community. The need to "make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable" was enshrined as Goal #11 in the United Nations' compendium of [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

Risks Abound

Despite the potential benefits of urbanization, the reality that many urban Africans face is grim. Although cities have the potential to be drivers of growth, many [migrants lack the education and skills](#) needed to find formal employment, resulting in the majority of urban employment in Africa being [informal](#), which is employment untaxed and unmonitored by governments, such as street hawking and food vending. This phenomenon is accelerating; the African Development Bank estimates that [93 percent](#) of all new urban jobs are in the informal economy.

The amount of urban informal employment, as well as the high unemployment rate itself, makes it difficult for municipalities and local governments to collect sufficient taxes [to finance necessary infrastructure projects](#) and improve living conditions.

Though, in theory, urbanization can improve service delivery, in practice these benefits have yet to fully emerge in sub-Saharan cities. In Lagos, Nigeria, [only half the residents have access to the potable water network](#), and delivery and availability are intermittent even for those that have service. These issues of access and delivery plague many social service programs in African cities—although it is worth noting that [access is generally higher in African urban centers than in rural areas](#).

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While sub-national government units are often responsible for service provision and urban planning, the current system of global lending and assistance is focused on national governments. A report by the [Center for Strategic and International Studies \(CSIS\)](#) noted that the multilateral development banks “and other donors need instruments and mechanisms that will allow them to work more directly with municipal and provincial governments, while encouraging accompanying private investment,” since national governments often are not well equipped to respond to urban needs.

All these developmental challenges have ramifications for global security. Richard J. Norton described the possibility of messy, uncontrolled urbanization creating “feral cities,” whose “very size and densely built-up character make them natural havens for a variety of hostile non-state actors, ranging from small cells of terrorists to large paramilitary forces and militias.” Norton suggests that because conducting military operations against these criminal groups and violent actors would be difficult given the physical and human terrain, feral cities create fertile ground for destabilizing movements.

Why African Urbanization is Different

Some of the unique attributes of African urbanization can be explained by the motivations driving urban migration in Africa. Studies have found that African urbanization is more frequently the result of “push” factors (such as declining agricultural productivity from shifting rain patterns or violent conflict in rural areas), rather than “pull” factors (such as the availability of higher paying jobs and better services in cities). In other regions, rural-urban migration is a means of securing a more stable financial future, but in sub-Saharan Africa, rural-urban migration does not radically alter livelihood security.

In addition, the lack of manufacturing centers and low levels of industrialization in sub-Saharan Africa means that many African cities maintain an unusually high dependence on [natural resource development and agriculture](#). These trades “can also be seen as [urban survival strategies](#), rather than a strong motor of growth.” As the [London School of Economics](#) observes, “pre-industry urbanization seems associated with consumer cities rather than producer cities,” which inhibits the ability of cities to drive growth. Another effect of the general lack of an industrial manufacturing hub in African cities is that settlements are often [diffuse and sprawling](#), which is an additional obstacle to establishing physical infrastructure and effective social services.

Conclusions

Since urbanization in sub-Saharan Africa is a persistent trend, it is important to understand its unique characteristics and to respond to them. Reforming international development strategies could make partnerships with cities and municipalities possible. At present, few African cities have access to the [sorts of financial tools](#) that could catalyze inclusive, sustainable growth through infrastructure development and human capital investment. Sensible planning, coupled with international technical support, investment, and aid, could help Africans reap the potential benefits of urbanization.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

ZIMBABWE—DIFFICULTIES MULTIPLY

By George F. Ward

The month of July 2016 has been a difficult one for Zimbabwe. Civic protests, fueled by social media, have continued to grow. The country's economic problems have deepened, and the government has been unable to pay its own employees. Plans for international help with debt relief seem to have gotten nowhere. With one key group of government supporters in open political revolt, gaps in the unity of the ruling party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), have been exposed. The question of whether any of these developments will result in political change remains open.



Pastor Evan Mawarire leaves the Harare Magistrates Court Wednesday, July 13, 2016, after the court freed him ruling that police violated his rights. Mawarire was charged with attempting to overthrow a constitutionally elected government by organizing a nationwide strike that shut the country down last week. (Source: AP Photo.)

Grim Economic Outlook

Africa Watch [reported](#) on June 30, 2016, that staff-level talks between the government of Zimbabwe and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had concluded positively, with the government seeking financing to resolve its \$1.8 billion in financial arrears to the IMF, the African Development Bank (ADB), and the World Bank. Significant hurdles remained, both internationally and domestically, with opposition within the ZANU-PF to cuts in the public sector payroll likely. Nevertheless, a glimmer of hope remained.

Since then, hope has turned to pessimism, both internationally and domestically. On July 14, a spokesman for the IMF [told](#) journalists in Washington, “there is no financing program under discussion with Zimbabwe at this point.” The spokesman added that negotiations could begin only after Zimbabwe’s financial arrears have been cleared. The IMF’s position on negotiations would also take into account issues such as “governance, accountability, and transparency.” According to *Africa Confidential*, the government of Zimbabwe and its advisors are having [difficulty](#) raising the funds needed to clear the arrears.

One [keen observer](#) of the situation in Zimbabwe described the situation succinctly: “Zimbabwe’s money is running out—and fast.” Payment of military and other public sector salaries was delayed in June, and those salaries were again not paid in mid-July. Subsequently, the government [announced](#) that the military services would be paid on July 25; nurses and doctors on July 27; the police on July 29; and teachers, who make up the largest number of state employees, only on August 2.

Anti-Government Protests Increase

The delays in payment of public salaries, while probably dictated by financial realities, were certain to increase the already elevated level of popular unrest in the country. In April, [Pastor Evan Mawarire](#) had recorded a Facebook video in which he literally wrapped himself in the country’s flag and lamented how the government had defiled and corrupted the promise implicit in that banner. The pastor’s eloquent message struck a chord, and [#ThisFlag](#) went viral on Twitter, contributing to protests across the country. On July 6, the [#ThisFlag](#) movement mobilized a [peaceful, stay-at-home protest](#) that proved effective. Businesses, including banks and department stores, were forced to close for lack of staff. The next week, Pastor Mawarire was arrested and charged with inciting public violence. At Mawarire’s hearing on July 13, 100 lawyers gathered inside the courtroom to show solidarity with the pastor, and a crowd of thousands gathered outside. The court released Mawarire, who soon resumed his nonviolent advocacy, but from South Africa, where he [fled](#) out of fear for his life.

President Robert Mugabe has outlasted popular protests in the past, and he doubtless aims to do so again. A serious complicating factor emerged, however, when on July 21, the organization of veterans of the war of liberation issued a [communiqué](#) denouncing President Mugabe and the ZANU-PF government. The veterans noted, “with concern, shock

and dismay, the systematic entrenchment of dictatorial tendencies, personified by the President and his cohorts, which have slowly devoured the values of the liberation struggle in utter disregard of the Constitution.” The veterans’ statement concluded with a promise to support Mugabe no longer: “we the veterans of Zimbabwe’s war of liberation, together with our toiling masses, hereby declare that, henceforth, in any forthcoming elections, will not support such a leader who has presided over untold suffering of the general population for his own personal aggrandizement and that of his cronies.”

Where Is Zimbabwe Headed?

The surprising defection on July 21 of the veterans, who had been a core source of support for Mugabe and the ZANU-PF government, is a significant development. In immediate terms, it was a contrast to a ZANU-PF mass gathering in Harare on the preceding day, in which the party’s youth organization had shown its support for President Mugabe. In covering the pro-Mugabe event, the ZANU-PF–friendly newspaper *The Herald* fancifully [described](#) the ruling party as “a mean, mass-mobilizing machine” and characterized the stage-managed demonstration as a “flash crowd” that “nobody saw . . . coming.”

The juxtaposition of the veterans’ dissent and the pro-Mugabe youth demonstration symbolizes an increasingly important division within the ZANU-PF. The veterans decried President Mugabe’s intentions to “turn the present young generation against us for his own continued personal aggrandizement.” Responding to the veterans’ move, Minister of Local Government Saviour Kasukuwere [declared](#) at a party rally on July 22 that the ZANU-PF was prepared to repossess farms that had been allocated to veterans and subdivide them into residential plots for the benefit of “loyal youths.”

It is perhaps no coincidence that of the two putative rivals to succeed President Mugabe, one is identified with the older generation represented by the veterans and the other is supported by a youth movement within the party. Veterans have been an important constituency for Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa, while the so-called [G40](#), a movement of younger politicians within ZANU-PF that includes the aforementioned Minister Kasukuwere, is viewed as supporting the aspirations of Grace Mugabe, the president’s wife. Viewed through this optic, it would seem that rival factions within the ZANU-PF may be more interested in using the current period of popular unrest to score political points within the party than in addressing the pressing need for political and economic reform. Without the latter, continual deterioration in the Zimbabwean economy is probable, and the potential for significant social unrest could increase.

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INTERNAL DIVISIONS AGGRAVATE CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN

By Sarah Graveline

The fragile ceasefire brokered on July 12, 2016, between South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and then–First Vice President Riek Machar is again at risk as both men face intensified pressure from internal factions. Machar, recently ousted from his position as South Sudan's First Vice President, is being pressed to retake control of his party, the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement in Opposition (SPLA-IO). While the opposition's turmoil benefits Kiir, he faces domestic pressure to resist a proposed African Union–led intervention. Kiir's and Machar's responses to these internal pushes for them each to consolidate power may determine whether South Sudan experiences another outbreak of conflict.



Hundreds of South Sudanese protest in Juba, South Sudan against Foreign military intervention Wednesday, July 20, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Samir Bol.)

A Winner-Take-All System Leads to Conflict

The latest outbreak of violence coincided with South Sudan's fifth anniversary of independence. Over five days, running battles between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the SPLA-IO left at least [272 dead](#) in the capital, Juba. The conflict was sparked by the presence of [1,400 recently-arrived SPLA-IO](#) forces in Juba. The soldiers were accompanying Machar as he took office in accordance with the [August 2015 Compromise Peace Agreement](#) (CPA-2) that ended the previous two years of civil war.

The resumption of conflict was unsurprising. As [Africa Watch](#) previously noted, South Sudan's constitution gives significant political power to the president, which is dangerous given the winner-take-all nature of South Sudanese politics. As longtime South Sudan observer Alex de Waal argues, South Sudanese politics are predicated on [patronage](#), giving an advantage to the politician with access to the most wealth.

The effect of political management through patronage has proven to be corrosive in South Sudan, leading to economic mismanagement that has inhibited the government's ability to provide [public services](#). It may also ultimately lead to political [fractionalization](#) as soldiers and political elites, given tacit authority to loot from the public, realize that they no longer need support from a national leader to gain power or turn a profit.

Upon South Sudan's independence, abundant oil wealth allowed Kiir to maintain political control by providing [payouts](#) to potential rivals. Following the January 2012 shutdown of oil wells, however, South Sudan quickly lost the revenue needed to maintain this "big tent" method of political management. As a result, opposition members challenged Kiir's authority, which ultimately led to a civil war.

While the civil war formally ended when Kiir and Machar signed the CPA-2, the newly created unity government did not resolve the underlying political conflict. In the interim, Kiir has continued to use state authority to strengthen his political power. Just four months after signing the CPA-2, Kiir dissolved South Sudan's existing 10 states and created [28 new states](#), appointing his supporters as governors.

Who's Really in Charge?

Despite years in power, both Kiir and Machar have recently struggled to maintain control of their factions. The most recent conflict created political vulnerabilities for Machar, who was forced to [leave Juba](#) during the fighting. In his absence, the SPLA-IO announced on [July 23](#) that Mining Minister Taban Deng Gai would replace Machar as the acting First Vice President.

Machar responded immediately, claiming he had [fired Deng](#), while SPLA-IO leaders loyal to Machar [claimed](#) Deng's supporters had forced SPLA-IO officials to make the announcement by holding them hostage at gunpoint in a Juba hotel. [Deng](#) rejected reports that he had been fired and maintained that he would continue to lead the SPLA-IO. On July 26, Kiir formally [replaced](#) Machar with Deng as the First Vice President, in a move that seemingly confirmed Kiir's [involvement](#) in his rival's ouster.

While Deng's appointment as First Vice President is an obvious challenge to Machar's authority, for the past year Machar has faced low-level internal challenges to his leadership. In [July 2015](#), Machar dismissed two of his most experienced generals after they objected to indications that Machar would attempt to broker peace with Kiir and reunify the SPLA-IO with the SPLA.

Like Machar, Kiir also faces significant internal pressure. Observers speculate that he does not control large segments of the SPLA, pointing to his [apparent confusion](#) at the outbreak of recent fighting and the high level of [control](#) the Chief of General Staff [Paul Malong](#) has over the military. Observers also believe Kiir faces pressure from the [Jieng Council of Elders](#), a group of political elites from the same Dinka ethnic group as Kiir who lobby for pro-Dinka policies.

Conclusion

As the international community moves forward in its attempts to maintain peace in South Sudan, Kiir and Machar's internal struggles pose a looming challenge. While the African Union has approved the creation of a [Regional Protection Force](#) to supplement the current [UN peacekeeping mission](#), Kiir's [supporters](#), and Kiir himself, have widely condemned the intervention as a violation of sovereignty. On July 24, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni [met](#) with Kiir to encourage him to accept the regional deployment. But if Kiir acquiesces to regional pressure, it may further weaken his position with hardliners within the SPLA.

The decision of whether or not to support the Regional Protection Force has also drawn attention to weaknesses within the SPLA-IO. On July 20, Taban Deng Gai claimed the SPLA-IO opposed regional intervention. He has maintained this stance and used his new position as the First Vice President to publicly push for the [integration](#) of the SPLA and SPLA-IO, a move that is [opposed](#) by SPLA-IO forces outside Juba who remain loyal to Machar.

The fractionalization of the SPLA-IO has increased the risk of a return to conflict. Perceptions of Kiir's involvement are especially concerning as SPLA-IO factions that remain loyal to Machar vehemently oppose Kiir's attempted co-optation of their party. Already, the SPLA-IO has [claimed](#) that the SPLA is carrying out attacks on its forces. In a conflict marked by brutal [ethnically based violence](#), further fractionalization of armed groups will likely make reconciliation and peacebuilding difficult.

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MISCALCULATING SECURITY: OBSTACLES TO RELIABLE DATA IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR STABILITY

By Hilary Mattess

The role of economic development in promoting national security is well-established and [frequently commented upon](#). As Secretary of Defense Gates said in 2010, “economic development is a lot [cheaper than sending soldiers](#).” The United States and its global partners recognize the utility of “soft” development programming in complementing and facilitating “hard” national security objectives. This is particularly true for advancing strategic interests in Africa.

One of the greatest obstacles to effective promotion of economic development is the lack of reliable data. In calling for a [data revolution](#), the United Nations noted that “data are the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability.” The lack of reliable data makes it difficult to design, implement, monitor, and evaluate programs aimed at either development or security. There are a number of obstacles to improving African data collection, including the politicization of the process, a lack of technical capacity, and the lack of standard metrics and processes.

Challenges to Good Data Collection

African governments, like the proverbial drunken man, often use statistics like lampposts, “for support rather than illumination.” The Nigerian experience illustrates many of the challenges to effective data collection. In 2013, the Chairman of the National Population Commission (NPC) resigned from his position after telling the media that “[no census has been credible in Nigeria since 1816](#),” because of the politicization of the process. Since in Nigeria, as elsewhere, statistics on populations determine the levels of funding received by state and local governments, there are a number of competing interests that compromise data integrity. A 2011 [analysis by the World Bank](#) was blunt, arguing that “the underlying cause” of poor data collection across a variety of sectors, “is that statistics are fundamentally political.”

Even in the absence of politicization of the data, however, there are a number of challenges, including “[weak capacity in countries to collect, manage and disseminate data; inadequate funding](#)”; and fragmented efforts to collect data. Low levels of education and constrained budgets have limited the technical capacity of African governments to effectively collect and manage data in a timely and regular fashion. The result is incomplete national data sets of dubious veracity, which are often unable to be compared to those from neighboring countries. Consider that in 2005, World Bank [statistics](#) demonstrated that Africa’s poverty rate had declined from 59 percent in 1995 to 50 percent, a result that was lauded as a major developmental success. However, only 39 countries had “[robust statistics](#) . . . for [which] we have internationally comparable estimates. And they are not comparable over the same year.” In fact, of the 39 countries, only 11 had comparable data for the same year.

Another complicating issue is the lack of methodological standards internationally. A study published in The Lancet in 2012 showcased an estimate by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) of 1.2 million deaths from malaria in 2010, [nearly double](#) the World Health Organization’s estimate for that same year. Although both organizations are well respected, variations in methodologies led them to vastly different results. The variations at the international level are replicated at



The UN's Sustainable Development Goals are driving investment in data collection, but the amount and types of data required may be beyond the capabilities of many African governments to collect. (Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focus/sdgs.html>.)

the national level, creating a myriad of data collection and analysis variations. The lack of coherent methodologies makes it difficult to compare countries or even a single nation's progress over time.

Overburdening a Limited System

Unfortunately, the current trend toward “evidence-based policy” has increased the demand on African governments to produce and collect large amounts of data. According to Morten Jerven, the author of *Poor Numbers: How We are Misled by African Development Statistics and What We Can Do About It*, “donors are increasingly [demanding monitoring and data in return for funding](#).” This creates situations in which “the huge gaps in data, combined with blatant incentives to distort it,” result in “[policy driven evidence](#).” Aptly illustrating this increased demand are the [17 Sustainable Development Goals](#), which replaced the [8 Millennium Development Goals](#) in 2016 as the “blueprint” for international development. The new Sustainable Development Goals are subdivided into [169 targets and 230 individual indicators](#). Jerven asserts that these more [detailed goals](#), while laudable in their intention, will overstretch the already limited capacity of African governments to collect meaningful data. For example, throughout Africa, [fewer than half of births are officially recorded](#); it is unlikely these same countries will be able to gather the more detailed data required to comply with many of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Conclusions and Reforms

The recognition of the importance of economic development for national security, in addition to the intrinsic benefits of human development, has galvanized action to improve development programs. But these same programs are overtaxing a data-collection system that is characterized by politicization, limited capacity, and methodological differences. There is a role for the international community to play in improving data collection and management in Africa. As the Center for Global Development asserts, one of the first steps is to reduce the demand on countries to produce so many metrics. Instead, “governments and donors should focus on the “[building blocks](#)” of national statistics systems,” such as “births and deaths; growth and poverty; tax and trade; sickness, schooling and safety; and land and environment.”

In addition to reducing demands on national statistics bureaus and focusing on a limited number of metrics, the international community could provide technical support and training to African governments. The maintenance of technologically relevant and methodologically sound data-collection practices would facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of programs aimed at improving economic development in Africa.

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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS SHAKE UP SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS

By Sarah Graveline

On August 3, 2016, South Africans voted in municipal elections. Although official results will not be announced until August 5, initial results show the race has proven uncomfortably tight for the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party. Opposition groups seem to have been successful in leveraging voter frustration with economic challenges, corruption, and poor service delivery. Their campaigns have put three key cities into electoral play. These local elections show that voters' attitudes toward the party of independence and of Nelson Mandela may be changing. Without an overhaul, it is conceivable that the ANC could lose national elections, next scheduled to be held in 2019. [more...](#)



A woman, center, wearing a traditional dress with the face of South African President Jacob Zuma, waits with others outside a polling station to cast her ballot during municipal elections in Khayelitsha township on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa, Wednesday, August 3, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam.)

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

STRANGERS IN A FAMILIAR LAND: A REFERENDUM ON IVOIRITÉ?

By Hilary Matfess

President Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire seems to be making progress on his 2015 campaign promise to deliver a new constitution to the country. On July 14, 2016, the Ivorian National Assembly voted [to organize a constitutional referendum](#) in the fall. Although details at this point are scant, the proposed constitution will likely favor a decentralized form of government and include provisions for creating a senate, as well as the position of vice president. In a more controversial move, however, the constitution will scrap the provision demanding that presidential candidates prove that both of their parents are "[natural born Ivoirians](#)" to qualify for the position. This provision was used specifically to prevent Ouattara from running for president in the 2000 election. If not delicately managed, the constitutional referendum could well reignite the country's long-simmering civil conflict. [more...](#)



President Alassane Ouattara speaks to the Associated Press during an interview in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, Thursday, October 29, 2015. (Source: AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam.)

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The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

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IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.

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Voters are Frustrated with the ANC

Voter frustration with the ANC is in part predicated on corruption and political mismanagement at the national level. South African President Jacob Zuma, in office since May 2009, has faced at least [five](#) major scandals that have led the opposition to publicly question his fitness for office. In April, Zuma narrowly avoided being impeached by [parliament](#) after a long-running battle over his decision to accept state money for [\\$16 million](#) worth of upgrades to his private residence in Nkandla.

Zuma has also overseen a variety of staffing scandals that have damaged the ANC's credibility. In [December 2015](#), Zuma abruptly fired his finance minister and appointed successively two inexperienced ANC members to the position before public outrage led Zuma to appoint former finance minister Pravin Gordhan. The scandal caused the South African rand to [tumble](#), harming South Africa's already-struggling economy. Zuma responded to corruption within the South African Police Service by [appointing](#) Mangwashi "Riah" Phiyega, a civilian, as the National Commissioner in June 2012. In July 2016, she was [suspended](#) from office after being found unfit for duty by a national commission investigating the [Marikana massacre](#), in which 44 protesting miners were killed by police during her tenure. Zuma has also been criticized for appointing [Hlaudi Motsoeneng](#) as COO of the South African Broadcasting Corporation—a series of journalists have alleged that Motsoeneng inappropriately censors negative coverage of Zuma or the ANC.

Although national-level scandals have harmed the ANC's reputation, local mismanagement and service delivery failures are the most pressing concerns for voters. Analysts argue that these failures are in part due to the financial incentives driving competition for local offices. Given South Africa's high unemployment rate, gaining a [paid position](#) within local government is one of the few ways ordinary South Africans can ensure their own financial security. Once in office, however, there are few incentives for local government officials to work to improve their communities. Since 2010, each year there have been on average [150 protests](#) related to poor municipal service delivery within South Africa. This figure is nearly four times as high as it was during the mid-2000s.

The financial benefits available to public officeholders have also led to outbreaks of violence between factions pressing for their candidate to be nominated by a political party on the ballot this month. In June and July, [12 ANC leaders](#) were killed in Kwa Zulu-Natal province in conflicts over nomination lists. Similarly, in Tshwane municipality [five people](#) were killed during protests over the ANC's nomination for mayor.



A woman, center, wearing a traditional dress with the face of South African President Jacob Zuma, waits with others outside a polling station to cast her ballot during municipal elections in Khayelitsha township on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa, Wednesday, August 3, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam.)

Democratic Alliance and Economic Freedom Fighters: Better Alternatives?

Two opposition parties, the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), attempted to capitalize on widespread dissatisfaction with the ANC in their national campaigns. Although the DA and EFF have markedly divergent platforms, early [results](#) show that the two parties have forced the ANC into a tight race in the key metropolitan areas of Johannesburg and Tshwane (including Pretoria), while the DA is on track to unseat the ANC in Nelson Mandela Bay (including Port Elizabeth).

The DA is more established than the EFF. It won 22 percent of the vote in the 2014 elections, and it is campaigning on the strength of its reforms in the Western Cape, where it has controlled local government since [2009](#). The DA is handicapped, however, by public perceptions that it is a white, urban party. Led from 2007 through 2015 by [Helen Zille](#), a white former journalist, the DA has performed best in the [Western Cape](#), the only province where black South Africans do not constitute the majority of the population. To combat this perception, the DA elected [Mmusi Maimane](#) as its first black leader in 2015. Young and social-media savvy, [Maimane](#) has sought to convince voters that the DA has built more successfully on Mandela's legacy than the ANC, which he argues has become corrupt and cut off from its origins.

The EFF has also made criticism of the ANC central to its campaign. The party was founded in 2013 by [Julius Malema](#), the former President of the ANC Youth League who was expelled from the party after vocally criticizing Zuma. As head of the EFF, Malema has won attention and support through incendiary rhetoric. In one [speech](#) he threatened to "remove the government through the barrel of a gun." The EFF's [policies](#) are equally radical, calling for land to be expropriated without compensation and for mines and banks to be nationalized.

Conclusion

South Africa's 2016 municipal elections have unleashed a wave of voter dissatisfaction that will continue to challenge the ANC in the lead-up to national elections. While the ANC has generally achieved polling success based on its history and the strength of its brand, there are signs that its political power is waning. Historically, the ANC has built support through its membership in the [Tripartite Alliance](#) with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu). But increasing tension between the ANC and the SACP, combined with the breakoff of several key unions from Cosatu, means that the alliance no longer carries the same [influence](#) among voters that it did in the immediate post-apartheid era.

Increasingly, South Africans are willing to look outside the ANC in search of solutions to a persistently weak economy and a [26.7 percent](#) unemployment rate. Municipal campaigns in Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay have drawn attention to the ANC's failures and, as the elections apparently have shown, caused many South Africans to seriously consider alternatives to the ruling party. In the face of widespread discontent, the ANC is reaching a crossroads. It must demonstrate its ability to bring corruption under control and strengthen service delivery or face a continued erosion of support leading up to the 2019 national elections.

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President Alassane Ouattara of Côte d'Ivoire seems to be making progress on his 2015 campaign promise to deliver a new constitution to the country. On July 14, 2016, the Ivorian National Assembly voted [to organize a constitutional referendum](#) in the fall. Although details at this point are scant, the proposed constitution will likely favor a decentralized form of government and include provisions for creating a senate, as well as the position of vice president. In a more controversial move, however, the constitution will scrap the provision demanding that presidential candidates prove that both of their parents are “[natural born Ivorians](#)” to qualify for the position. This provision was used specifically to prevent Ouattara from running for president in the 2000 election. If not delicately managed, the constitutional referendum could well reignite the country's long-simmering civil conflict.

History of Identity Conflicts and “Ivoirité”

The debate over Ivorian citizenship can be traced to the country's independence from France in 1960. The first constitution after independence asserted that those living within the new nation's borders before independence would be [considered citizens](#). This big tent approach did not endure beyond the softly authoritarian tenure of the country's first president, Felix Houphouët-Boigny. After his death, multiparty elections were re-established in the early 1990s, and the definition of citizenship became an issue. Resentment toward France, the former colonial power, and toward “[strangers](#)” (immigrants from neighboring countries) had simmered for years, but the 1990s saw the development of an exclusionary set of conditions for citizenship. [Henri Konan Bedie](#), the President of Côte d'Ivoire from 1993 to 1999, developed the concept of “[Ivoirité](#)” or “[Ivorian-ness](#),” which politicized the citizenship debate in a new and volatile way by emphasizing divisions among groups that considered themselves Ivorian. The brand of patriotism that emerged from this definition has been described as “[ultranationalist](#) and extremely violent.”

The concept was an exclusionary one, as it divided Ivorians along ethno-political and regional lines. In particular, the concept of Ivoirité was considered by many to [marginalize Muslims](#) in the north, where there is a higher rate of immigration. In 2000, a hasty referendum on the restriction of the presidency to those who met Ivoirité conditions disqualified Ouattara from that election and forced him to demonstrate his parents' lineage in subsequent elections. Many have traced the perception of the referendum as “a blatant attempt to curtail Ouattara's rising power and the political participation of northerners” to the country's 2002 civil war. This conflict saw a coalition of armed rebels from the north, called the “[Forces Nouvelles de Côte d'Ivoire](#),” fighting the “[Young Patriots](#),” from the country's south. More than [1,000 people](#) are thought to have died in the fighting.

Debates over who is “truly Ivorian” were also behind the 2011 crisis in the country. The violence followed the [2010 presidential election there](#), in which Ouattara proved his eligibility and won, according to international observers. His main opponent, incumbent Laurent Gbagbo, whose support was largely in the Christian south, refused to concede defeat. The resulting violence claimed more than 3,000 lives and displaced more than 500,000 people. The conflict ended with [Gbagbo's indictment](#) by the International Criminal Court and Ouattara being sworn in as the president.



President Alassane Ouattara speaks to the Associated Press during an interview in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, Thursday, October 29, 2015. (Source: AP Photo/Schalk van Zuydam.)

Moving Forward

The wounds of the 2011 conflict are still evident in the country, and Ivoirité remains a potent political force. The proposed referendum may stir up [ethnic resentment and xenophobia](#), possibly resulting in violence. Although lacking sufficient cohesion and representation to stop the referendum bill, a group of more than 20 opposition political parties have agreed to campaign against proceeding with the constitutional referendum.

The issue of what defines a citizen is a pressing matter, not merely a question of symbolism. According to Sayre Nyce of Refugees International, Ivoirite's definition of a "true" citizen as someone with two natural-born Ivorian parents "renders [about 30 percent](#) of the Ivory Coast's 16 million inhabitants foreign." The Ivorian government has estimated that at least [700,000 people](#) are stateless within the country's borders. These people cannot work legally in Cote d'Ivoire, nor can they access government services and assistance.

The process of documenting identity is also in need of reform. At present, obtaining an Ivorian ID card can cost between [\\$40 and \\$100](#). For many, this price is simply too high—especially since formal employment without an Ivorian ID is nearly impossible to come by. As one undocumented woman in Cote d'Ivoire put it, "being stateless is like not having an identity."

The issues to be debated in the constitutional referendum extend beyond the question of identity and include restructuring the country's legislative and executive branches. Although these issues are worthy of debate, it seems possible that they will be crowded out by divisive identity discussions. The election of President Ouattara did not put to rest the notion of Ivoirité, and ethno-political and geographic divisions in the country remain potent. Although Ouattara won re-election in 2015, [anti-Northern, anti-immigrant, and anti-Muslim sentiments](#) were prominent in that campaign.

Conclusions

Although Côte D'Ivoire has been relatively peaceful and stable under President Ouattara, if he follows through on his 2015 campaign promise to bring about a constitutional referendum, it is possible the proposed changes will reignite the sort of identity politics that claimed thousands of lives over the past 15 years. The international community, while supporting democratic constitutional reform, should be alert to the prospect of violence and instability as the referendum nears. Providing financial and technical support to the constitutional drafting process and ensuring that the referendum abides by the highest standards of transparency could help legitimize the process and ease tensions among those who feel marginalized.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: DELAYED ELECTIONS SPARK POLITICAL UNREST

By Sarah Graveline

On July 27, 2016, thousands of Congolese took to the streets to publicly welcome opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi back to the DRC after two years away seeking medical treatment. The size of Tshisekedi's homecoming, which constituted Congo's largest public demonstration in recent memory, was driven by public frustration with President Joseph Kabila's apparent determination to remain in office beyond constitutionally imposed term limits. While rising disapproval with Kabila's government has increased public support for opposition candidates, competition between opposition leaders weakens their leverage against the ruling party. Congo's opposition leaders must improve their cooperation or risk squandering their newly strengthened support. [more...](#)



Congo opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, center, walks, as he arrives at the airport in Kinshasa, Congo, Wednesday, July 27, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/John Bompengo.)

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

EFFORTS AT PAN-AFRICAN INTEGRATION: NEW VARIATIONS ON AN OLD THEME

By Hilary Matfess

The 27th African Union (AU) Summit, hosted in Kigali, Rwanda, drew to a close on July 18, 2016. Although the group failed to elect a [new President](#), the AU's mandate to promote regional integration was front and center at the conference. A new African Union passport was introduced and planning for the [Continental Free Trade Area \(CFTA\)](#) gained traction during the conference. These calls for enhanced regional integration are not new. For decades, greater intracontinental trade and investment have been goals, but little progress has been made despite the numerous bodies and agreements formed to advance this cause. In the aftermath of the summit, which revealed some structural weaknesses in the African Union, it is worth assessing the future of pan-African integration. [more...](#)



New African Union passport. (Source: Image adapted from James Oyesola, Twitter, <http://tinyurl.com/hemamux>, July 17, 2016.)

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Congo opposition leader Etienne Tshisekedi, center, walks, as he arrives at the airport in Kinshasa, Congo, Wednesday, July 27, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/John Bompengo.)

A Sliding Election Generates Anger

Current political unrest within the DRC centers on indications that Congolese president Joseph Kabila intends to stay in power beyond the end of his second term in December. Kabila first assumed national leadership in 2001, following the assassination of his father, Laurent Kabila, and was formally elected in the nation's first freely held democratic election in 2006. Kabila was reelected in 2011, although the results were contested by the [opposition](#), and some observers argued the [elections lacked credibility](#).

Kabila is constitutionally forbidden from seeking a third term. In May, however, Congo's [Constitutional Court](#) announced that if the election failed to be held in time, the current president would remain in office until a new president is elected. [Observers](#) believe Kabila is actively working toward this outcome by obstructing elections from taking place. For example, in [January 2015](#), the ruling People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy (PPRD) attempted to pass a law requiring that a new census take place before elections are held. Such a massive effort would certainly delay polling. In addition, the Congolese electoral commission (CENI), which is responsible for organizing the election, has repeatedly [increased](#) its estimate of the funding and time needed to organize polls, while undertaking almost no actual preparation activities.

A Fractured Opposition

This strategy of obstruction has created political unrest that is reenergizing the opposition. Immediately following the 2011 elections, opposition groups appeared weak. Tshisekedi, who had challenged Kabila for the presidency, was forced into [house arrest](#) after contesting the results. Ultimately, he left the country while members of his party, Union Pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS), accepted minority positions in parliament. The opposition remained quiet until September 2015, when seven party leaders within Kabila's coalition government published a [letter](#) urging Kabila to respect term limits. These leaders, who became known as [the G7](#), were fired from their government positions and, given Tshisekedi's absence, became the *de facto* voice of the opposition in the DRC.

Just days after the G7 published their letter, Moïse Katumbi, a longtime Kabila supporter and former governor of mineral-rich Katanga Province, publicly [broke with the president](#) by resigning from the PPRD and criticizing Kabila's attempt to prolong his term. On [May 4, 2016](#), Katumbi announced his own candidacy for president, with [support](#) from the G7. Less than a week later, he was [charged](#) with hiring armed mercenaries to overthrow the government. When Katumbi was summoned to court in Lubumbashi, the capital of Katanga Province, his supporters [rioted](#) in the streets.

On May 19, the government issued an [arrest warrant](#) for Katumbi, who quickly flew to [South Africa](#). The government issued a three-year prison [sentence in absentia](#), while Katumbi traveled to [London](#) and [Washington, DC](#), to lobby the international community.

Since Katumbi's departure, Congo's main opposition groups have sought to present a unified front. For example, in early June, the G7 and UDPS, along with Katumbi's Dynamic Opposition, met in Brussels to form an [alliance](#) known as *Rassemblement pour la défense des valeurs de la République*. But from its inception this alliance has shown signs of strain. Leaders from two key opposition groups, eastern Congo-based [Union pour la nation congolaise](#) (UPC) and [Mouvement de libération du Congo](#) (MLC), were not present at the Brussels meeting. In addition, Tshisekedi's popular reception in Kinshasa has strengthened his position while weakening Katumbi, who remains outside the DRC.

This shifting power balance between opposition groups seems to be further delaying the already slow progress toward elections. On June 24, the *Rassemblement* released a [communiqué](#), signed by Tshisekedi, announcing that it would not take part in African Union (AU)-led talks with the PPRD because it objected to the AU facilitator. This delay is helpful to the *Rassemblement*, ensuring Katumbi is not shut out of negotiations due to his absence, while also providing Tshisekedi time to continue to rally his supporters to leverage the PPRD for concessions. By jockeying for negotiating power at the expense of actual negotiations, however, the opposition may be contributing to the erosion of democratic norms in the DRC.

Conclusion

While the opposition squabbles, ordinary Congolese are suffering. Although the country has an estimated [\\$24 trillion](#) in untapped mineral resources, [64 percent](#) of the population lives in poverty. The state compounds this suffering as some government officials play a predatory role in citizens' daily lives. [Dr. Pierre Englebert](#), writing for the Atlantic Council, reported that "preliminary findings from an ongoing study of the real tax burden of the Congolese based on 2,400 households, indicate that the real tax rate faced by lower-income Congolese amounts to a stunning 40 percent of their wealth." On top of this, residents report that they must also pay a variety of menial bribes, fees, and fines, often created at the whim of civil servants or security officials in local areas.

The opposition's disorganization inspires little confidence that the situation for ordinary Congolese will soon change. As [observers](#) note, opposition groups in the DRC have a long history of speaking loudly while taking little action. Now, however, Congolese citizens are increasingly challenging this status quo. Over the past year, Congolese have registered their discontent with Kabila's government through a series of protests. To harness this dissatisfaction, opposition leaders need to overcome their existing rivalries in order to move the country forward toward the goal of political change.

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New African Union passport. (Source: Image adapted from James Oyesola, Twitter, <http://tinyurl.com/hemamux>, July 17, 2016.)

Previous Efforts and the Current State of Affairs

Trade among African nations is unusually low; the intraregional trade rate is just [18 percent](#), versus 69 percent in Europe and 52 percent in Asia. This low rate is not due to a lack of political infrastructure to facilitate trade—throughout the continent are [eight Regional Economic Communities \(RECs\)](#) designed to promote trade. Three of these RECs joined to form the [Tripartite Free Trade Area \(TFTA\)](#) in June 2015, a consolidation that includes 26 African countries and 57 percent of the sub-Saharan Africa's GDP. Despite the optimism that accompanied this union, on June 30, 2016, the countries failed to come to an agreement on tariff rate reduction and market access, raising questions about the [agreement's future](#).

In spite of the existence of the RECs and the TFTA and political endorsement of free trade, intra-African trade is hampered by protectionist trade [policies](#). Trade with non-African countries has been liberalized, but high tariffs on [agricultural products](#) imported from other African states are barriers to regional economic integration. It is estimated that the average African agricultural exporter faces a protection rate of [12.4 percent](#) within Africa but only 9.5 percent when exporting to non-African countries. Often, African agricultural commodities are designated as “sensitive products” and can be taxed protectively even under REC agreements. As a result of these policies, [nearly 85 percent](#) of African countries' imports of food and agricultural raw materials are from non-African countries.

Non-tariff barriers also impede trade. These include requirements for an abundance of paperwork at border crossings, the continental [deficit of physical infrastructure](#), and inefficiencies within national customs offices. These barriers raise costs significantly. Consider a 2010 UN estimate that “shipping a car [from Japan to Abidjan costs \\$1,500](#), while shipping that same vehicle from Addis Ababa to Abidjan would cost \$5,000,” because of the poor roads and transport infrastructure on the continent.

New Endeavors

The introduction of an African Union passport and the completion of the CFTA by 2017 are both aimed at reducing these administrative hurdles to pan-regional integration. The AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry, Fatima Haram Acyl, viewed the passport as a symbol of increasing continental linkages to advance economic development. As she stated, “[goods do not move themselves](#), they move with people.” The program was inaugurated with the granting of AU passports to Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Chadian President Idris Deby, but it is intended to expand beyond the continent's political elite.

Freedom of movement in Africa has been on the agenda since the [1991 Abuja Treaty](#); however, progress has been slow and uneven. At present, [just 13 African countries](#) allow all African citizens to enter without advance visas. Although the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) introduced an REC-wide passport in 2000, the process of implementation has taken longer than expected. Particularly tricky has been the scarcity of “not only passports but of [travel and identity documents altogether](#) in some countries in West Africa,” a shortcoming that is likely to also plague the AU’s passport program.

If the CFTA is successfully implemented, it would be the largest free-trade area in the world by number of participating countries. The market would be valued at more than [\\$3 trillion and contain more than 1 billion people](#) (with a population growth rate that portends [2 billion](#) people by 2050). The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) suggests that the CFTA could help promote industrialization in Africa and expand exports beyond raw agricultural products. Acyl suggests that the CFTA is more likely to succeed than previous efforts because it is “not starting from scratch,” but is building upon the institutions created by the RECs.

Conclusions

Both the AU passport program and the CFTA have subregional counterparts, the ECOWAS passport and the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement, respectively. The histories of those arrangements caution against overoptimism about the latest initiatives. Synchronizing the trade policies and bureaucratic capacities of the AU’s diverse member states, even absent political incentives to maintain protectionist policies, is a tall order. Further, even improving intraregional trade will not be a “[panacea for Africa’s industrial development](#).” While the latest efforts to promote pan-African integration have garnered public political support, their implementation will prove challenging. Improving intraregional trade requires not only the political courage to liberalize agricultural trade policies, but also significant investments in transnational transport networks and a reduction of non-tariff barriers. Although difficult, increasing intra-African trade is a worthy goal that would facilitate industrialization and economic development across the continent.

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IN THE FIGHT AGAINST BOKO HARAM, WHAT'S THE ROLE OF THE MULTI-NATIONAL JOINT TASK FORCE?

By Hilary Matfess

In recent weeks, contradictory information has emerged from the Lake Chad Basin, an area of land spanning northeastern Nigeria and parts of Cameroon, Chad, and Niger, about the military offensive against Boko Haram. Although Colonel Sani Usman of the Nigerian Army announced in July 2016, “we have come to the point that [we can beat our chest](#) and decisively say we have dealt with Boko Haram,” his account has been contradicted by subsequent events. Just days after Usman’s announcement, a UN aid convoy with a Nigerian military escort came [under fire](#) by suspected Boko Haram militants. Although there is uncertainty about the sect’s strength, Boko Haram has expanded beyond Nigeria’s borders and is now a regional threat. In addition to the violence, an escalating humanitarian crisis threatens stability in the Lake Chad Basin. The UN estimates that more than [4.6 million](#) people are food insecure in the Lake Chad Basin, and regional trade has slowed to a trickle. Given the contradictory accounts of the current situation in the Lake Chad Basin and the increasingly regional nature of the insurgency, it is worth considering what progress has been made in fighting Boko Haram. Particularly worthy of consideration is the status of the much-publicized Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF). This regional body was intended to spearhead the fight against the insurgents, but it has yet to fulfill its mandate. [more...](#)



In this Sunday Jan. 31, 2016, file photo, a man walks past burnt-out houses following an attack by Boko Haram in Dalori village near Maiduguri, Nigeria. (Source: AP Photo/Jossy Ola, File.)

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

SHIFTING ALLEGIANCES IN ZIMBABWE'S POWERFUL SECURITY SECTOR?

By Alexander Noyes

On August 1, 2016, police in Zimbabwe [arrested](#) two senior leaders of the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA) on charges of insulting President Robert Mugabe. The organization, which is composed of war veterans from Zimbabwe’s liberation war fought in the 1970s, has been a staunch supporter of Mugabe and his ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party. The arrests come on the heels of the ZNLWVA’s July 21 break with Mugabe, when the group released a sharp [rebutal](#) to Mugabe’s rule. In the [statement](#), the war veterans cited Mugabe’s “dictatorial tendencies” that had “devoured the values of the liberation struggle.” The war veterans’ unprecedented break with Mugabe has drawn in other security sector actors and should be viewed through lens of the ruling party’s long-simmering succession struggle. [more...](#)



Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe sings the national anthem before addressing the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association, at the party headquarters, in Harare, Wednesday, July 27, 2016. Zimbabwe’s 92-year-old president on Wednesday said the longtime loyalists who turned against him last week should face “severe” punishment, and he vowed to stay in power for “a long time.” (Source: AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi.)

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TANZANIA: GROWING CONCERN OVER GOVERNANCE REFORM

By Sarah Graveline

Since his election in October 2015, Tanzanian President John Magufuli has won accolades for his public commitment to thrift and his anti-corruption activities. Known as the “bulldozer,” Magufuli has overseen the deletion of ghost-workers from the federal payroll and imposed strict bans on unnecessary government expenses. While his tough public persona has won him widespread support—he had a [90 percent](#) approval rating following his first 100 days in office—his government has also sought to limit dissent by closing newspapers and taking a hard line against opposition demonstrations. These actions suggest that Magufuli is a limited reformer. Although he has pared some of his government’s worst excesses, he has thus far proved unwilling to attempt to bridge Tanzania’s enduring political fault lines. [more...](#)



Tanzania's new President John Pombe Magufuli holds up a ceremonial spear and shield to signify the beginning of his presidency, shortly after swearing an oath during his inauguration ceremony at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Thursday, Nov. 5, 2015. (Source: AP Photo/Khalfan Said.)

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Founding and Funding of the MNJTF

The MNJTF was created in [1998](#) as a partnership between Nigeria, Chad, and Niger to counter cross-border crime and smuggling. The African Union (AU) approved the repurposing of the MNJTF as a counter-Boko Haram force in [January 2015](#), with an operational [headquarters](#) in N'djamena boasting roughly 100 military and civilian personnel. The task force's counterterrorism force, intended to engage in military operations against the insurgency, was to comprise 8,700 troops from [Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Benin](#), united under the command of Nigerian Major-General [Buratai](#). The operational budget for this endeavor, originally [authorized for a year](#), was pegged at \$700 million, some \$250 million of which was pledged by Nigeria and France. In addition, the United States offered intelligence support and training to the force. The force was supposed to act as a way to coordinate regional efforts and lead the offensive against Boko Haram. Its [charter](#) gives the force the responsibility to engage in everything from psychological operations against the insurgents, to organizing humanitarian aid convoys, to preventing arms trafficking—in addition to “conducting military operations to prevent the expansion of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups activities and eliminate their presence.”

One important issue limiting the efficacy of the MNJTF is funding: the AU has struggled to collect contributions for the force, and the disbursement of pledged funds has been slow. [Reuters](#) quoted an anonymous senior officer with the MNJTF who claimed that the force's budget had been able to buy only “11 vehicles and some radio equipment.” The officer also noted that the remaining costs were borne by the individual countries' militaries, creating a financial strain on already tight budgets. Even in relatively wealthy Nigeria, the [decline in the global price of oil](#) has limited the military's budget. Other shortages, like the jet fuel scarcity in the North East, have made it difficult for the Nigerian Air Force to conduct air operations, according to the Chief of Defense Staff, [General Gabriel Olonisakin](#).

The fragmented financial responsibility mirrors the current operational characteristics of the force's military operations against Boko Haram. For example, credit has been given to the force for successfully dislodging Boko Haram from much of the territory it [overran last year](#), but since then, the territory has not been adequately secured by the

Nigerian military or police. Moreover, many of these operations that dislodged Boko Haram were conducted largely by national forces, rather than the regional force. [Vincent Foucher](#), a West Africa researcher with the International Crisis Group reported that “each force is based in its country of origin,” and observed that there is not yet a truly integrated force. At best, the MNJTF has been a complement to national efforts in the region; at worst, it has delayed military action and obfuscated which military forces are responsible for responding to developments.

Fragmentation of Effort

Even though Nigeria’s initial [reluctance](#) to allow any foreign forces onto its territory seems to have faded, a true coalition force remains elusive. Tensions between Nigeria and its neighbors have contributed to the lack of coordination. For example, in March 2015, Chadian President Idriss Déby complained that the Nigerian military was not providing necessary support. He told the [New York Times](#) that he wants “the Nigerians to come and occupy” the territory his troops reclaimed from Boko Haram. Despite Buhari’s efforts to smooth over [regional disputes](#), tensions remain.

A related issue is that lines of authority remain blurred within the MNJTF, making commitment more difficult to coordinate. Although Nigeria announced, “All the countries agreed this operation will not recognize international boundaries—wherever terrorists are they will be chased to these locations and they will be fought [until they are finished](#),” the issue of territorial sovereignty remains a [thorny](#) one.

The lack of clear oversight mechanisms and organizational hierarchy is another issue, because the individual efforts of regional militaries have led to uneven efforts against the group. Niger, in particular, has suffered from the lack of a unified effort; as Nigeria and the other countries have stepped up their military offensives, the country has not been able to muster the necessary military force to counter the insurgents domestically. Although the MNJTF should have responded to the Boko Haram attack on Bosso, Niger, the President of Niger was forced to [request military assistance](#) from the Chadian military. Even then, while Idriss Déby agreed to help, Chadian troops arrived only about a month later; the MNJTF never sent military support. The failure to coordinate a regional effort has resulted in military efforts that move Boko Haram around, rather than eradicate the insurgency.

Conclusion

Hopes were initially high for a regional force to defeat Boko Haram, but the MNJTF has not lived up to these expectations. The international community may be well advised to increase its focus on improving the effectiveness of the coalition’s military efforts. It may be necessary to rethink the broad mandate of the MNJTF, narrowing its scope of activities to more achievable goals—e.g., focusing on cross-border surveillance and intelligence sharing rather than more ambitious military objectives—that could complement the activities of the national forces of the participating countries.

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Background

Zimbabwe's security sector has played a long and prominent role in the country's politics. After Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, Robert Mugabe relied on the military and other security sector actors, including intelligence organizations and war veterans groups, to consolidate his power. Starting in 2000, when ZANU-PF faced its first credible political threat from the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change, Mugabe leaned on the security sector to [violently](#) guarantee electoral wins for him and ZANU-PF. This reliance led Mugabe to grant increasingly powerful political positions to the security sector, resulting in a gradual [militarization](#) of the party and state. Despite its considerable political power, the security sector in Zimbabwe is far from a monolithic organization, as exemplified by the stark [divides](#) between military and intelligence organizations in the 2014 ZANU-PF purge of former Vice President Joice Mujuru.

ZANU-PF's Bitter Struggle to Succeed Mugabe

As [noted](#) in previous editions of Africa Watch, ZANU-PF has experienced a long-running battle over who will succeed the aging Mugabe. Before 2014, this battle was fought between two major party factions, with one camp led by current Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa and the other by Mujuru. This rivalry came to a head when Mugabe, accusing Mujuru of plotting to overthrow him, expelled Mujuru and [hundreds](#) of her allies from the party in late 2014. [According](#) to the scholar Blessing-Miles Tendi, the security sector was deeply divided between support for Mnangagwa and Mujuru, who are both veterans of the liberation period. In the run-up to the 2014 expulsions, Tendi maintains that Mnangagwa had support from Commander of the Zimbabwe Defense Forces, General Constantine Chiwenga, and Zimbabwe's Military Intelligence, while the Central Intelligence Organization actively supported the Mujuru faction.

Succession Battle and Security Sector Divides Continue

The sacking of Mujuru and her loyalists, and the installation of Mnangagwa as Vice President, bought Mugabe some time, but failed to decisively resolve the party's succession issue. Indeed, the fight over who will take over from Mugabe has continued unabated. In the period since Mujuru's departure, the Mnangagwa faction has come to be

known as Team Lacoste, a reference to Mnangagwa's nickname of the "Crocodile." On the other side, Mugabe's wife, Grace, has stepped into the vacuum created by Mujuru's ouster and risen to prominence as the de facto leader of a different faction, known as [Generation 40](#) (G40), which is also aligned with ZANU-PF's young political commissar, Savior Kasukuwere. At the [moment](#), President Mugabe appears to be supporting his wife and the G40 faction over Team Lacoste. The security sector has also continued to play a role in the latest chapter of the succession struggle. Speaking openly on this issue in December 2015, Mugabe [said](#), "The military, police and the intelligence are now involved and split as well. Let's stop this. We do not want factions."

Conclusion: Mugabe Still Calls the Shots but Faces Unprecedented Splits

While it is of course difficult to ascertain where loyalties lie within the Zimbabwean security sector, the available evidence suggests that Mnangagwa continues to enjoy support from some of the higher echelons of the [military](#), including from Chiwenga. Just last week, in the midst of the fallout from the war veterans' break with Mugabe, Chiwenga [attacked](#) prominent figures in the G40 faction, who are seeking Mnangagwa's ouster. Chiwenga chided G40 members for a lack of real liberation credentials, [asking](#), "Where did you participate in the war?" A senior military officer [spoke](#) to Tendi about this alliance between Chiwenga and Mnangagwa: "Chiwenga's plan is to succeed ED [Mnangagwa] after ED succeeds Mugabe. When ED is President, Chiwenga will be his Vice-President. There is an alliance between the two." Before their recent break with Mugabe, the war veterans openly [voiced](#) support for Mnangagwa as well, with ZNLWVA spokesperson, Douglas Mahiya, explaining: "Seniority tells who is next in line. So next in line from those who took part in the struggle, is Mnangagwa. There is nothing sinister about that; it is just a matter of principle."

While Chiwenga also [reiterated](#) his pledge to Mugabe last week and some war veterans groups have [distanced](#) themselves from the July 21 rebuke of Mugabe, it appears that the security sector's largely unwavering support for Mugabe may be shifting, especially if Mugabe continues to back the G40 faction. Indeed, in addition to ostensible support shifting away from Mugabe and toward Mnangagwa, senior elements of the security sector are also believed to remain loyal to Mujuru. In March of this year, Mujuru officially [launched](#) her new opposition party, named Zimbabwe People First (ZPF). ZPF's Didymas Mutasa, himself a former ZANU-PF stalwart, [noted](#) residual allegiance to Mujuru among security sector officials: "I know people in the defense forces, people in the police, people in the Central Intelligence Office who will be very willing to see her [Mujuru] leading Zimbabwe." Although Mugabe's ability to cultivate support from the security sector and divide and rule the two intra-party factions should not be underestimated, it appears that Mugabe may not be able to depend on the country's powerful security sector to unequivocally defend his rule in elections scheduled for 2018.

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TANZANIA: GROWING CONCERN OVER GOVERNANCE REFORM

By Sarah Graveline

Since his election in October 2015, Tanzanian President John Magufuli has won accolades for his public commitment to thrift and his anti-corruption activities. Known as the “bulldozer,” Magufuli has overseen the deletion of ghost-workers from the federal payroll and imposed strict bans on unnecessary government expenses. While his tough public persona has won him widespread support—he had a [90 percent](#) approval rating following his first 100 days in office—his government has also sought to limit dissent by closing newspapers and taking a hard line against opposition demonstrations. These actions suggest that Magufuli is a limited reformer. Although he has pared some of his government’s worst excesses, he has thus far proved unwilling to attempt to bridge Tanzania’s enduring political fault lines.



Tanzania's new President John Pombe Magufuli holds up a ceremonial spear and shield to signify the beginning of his presidency, shortly after swearing an oath during his inauguration ceremony at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Thursday, Nov. 5, 2015. (Source: AP Photo/Khalifan Said.)

Government Reform ... Up to a Point

Magufuli’s election revitalized his struggling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), which has been the ruling party in Tanzania since 1977. CCM was weakened under former President Jakaya Kikwete by economic decline and corruption scandals that caused Western donors to [cut budget support](#). Magufuli promised voters that he would clean up the government and, once elected, began a variety of reforms. These changes ranged from geopolitics—repairing relationships with Uganda and Rwanda to land two [infrastructure deals](#)—to public relations—[canceling](#) expensive Independence Day celebrations to spend the day picking up litter. Magufuli’s forceful style of governance is popular with Tanzanians, who took to Twitter in December 2015 to celebrate their President’s thriftiness under the hashtag [#WhatWouldMagufuliDo](#).

Despite his personal popularity, Magufuli’s government has failed to reform authoritarian practices that began under previous administrations. The government has made broad use of a [cybercrime bill](#), signed into law by Kikwete, which makes it illegal to share “false, deceptive, misleading, or inaccurate” information online. In [April](#) and [June](#) 2016, this law was used as justification to arrest two Tanzanian citizens who insulted Magufuli on social media.

More troubling, Magufuli’s administration has either [closed](#) or [threatened to close](#) over 25 newspapers, television stations, and radio stations. In August, Tanzania’s Information, Youth, Arts, Culture and Sports Minister [announced](#) that media organizations that published “inflammatory statements” when covering protests would be banned. [Journalists](#) report that this crackdown has created a culture of self-censorship within Tanzanian media as news outlets fear repercussions for reporting on political issues.

The Government Takes a Hard Line against Opposition

The government’s suppression of criticism has increasingly brought it into conflict with opposition parties. In early June, the opposition *Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendaleo* [Party of Democracy and Progress] (Chadema) [announced](#) it would begin a nationwide series of demonstrations, concluding in a “defiance day” on September 1, to protest against CCM’s “suppression of democracy.” At an early rally, Tanzanian police used tear gas to disperse protesters and, on June 7, issued a [ban](#) on further opposition protests. Chadema sued the Inspector General of Police to overturn the ban, but was [overruled](#) by the Tanzanian High Court on August 10.

Magufuli's response to the protestors has further inflamed tension. On July 29 he [told reporters](#) that he would respond to protests "without mercy," and on August 8, he issued an additional ban on protests other than by opposition constituencies without describing how these constituencies would be defined. In addition, in early August, talks between opposition groups, CCM, and the government [fell through](#) after CCM, the office of the Inspector General of Police, and the office of the Attorney General failed to send representatives to preliminary meetings with the opposition.

A Long History of Failed Constitution Reform

Magufuli's treatment of the opposition is in keeping with CCM's history of avoiding political reform, supporting instead the status quo. This tendency has been most evident in a series of curtailed efforts to reform the 1977 constitution. Since 1991, Tanzanian presidents have appointed three successive [commissions](#) to make recommendations for constitution reform. Critically, the two most recent commissions recommended that Tanzania move to a [three-tier government](#) so that the mainland and Zanzibar Islands would each have a federated government with a third, the Union government, ruling on issues affecting the country as a whole. This would replace the current two-tiered system in which Zanzibar has a government for internal affairs, but relies on the mainland government to rule on national issues.

In December 1999, the [second commission](#) issued an 800-page report recommending a three-tiered system, among other changes. Alarmed, then-President Benjamin Mkapa insisted the report would need to be [approved by CCM](#) before being presented publicly for debate. This move effectively tabled discussions, and the report's recommendation for a three-tiered system was ultimately not adopted.

The issue was raised again when the [findings](#) of the third commission, released in December 2013, led to a recommendation to adopt a three-tiered system. A constituent assembly was drawn from parliament, the Zanzibar House of Representatives, and civil society to discuss and incorporate the commission's recommendations into the design of a new constitution that would undergo a referendum vote in April 2015.

This referendum never came to pass. In April 2014 the opposition coalition and civil society representatives [walked out](#) of the assembly, protesting a failure to abide by the commission's recommendation, while the rump constituent assembly, now composed primarily of CCM members, put forward a draft text. Ultimately the referendum on the constitution was [postponed](#), but CCM's attempt to move forward without the opposition deepened political animosity in the run-up to the October 2015 elections.

Conclusion

Since coming to power, Magufuli has had to balance his promise to reform the government against existing political constraints. Primary among these constraints is his status as a relative outsider in his own party. Although Magufuli became chair of CCM in July 2016, he was not an influential or high-ranking member in the party until his nomination as CCM's presidential candidate. This outsider status played to his advantage during the national election, enabling his campaign to successfully make the argument that he was well-placed to clean up the government. After his victory, however, [observers believe](#) his lack of ties to traditional party leaders has weakened his leverage over CCM.

The political standoff between the opposition and CCM may be reaching a breaking point with Chadema's insistence that it will [move forward](#) with protests despite the ban. This puts Magufuli in a difficult situation. He must defend his reputation as a reformer while also keeping his party in line. To maintain this balance, he has attempted to suppress the opposition while presenting himself as a reformer working in the people's interest. Now, opposition groups want Magufuli to commit his party to dialogue with them, but there are not yet any signs the "bulldozer" is interested in talking.

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IDA SUPPORT TO THE THREAT REDUCTION IN AFRICA (TRIA) INITIATIVE

By Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee

Following the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Government (USG) established the [Cooperative Threat Reduction](#) (CTR) program to “prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related materials, technologies and expertise from former Soviet Union states.” Today, the term “threat reduction” (TR) is also used in the context of partnering with other states, such as African nations where the proliferation of terrorist groups and an increase in commercial trade have raised concerns over the potential for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosives (CBRNE) materials to fall into the wrong hands. Though nascent, USG partnership with African countries on TR activities could become an important aspect of our engagement with the continent. [more...](#)



IDA researchers provide analytic support to an interagency initiative co-led by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the State Department Coordinator for Threat Reduction to improve coordination of threat-reduction activities in Kenya. (Source: Photo courtesy of the author.)

Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses

INTERVENTION IN SOUTH SUDAN: CHALLENGES AHEAD

By Sarah Graveline

On August 12, 2016, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted [Resolution 2304](#), which renewed the mandate for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and authorized the creation of a 4,000-strong regional protection force to be drawn from neighboring states. While the regional protection force may improve stability in and around Juba in the short term, a political solution is ultimately needed to resolve the conflict. This solution appears unlikely, as mistrust over peace negotiations is high. Both South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar will likely accept international intervention when it is perceived to be advantageous, but the international community has so far proved unable to pressure either side to commit to a realistic peace framework. [more...](#)



In this photo released by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), children wait to be served with roasted maize in a refugee camp Juba, South Sudan, Friday July 22, 2016. The United Nations refugee agency says thousands of people continue to flee South Sudan over violence between armed groups in the country, stretching the capacity of humanitarian efforts to look after the refugees. (Source: Isaac Billy UNMISS via AP.)

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About IDA

The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.

ETHIOPIAN INTIFADA? ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS SHAKE THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC FRONT

By Hilary Matfess

Ethiopia is once again witnessing protests against the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition that has been in power since 1991. The regime, dominated by the Tigray ethnic group, has long been challenged by protestors from the Oromia region demanding greater regional autonomy, but the most recent wave of protests may be a "tipping point" for the country. The protests that took place over the first weekend in August are being described as [unprecedented](#) by activists and international observers alike. [more...](#)

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Silver medalist Feyisa Lilesa, of Ethiopia, acknowledges applause during an award ceremony as he crosses his wrists in an attempt to draw global attention to recent deadly protests in his home region, Oromia, after the men's marathon at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty.)

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IDA researchers provide analytic support to an interagency initiative co-led by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and the State Department Coordinator for Threat Reduction to improve coordination of threat-reduction activities in Kenya. (Source: Photo courtesy of the author.)

Since 2013, USG members of the TR community have convened an informal working group that seeks to promote coordination; increase collaboration; and ensure efficient, effective, and sustainable implementation of USG TR resources and activities in Africa. The Threat Reduction in Africa (TRIA) initiative is co-led by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) and the Department of State’s Office of the Coordinator for Threat Reduction Programs (ISN/TR), with participation from the Department of Energy and the Department of Homeland Security. It was created to improve interagency coordination and information exchange on TR activities in Africa. TRIA’s purpose is twofold: (1) it provides a forum for USG stakeholders to discuss and coordinate plans and programs in Africa and enhance visibility of efforts across the TR community, and (2) it provides a forum for discussing how to improve delivery of TR assistance to African partners.

In 2014, DTRA asked the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) to provide analytic support to the TRIA working group by gathering data from various interagency partners to document existing TR programs and coordination processes. IDA provided regional and functional experts in the fields of African security and interagency coordination to facilitate these discussions and to document and develop lessons from the first TRIA workshop in Africa. The USG delegation at this January 2016 workshop was led by the State Department’s Coordinator for Threat Reduction, Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, who hosted 32 members of the Government of Kenya (GOK) in Nairobi.

Unlike the USG, which has a formalized TR community rooted in the CTR program, there is no equivalent community in Kenya. Recognizing this gap, U.S. participants in the TRIA initiative, with the help of the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, identified and convened, in a two-and-a-half-day workshop, 20 Kenyan stakeholder organizations, which shared details of their TR programs, their existing capabilities, noteworthy gaps, and their plans for the future.¹ For many Kenyans, this was a rare opportunity to meet their counterparts in other agencies, ask questions about each other’s capabilities, and identify areas of mutual interest. The forum provided by TRIA facilitated that interagency communication—a stated priority for the GOK that has historically been difficult to achieve due to the lack of incentives for coordination. U.S. Embassy Nairobi has observed that the stakeholders who attended the TRIA workshop in January continue to meet with each other on an informal basis, suggesting the possibility that an official TR community to coordinate stakeholders’ activities may soon become a reality in Kenya.

¹ The National Disaster Management Unit (NDMU); the National Disaster Operations Center (NDOC); the Kenya Defense Forces Disaster Response Unit (KDF/DRU); the Government Chemists; the Radiation Protection Board (RPB); the National Public Health Laboratory Services (NPMLS); the East African Public Health Labs; the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI); the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI); the Kenya Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (K-FELTP); the Zoonotic Disease Unit (ZDU); the Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS); the National Biosafety Authority (NBA); the Kenya Maritime Authority (KMA); the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA); the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA); the Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS); Kenya Power; Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen); and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).

Challenges to Effective Management of TR Programs

The TRIA forum provided an opportunity for the GOK to discuss, and for the USG to enhance its understanding of, the challenges hindering the effective coordination and development of TR capabilities in Kenya. Above all, the greatest impediment to more effective management of Kenya's TR resources is the absence of legislation or official policy guidance to enforce collaboration among TR organizations. Although significant collaboration occurs at the operational level—for example, within biosecurity or detection and interdiction domains—there is little communication between functional domains across parent ministries. This results in the continued existence of stove-piped organizations. To be fair, this is a challenge that plagues many mature TR communities, including those in the United States.

A second major challenge for the GOK is the need to balance resources between counterterrorism and other military operations and those programs that improve planning and preparedness. The threat posed by al-Shabaab takes much, if not most, of the GOK's attention and resources in the security field. This focus on counterterrorism and internal security has historically diverted senior-level officials' attention and resources from activities that are more preparatory and preventive in nature, including emergency preparedness and response planning. Perhaps as a result of the 2013 Westgate shopping mall attack, where questions arose about the ineffective response by the police and military, there seemed to be a concerted effort by the Kenyan authorities to improve their own capacity to respond to terrorist attacks. The National Disaster Operations Centre (NDOC), which has traditionally focused on droughts, floods, landslides, and epidemics, expanded its planning in recent years to respond to all hazards, including terrorist events. The interagency National Disaster Management Unit (NDMU), which was established more recently in response to the increase in terrorism in the region, is focused on preparation and interministerial coordination and communication.

Opportunities for Future Collaboration

Kenyan participants used the forum provided by TRIA to identify areas where they believed the GOK should increase its attention, which included Kenya's critical infrastructure (the physical and cyber systems that underpin the nation's security). Kenya Power and Kengen are two government agencies with significant roles to play in protecting Kenya's cyber infrastructure. Developing Kenya's physical infrastructure for TR is also a priority. Kenyan participants noted that DTRA programs that enhanced biosecurity infrastructure for the Directorate of Veterinary Services (DVS) have been helpful. Kenyan participants also agreed that better access control is needed for the growing number of laboratories, schools, and factories that handle CBRN materials. Standardization of laboratory building rules is one possible way to ensure better security of these facilities. Sandia National Laboratories has provided technical support to Kenyan regional labs in this area. Additional safety measures may take the form of training employees on the safe disposal or destruction of expired or spent CBRN stocks held in these facilities.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of its study, IDA found that the TRIA process provides a number of unique opportunities for USG and GOK stakeholders alike. There does not appear to be another process or forum that engages the GOK in this manner, and Kenyan participants emphasized that it was a unique opportunity to network with each other, learn about each other's TR activities, and provide feedback to the USG. These benefits are equally as applicable to USG stakeholders as to Kenyan partners. As Africa continues to grow in importance within the TR community and cultivates competent partners, the USG will likely invest more TR resources in the continent. IDA's team of regional and functional experts provided a level of analytic rigor and independence that enabled it to illuminate areas of mutual interest and advance the USG's goals in Kenya. This type of support typifies the role of a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) within a broader USG effort.

Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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On August 12, 2016, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted [Resolution 2304](#), which renewed the mandate for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and authorized the creation of a 4,000-strong regional protection force to be drawn from neighboring states. While the regional protection force may improve stability in and around Juba in the short term, a political solution is ultimately needed to resolve the conflict. This solution appears unlikely, as mistrust over peace negotiations is high. Both South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader Riek Machar will likely accept international intervention when it is perceived to be advantageous, but the international community has so far proved unable to pressure either side to commit to a realistic peace framework.

Regional Protection Force to Bolster UN Peacekeepers

The regional protection force was created in response to an [outbreak of violence](#) between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) in early July. The force, which will be based near South Sudan's capital, Juba, and report to the UNMISS Force Commander, is [mandated](#) "to use all necessary means" to provide "a secure environment in and around Juba."

While commentators have welcomed the regional protection force's robust mandate, the UN's experience in South Sudan has shown that even that mandate may not guarantee civilians' safety. UNMISS already has a [strong mandate](#) that calls on peacekeepers to "use all necessary means ... to protect civilians under threat of physical violence, irrespective of the source of such violence ... through proactive deployment [and] active patrolling." Despite this, UNMISS peacekeepers have been accused of failing to protect civilians from [attacks by government forces](#) in Unity state, attacks [against internally displaced persons](#) in a Protection of Civilians (PoC) site in Malakal, and, most recently, during attacks against aid workers at the [Hotel Terrain](#) in Juba on July 11.

The regional protection force may fulfill its mandate more successfully than UNMISS because neighboring states are more directly invested in ensuring South Sudan's peace. Regional intervention, however, also creates unique political challenges. The South Sudanese Government initially [opposed](#) the force, arguing that it violates the country's sovereignty. Although the South Sudanese Government later [clarified](#) that it would accept the intervention, it demanded that Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Kenya refrain from contributing troops. Both [Sudan](#) and [Uganda](#) have already stated that they do not intend to participate in the regional protection force, but Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia are expected to contribute troops and equipment.

The new force may prove to be only a stopgap measure. Unlike the similarly structured [Force Intervention Brigade](#), which partnered with the Congolese military in the Democratic Republic of Congo to engage and defeat the rebel group M23, the regional protection force will not cooperate with its host government. Conceivably, in carrying out its mandate to secure Juba, it could actually be asked to undertake operations against the SPLA. Because of this possibility, the regional protection force could be seen as challenging South Sudan's sovereignty. Given the [atrocities](#) carried out by the SPLA, the force is a short-term necessity, but may spawn larger political complications that would need to be overcome to broker a lasting peace deal.

No Political Solution in Sight

International observers recognize that a political solution is needed for the peaceful resolution of the South Sudan conflict. Efforts to find an acceptable political solution, however, have produced little progress. The political



In this photo released by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), children wait to be served with roasted maize in a refugee camp Juba, South Sudan, Friday July 22, 2016. The United Nations refugee agency says thousands of people continue to flee South Sudan over violence between armed groups in the country, stretching the capacity of humanitarian efforts to look after the refugees. (Source: Isaac Billy UNMISS via AP.)

process has primarily been led by a group composed of the regional [Intergovernmental Authority on Development](#) (IGAD) and representatives from the European Union, Italy, Norway, the United Kingdom, United Nations, and the United States, a group known as IGAD Plus. Thus far, IGAD Plus has concentrated its efforts on the restoration of the [Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan](#) (ARCSS), the IGAD-brokered roadmap intended to resolve the issues that led to the outbreak of violence in 2013.

Progress toward restoring the ARCSS has been fraught with mistrust. As [Africa Watch](#) previously noted, in late July President Salva Kiir attempted to co-opt the opposition by confirming Taban Deng, a Kiir supporter, as the country's First Vice President. This move followed the attempt by a breakaway group within the opposition to unseat Machar. IGAD tacitly accepted this replacement, allowing Deng to attend an August 5 IGAD Plus summit and noting in the subsequent [communiqué](#) that "leadership changes in SPLM/A-IO ... [are] solely an internal matter and the region should work with the current setup of the TGoNU [the Government of National Unity]." In addition, on [August 17](#), Kenya recognized Deng as the First Vice President, formally hosting him at a meeting in Nairobi. These steps may make it difficult for Machar to accept negotiations led by IGAD Plus.

While Machar may mistrust the international community, he is willing to accept assistance when it is to his advantage. On August 18, the [UN confirmed](#) that it had arranged an emergency airlift to transfer Machar to the Democratic Republic of Congo after he fled to the border on foot and in need of medical attention. In a report [leaked to the media](#), Kiir's staff have already argued that the UN seeks to undermine the South Sudanese government. The news that the UN provided an airlift to Machar will likely further this mistrust.

Conclusion

While both Kiir and Machar mistrust international intervention, both sides are also resisting the peace process because they feel they have more to win from remaining in conflict. Kiir is using Machar's absence as an opportunity to consolidate power. With Deng acting as a representative of the SPLA-IO, Kiir is promising to [integrate](#) the SPLA and SPLA-IO and to hold [elections](#). Pursuing either aim would help Kiir increase his legitimacy as the country's leader, improving his position when negotiations finally do occur. Simultaneously, the SPLA-IO is trying to shift conditions outside the capital to create a more favorable negotiating position. Machar's spokesman [stated](#) that Deng would be considered *persona non grata* in SPLA-IO-controlled territory, while SPLA-IO forces [reportedly engaged](#) SPLA soldiers in the Upper Nile state in early August.

As both sides fight for advantage, South Sudan's civilians suffer. Since the outbreak of violence in July, [70,000](#) South Sudanese have fled to Uganda, where they are living in dire conditions. To reverse this humanitarian crisis, more diplomatic tools are needed to bring combatants to the negotiating table. Asset freezes on elites supporting conflict or an [embargo](#) on the transfer of arms or ammunitions into South Sudan might help the international community apply more pressure on combatants. Ultimately, the international community needs to find a way to convince both Kiir and Machar that negotiations are more attractive than continued conflict.

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

ETHIOPIAN INTIFADA? ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS SHAKE THE ETHIOPIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRATIC FRONT

By Hilary Matfess

Ethiopia is once again witnessing protests against the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a coalition that has been in power since 1991. The regime, dominated by the Tigray ethnic group, has long been challenged by protestors from the Oromia region demanding greater regional autonomy, but the most recent wave of protests may be a "tipping point" for the country. The protests that took place over the first weekend in August are being described as [unprecedented](#) by activists and international observers alike.

Numerous protests have taken place [across the country](#), including in 10 towns in Oromia and several cities in Amhara, uniting previously antagonistic ethno-political blocs. The protestors, [reportedly numbering in the tens of thousands](#), have persisted despite government repression, including [blackouts](#) of social media. Reuters reported that more than [90 people](#) were shot and killed at protests from 5 to 8 August 2016. Videos emerging from the protests show civilians being subjected to "[beating, kicking, and dragging](#)" on the streets by Ethiopian police. Given the uncertainty surrounding these events, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has requested that [international observers](#) be allowed into the country to determine what transpired. To date, the EPRDF has condemned the activists, with the Prime Minister deriding the protestors as being "ethnic chauvinists" and "[anti-development](#)." What prompted these anti-government protests, what makes the latest round of resistance different from previous ones, and what do these protests portend for the future of an American ally in an unstable region?

Protesting the Master Plan and the Government's Response

The trigger for the protests was the [Addis Ababa Master Plan](#), a development plan intended to expand the perimeter of the capital city into the surrounding Oromia land. Protests over the plan began in [April 2014](#), when those living in areas to be incorporated into Addis Ababa complained that the government was not compensating them for their land and that the eviction process was frequently violent and poorly managed. Despite being the [largest ethnic group](#) in the country, the Oromo are politically marginalized and face government discrimination, according to a [2015 report](#) by Amnesty International. This report points out that Oromo students were monitored and harassed by the government, and Oromo cultural expressions were considered to be "manifestations of dissent."

Part of the government's response to the Oromo protests has been to crack down on certain human and civil rights. Protestors and members of [political parties](#), especially Oromo ones, have been jailed and prosecuted under the country's 2009 [Anti-Terrorism Proclamation](#), which has been referred to by some experts as "draconian." Association with such groups (real or alleged) has been used to justify detention and arrest of activists. There have been allegations that those being held have been subjected to inhuman conditions and [torture](#). In April 2014 the "[Zone 9 Bloggers](#)," who ran a website critical of the EPRDF, were arrested and charged as terrorists. They were held for more than a year and were only released following [significant international pressure](#).

While initial protests were focused on the land policy, it appears that the latest round of protests reflects an expanded set of grievances related to the authoritarian tendencies of the government, the treatment of political prisoners, and discrimination against the Oromo by the ruling party. One Oromo activist asserted that the original protests were



Silver medalist Feyisa Lilesa, of Ethiopia, acknowledges applause during an award ceremony as he crosses his wrists in an attempt to draw global attention to recent deadly protests in his home region, Oromia, after the men's marathon at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Sunday, Aug. 21, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Robert F. Bukaty.)

“manifestations of a much deeper crisis of political representation, equality, and justice that has been simmering underground, waiting to [erupt](#).” Long-standing Oromo grievances, which had previously resulted in sporadic demonstrations on narrow policy issues, seem now to be channeled into broad, public protests against the government.

Despite the state’s efforts to silence protestors, they gained such momentum that in January 2016, the Ethiopian government canceled the [planned expansion](#) of the capital. Does that outcome suggest that the Oromo protests may have made a crack in the regime’s armor? Will others take to the streets to vent their complaints in hopes of a similar result? Merera Gudina, the head of the political opposition party the Oromo People’s Congress, told AFP: “We are nine months into this protest. I don’t think it will stop. This is an [intifada](#).”

Ethnic Discrimination and Unlikely Alliances

One noteworthy feature of the most recent wave of protests is the simultaneous protests of the Amhara ethnic group—a group that has historically been [pitted against the Oromo](#) as part of the EPRDF’s strategy to maintain political control. The protests by the Amhara have involved both public demonstrations in urban centers like [Gondar](#), as well as a [“stay at home” protest](#) that has brought parts of the region to a halt.

Amhara and Oromo protestors have expressed solidarity with one another, suggesting the potential for cooperation between the two groups. The demographics of a potential [Amhara-Oromia](#) alliance are important. These two ethno-regional blocs account for about two-thirds of the country’s total population. One Oromo activist believes that the Amhara protestors are [“bitter](#) against . . . old guard” representatives from the region within the EPRDF. This new class of Amhara activists also bristles at the Tigrayan dominance of the EPRDF. Regardless of the Amhara protests’ origins and specific grievances, an alliance with the Oromo could destabilize the EPRDF’s political control.

What’s Next for This American Ally?

The relationship with Ethiopia is an important one for the United States. Ethiopia plays a critical role in countering al-Shabaab and has been described as a [“linchpin of stability”](#) in the region. It is a significant recipient of U.S. foreign assistance, accepting [\\$650,926,000](#) in 2015. The EPRDF’s control of the country’s police and military forces suggests that the government will ride out the recent wave of protests. It is possible, however, that the united front presented by the Amhara-Oromia alliance could prompt governmental reform. The EPRDF’s scrapping of the Addis Ababa Master Plan suggests that although peaceful protest may be met with harsh repression, it also has the possibility to bring about reform.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

SOMALI REFUGEES IN DADAAB: THERE TO STAY?

By Sarah Graveline

On August 21, 2016, Joseph Nkaissery, Kenya's Minister of Interior, [announced](#) that the government would abandon its May [proposal](#) to close Dadaab refugee camp. Although the announcement appears to fit the Kenyan government's pattern of loudly protesting refugees while quietly accommodating them, Kenya's political calculus is changing. The Kenyan government is facing pressure to show progress against rising insecurity in the country ahead of the 2017 elections. In addition, international funding for Kenya's refugee populations has fallen as donors have shifted their focus toward the Syrian refugee crisis. While Dadaab's size and integration within the local economy means Kenya is unlikely to close the camp in the near future, the Kenyan government will likely continue to pursue harsh refugee policies in a bid to win domestic political support and gain financial commitments from international donors. [more...](#)

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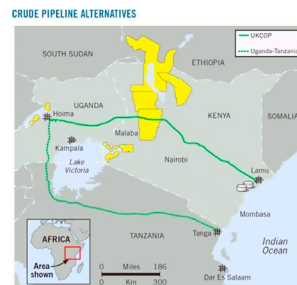
Somali refugees walk through an area housing new arrivals, on the outskirts of Hagadera Camp outside Dadaab, Kenya.

EAST AFRICAN OIL AND GAS—THE FUTURE IS NOT NOW

By George F. Ward

In sub-Saharan Africa, around two-thirds of the population lives [without electricity](#). Several factors contribute to Africa's poverty in energy supply, including inadequate infrastructure and lack of investment. The problem is not the lack of energy resources, as Africa boasts untapped potential in both renewable and nonrenewable energy. This is the situation in East Africa, where significant reserves of oil and natural gas have been discovered over the past decade. Exploitation of these reserves has lagged, and recent developments have highlighted the challenges in bringing new energy sources on line in Africa. [more...](#)

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Two pipeline alternatives in East Africa. (Source: Image adapted from Brendan J. Cannon, "Drive for Oil Exports Pushes East Africa Pipeline Development," *Oil and Gas Journal*, March 7, 2016, <http://www.oj.com/articles/print/volume-114/issue-3/transportation/drive-for-oil-exports-pushes-east-africa-pipeline-development.html>.)

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After months of investigation by INTERPOL and Nigeria's Anti-Fraud unit, two organizers of a network of scammers thought to be responsible for defrauding people around the world of more than \$60 million were arrested in Nigeria in August 2016. The network they controlled was global in scope and impact. INTERPOL believes that the operation used 40 people, based in Nigeria, Malaysia, and South Africa, who [provided malware](#) and carried out the frauds" that targeted small- and medium-sized businesses. Revenue gleaned from the fraud was then laundered by contacts in the United States, China, and Europe. The investigation and subsequent arrest is an encouraging development, illustrating the capacity of the international community to partner with domestic law enforcement units to stymie global threats. The disbanding of this criminal network is nevertheless just one step. Cybercrime in Africa is increasingly sophisticated and beginning to target African companies and, through their personal devices, ordinary African citizens. [more...](#)



Cyber cafe, Dschang, Cameroon. (Source: Renalta Avila, "New Grants To Promote African Declaration On Internet Rights and Freedoms in 7 Countries," *Web We Want*, September 1, 2015. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/zxhl6wd>. Image SarahTz, CC 2.0.)

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Somali refugees walk through an area housing new arrivals, on the outskirts of Hagadera Camp outside Dadaab, Kenya.

Refugee Repatriation: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Although Kenya has hosted refugees in Dadaab since 1991, the Kenyan government is uncomfortable with its refugee populations. As [Africa Watch](#) noted in May, Kenyan officials argue that Dadaab presents a direct threat to national security because it has served as a staging ground for terrorist activities. In response to this perceived threat, the Kenyan government has threatened to expel its refugee populations. In 2015, the government [announced](#) and then [walked back](#) a plan to dismantle Dadaab following the Garissa massacre in April 2015. The year before, in the [Ushahidi](#) security sweep, Kenyan security forces threatened to repatriate urban Somali refugees, but ultimately transferred many to Dadaab.

While the August 21 announcement appears to fit Kenya's pattern of quiet accommodation for refugees, shifting political and security trends suggest that Kenya has become more serious about encouraging repatriation. Under the [Tripartite Agreement](#) signed in November 2013 by Kenya, Somalia, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), refugees may be voluntarily repatriated into selected areas of Somalia deemed safe by UNHCR. Determining what constitutes voluntary repatriation is not always clear, however. In late August, a UNHCR official based in Dadaab [told journalists](#) that refugees were registering to return to Somalia because of "threatening rhetoric by Kenyan regional security officials." A [UNHCR spokesman](#) later claimed this statement was inaccurate, but [interviews](#) with refugees suggest many do feel pressured to leave in response to contradictory government statements and heated political rhetoric.

Political Considerations Driving Kenya's Refugee Policy

Kenya's refugee policy is influenced by its domestic politics. With elections set to be held in August 2017, the current administration is focused on demonstrating to voters the impact of its policies. A key area of focus has been security. Since 2013, Kenya has experienced several large-scale terrorist attacks, including the attack on the [Westgate Mall](#) in 2013, the bombing of a [Nairobi market](#) in 2014, and the attack on [Garissa University](#) in 2015. Insecurity caused by terrorism is a major concern for Kenyans. A public opinion poll conducted by [Afrobarometer](#) found that 45 percent of Kenyans thought insecurity was among the top three problems facing the country. Cracking down on refugees is a politically expedient way for the Kenyan government to show constituents that it is tough on terrorism.

Kenya is also seeking additional financing to help cover the cost of hosting refugees. The [2015 pledging conference](#) for the Tripartite Agreement declared that \$500 million was necessary to cover the costs of repatriating Somali refugees, but raised only \$104 million from donors. Of this, only [\\$7.2 million](#) has been received by UNHCR. [Observers](#) have suggested that Kenya's threat to close Dadaab was partly a negotiating tactic to leverage financial commitments from donors. If so, it has been successful. On August 22, Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States would provide UNHCR [\\$59 million](#) to support refugees in Kenya.

Conclusion

Although it may be politically expedient to expel refugees, Kenya is ultimately unlikely to do so. Since December 2014, only [24,000](#) refugees have voluntarily returned to Somalia from Dadaab. In its [Operations Strategy](#), UNHCR estimates that 50,000 refugees would return by the end of 2016 and an additional 75,000 each year beginning in 2017. Given the ongoing instability in Somalia, however, these numbers seem highly optimistic. In late August, [officials](#) in southern Somalia reported that they had turned back convoys of refugees because of a lack of humanitarian support for returnees. These trends suggest that voluntary repatriation will not reduce numbers in Dadaab quickly enough to make closing the camp feasible in the near future.

Similarly, despite its rhetoric, Kenya is unlikely to forcibly repatriate refugees in Dadaab. The camp is an established urban area generating [\\$14 million](#) in economic benefits to the host community each year. Not only would closing the camp draw international condemnation and be an expensive logistical undertaking, but it would also disrupt the local economy in communities near the camp.

As world leaders prepare for the first UN Summit for Refugees and Migrants to be held on September 19, the challenge posed by Dadaab has been patched over, but is far from resolved. The problems posed by Kenya's large refugee population will continue to tempt the Kenyan government to undertake harsh refugee policies. With funding increasingly scarce and the situation in Somalia remaining unstable, there simply are not many alternatives for Somali refugees. The international community should push to meet funding needs and encourage the Kenyan government to maintain its hospitality for refugees.

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EAST AFRICAN OIL AND GAS—THE FUTURE IS NOT NOW

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In sub-Saharan Africa, around two-thirds of the population lives without electricity. Several factors contribute to Africa's poverty in energy supply, including inadequate infrastructure and lack of investment. The problem is not the lack of energy resources, as Africa boasts untapped potential in both renewable and nonrenewable energy. This is the situation in East Africa, where significant reserves of oil and natural gas have been discovered over the past decade. Exploitation of these reserves has lagged, and recent developments have highlighted the challenges in bringing new energy sources on line in Africa.

Where Are the Resources?

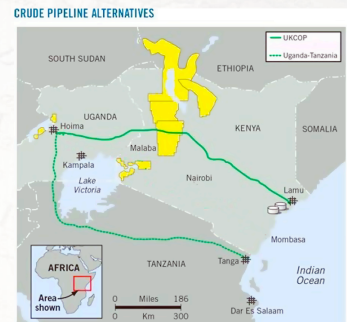
A study by [KPMG East Africa](#) surveyed oil and natural gas prospects in the subregion:

- The only established producer of crude oil in the East African subregion is South Sudan, but both production and exploration there have been slowed by the civil war and reliance on Sudan for export routes. There has been no drilling in South Sudan since 2012.
- Oil was discovered in Uganda in 2006, and 80 wells have since been drilled, but there has been no commercial exploitation of the sizable reserves there.
- In Kenya, there had been sporadic drilling of oil for half a century, but discoveries in 2012 led to a marked increase in activity. There has been no production to date from Kenya's modest discovered reserves, which recently were stated by World Bank economists to be just [600](#) million barrels.
- There has also been drilling for both oil and gas in Ethiopia, but it is unclear whether the reserves there merit commercial exploitation.
- In purely quantitative terms, Tanzania seems to be the East African energy giant, with natural gas reserves of as much as 60 trillion cubic feet offshore and much more modest reserves on shore. The offshore deposits have not been exploited commercially, and onshore production of natural gas for the domestic market has risen only slowly.

The Problem: Getting to Market

All the current and potential East Africa producers of hydrocarbons face obstacles in bringing their production to market. One of the hurdles is ubiquitous: geography. The oil discoveries in Uganda have been in the [Albertine Graben](#), which lies along the country's remote western border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Exploiting the resources there involves not just building a 900-mile pipeline, but also constructing access roads. Kenya is in a similar position, with its oil reserves lying in the Turkana region, which is perhaps the most isolated, environmentally fragile, and impoverished region of the country. Tanzania's offshore natural gas reserves are larger than local markets could consume. For production to be economically sustainable, gas production would need to be coupled to a liquefied natural gas export facility onshore. Plans exist for such a terminal, but legal, regulatory, and, above all, financial [obstacles](#) have yet to be overcome.

In addition to the natural obstacles posed by geography, man-made factors have contributed to the relatively slow pace of resource exploitation in East Africa. While regulatory issues have arisen in both Tanzania and Kenya, they have been particularly acute in Uganda, where President Yoweri Museveni has [personally controlled the process](#) in detail. Disputes between the Ugandan government and international oil companies have led to significant delays. At the outset, President Museveni took the position that he would prohibit crude oil exports and pressed the companies to finance a large refinery



Two pipeline alternatives in East Africa. (Source: Image adapted from Brendan J. Cannon, "Drive for Oil Exports Pushes East Africa Pipeline Development," *Oil and Gas Journal*, March 7, 2016, <http://www.ogj.com/articles/print/volume-114/issue-3/transportation/drive-for-oil-exports-pushes-east-africa-pipeline-development.html>.)

that would process all the oil and meet regional needs. Eventually, the government accepted the need for a pipeline and downsized its expectations for a refinery. That the international oil companies have remained engaged in Uganda despite the interminable disputes is an indication of the importance of the country's oil resources. Recoverable oil in Uganda is estimated at between 1.8 and 2.2 billion barrels, comparable to present-day levels in lower tier producers such as Gabon, which has proven reserves of [2 billion barrels](#).

Regional Politics Complicate Resource Exploitation

Even though all of East Africa's oil and gas resource countries except Ethiopia are members of the [East African Community \(EAC\)](#), which is committed to policies aimed at "widening and deepening cooperation," achieving cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector has been difficult. The root of the problem may be that Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda each aspire to primacy within the EAC.

Both Kenya and Tanzania developed plans for oil pipelines leading to national port facilities at Lamu and Tanga, respectively. For many months, it appeared that Kenyan President Uruhu Kenyatta had put together a coalition consisting of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan to support construction of a pipeline and highway connecting the port of Lamu to the Ugandan and Kenyan oil fields, with a branch to South Sudan that would relieve that country's dependence on Sudan's transportation network.

In the end, Uganda decided to switch sides. At a regional meeting on April 23, 2016, the [Ugandan Foreign Minister](#) announced his country's intention to build an 870-mile oil export pipeline to Tanzania rather than Kenya. Although this decision was buttressed by a [technical report](#) by Uganda's Energy Ministry that concluded that the Tanzanian route posed fewer risks than the Kenyan one, there has been speculation that international political considerations were involved.

Kenya has not dropped its own pipeline plans, and on June 23, Kenyan President Kenyatta and Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn signed an [agreement](#) in Nairobi for a proposed branch pipeline to Addis Ababa. With two pipelines in prospect, costs are projected to increase. The [KPMG study](#) projects an increase in the break-even price for Kenyan oil from a range of \$37–\$42 per barrel to \$45–\$49 per barrel. The break-even price for Ugandan oil is estimated to be \$51 per barrel. These prices would seem to place the new East African oil reserves on the margin of unprofitability on the world market. Kenyan President Kenyatta is nevertheless undeterred. He [announced](#) on August 29 that Tullow Oil, the lead concessionaire in Kenya, would commence small-scale production of around 2,000 barrels per day in June 2017. The oil would be transported to the Lamu refinery by truck until the completion of the projected pipeline. Although road transport will probably drive the per-barrel cost of crude up still further, the announcement enabled Kenyatta to make the political point that Kenya is forging ahead even as Uganda's production prospects remain years away.

Conclusion

While East African oil reserves are not large by global standards, they are sizable enough to make a difference in the subregion's development prospects. Coupled with the eventual successful exploitation of Tanzania's large offshore gas reserves and renewable sources that are projected to come on line, Ugandan and Kenya oil could help provide a solid energy foundation for accelerated economic development. That will happen only if governments and international oil companies work together at a faster pace toward turning their hydrocarbon reserves into oil and gas production.

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The disbanding of this criminal network is nevertheless just one step. Cybercrime in Africa is increasingly sophisticated and beginning to target African companies and, through their personal devices, ordinary African citizens.



Cyber cafe, Dschang, Cameroon. (Source: Renalta Avila, "New Grants To Promote African Declaration On Internet Rights and Freedoms in 7 Countries," *Web We Want*, September 1, 2015. <http://preview.tinyurl.com/zxhl6wd>. Image SarahTz, CC 2.0.)

Scope of Cybercrime: Increasing Focus on Africa

Overall access to the Internet lags in sub-Saharan Africa, but relative to other regions, African IT infrastructure is among the most infected by malware, viruses, and the like, posing a threat to global cybersecurity. One review found that "of the top ten countries in the world with high levels of cybercrime prevalence, sub-Saharan Africa is [host to four](#)."

Cybercrime takes a number of forms. Nigeria especially has become infamous for email-based "[419 schemes](#)" like the ones perpetrated by the recently arrested organizers. These email-based scams are a mixture of "advance-fee scams," in which targets are given the opportunity to obtain a large amount of cash in exchange for a smaller, enabling payment, and "phishing scams," in which the fraudster tries to obtain login information to sensitive accounts and siphon off funds. Also, there have been cyberattacks on devices and networks and software piracy.

Cybercrime directed toward less-developed nations is on the rise. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has marked an increase in cybercrime targeting [developing countries](#); another study found that targeted attacks on devices in Africa increased [by 42 percent in 2012](#). [Kaspersky](#) recorded more than 49 million cyberattacks on African targets within a three-month span in 2014. African cybersecurity is also threatened by counterfeit software. Ninety-two percent of computers in Zimbabwe, 82 percent in Nigeria, and 78 percent in Kenya [are thought to be infected](#) or contain counterfeit software.

An Economic Drain

Inadequate cybersecurity leaves developing countries vulnerable to cybercrime, which is siphoning off significant financial resources. Kenya recently reported that businesses in the country are losing an estimated [\\$146 million annually](#) to cybercrime. A Deloitte review conducted in 2011 showed that more than [\\$245 million](#) had been lost to cybercrime in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zambia.

Banks in sub-Saharan Africa are also increasingly [frequent targets](#) of cyberattacks. Such attacks make it more difficult to attract [foreign investment](#) and win both foreign and domestic investor confidence. In effect, cybercrime has a negative multiplier effect on sub-Saharan African economies. It siphons off economic resources through direct attacks and hinders future economic growth by adding to perceptions of investment risk.

Difficulty in Responding

A number of factors make it difficult to respond to cybercrime in sub-Saharan Africa. Perhaps the most glaring is the lack of a legislative framework for combating cybercrime in a number of African countries. Despite the growing threat from cybercrime, it remains a [low priority](#) for many African countries. In 2014, the African Union adopted its “[Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection](#),” but no African country has ratified the sweeping bill and only eight have become [signatories](#).

Even in countries where domestic legislation has been adopted, it is rarely [fully implemented](#). For example, South Africa, one of the African countries most affected by cyberattacks, adopted the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act in 2002 and adopted the Council of Europe’s Convention on CyberCrime CETS #185, but neither of these has been fully implemented. Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Ghana, and Botswana are among other African countries that have adopted legal measures aimed at stemming cybercrime but struggled to implement these measures. According to the UNCTAD, the lack of legal infrastructure to investigate and prosecute crimes makes developing countries more appealing as a base for cybercriminal operations. The coming years could see the region [becoming a hub for cybercriminals](#) seeking to evade the more stringent regulations of Western countries.

Illicit activities that occur at public computers, like those found at [popular cybercafes](#), are particularly hard to detect, “making it difficult to identify the perpetrators.” The cyber-infrastructure is made all the more vulnerable because of a [lack of basic cybersecurity measures and knowledge](#) among Africans. Mirroring the general lack of computer literacy on the continent, many African police forces lack the training and human capital to investigate cybercrime. There have been calls for “specially trained cyber police,” particularly in countries like Nigeria. But funding and training for such a unit is difficult for many African countries to muster.

Conclusion

The growth of Internet access in sub-Saharan Africa has been hailed as [revolutionary](#)—this rise, however, has been accompanied by a mounting threat from cybercrime. In addition to being a drag on African economies, the rise of cybercrime is a threat to companies and individuals worldwide. Countering cybercrime in sub-Saharan Africa may require globally coordinated and implemented regulations. Although personal devices are prominent in developed countries and are growing increasingly popular in sub-Saharan Africa, the continued popularity of cybercafes may call for specific regulations and enforcement mechanisms that are currently lacking on the continent. Since cyberspace does not have geopolitical boundaries, any one country’s efforts will likely be inadequate if the global community fails to take coordinated action.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

STATUS OF BOKO HARAM

By Hilary Matfess

Secretary of State John Kerry's [recent trip to Nigeria](#) emphasized the U.S. commitment to helping Nigeria defeat Boko Haram, the Salafist-Jihadi terrorist group that emerged in the northeastern town of Maiduguri in 2002. Leadership of the group is unclear, with different characterizations depending on the source. A few days before the secretary's arrival, the Nigerian military announced that Abubakar Shekau, Boko Haram's embattled leader, had been "[fatally wounded](#)" in an airstrike. Weeks before, it appeared that the group was undergoing a fragmentation, as it was announced in the Islamic State's e-magazine Dabiq that Shekau had [been replaced as Wali](#) (the top leadership position in the insurgency) by a man called Abu Musab al-Barnawi. All these developments follow the December 2015 declaration by President Buhari that Boko Haram had been "[technically defeated](#)" and a decline in the group's lethality in recent months. In these circumstances, it is important to assess the current status of the leadership of Boko Haram and the fight against violent extremism in the Lake Chad Basin. [more...](#)



In this photo taken Friday, Oct. 30, 2015, a poster featuring wanted Boko Haram members, pasted onto the wall by Nigeria army in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Nigeria's army has displayed the poster of 100 photographs of the most wanted Boko Haram militants including the shadowy leader Abubakar Shekau, large picture at center, whom they claim to have killed on at least three occasions. (Source: AP Photo/Jossey ola.)

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

CAN THE UPCOMING CITES CONFERENCE STOP ELEPHANT POACHING?

By Sarah Graveline

Elephant poaching carries a tangible cost for both animals and humans in sub-Saharan Africa. Across the continent the elephant population declined by [144,000](#) from 2007 to 2014, primarily due to poaching. Not only does this loss negatively affect the tourism industry in central and southern Africa, but poaching also provides revenue to criminal gangs, militias, and corrupt units of some African militaries. While these issues are well known, efforts to restrict poaching are mixed and do not address larger challenges related to interfaces between elephant populations, poachers, and rural communities. As members of the regulatory Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) prepare to meet in South Africa on September 24, African nations have an opportunity to consider adopting policies that take into account these broader concerns. [more...](#)



In this April 28, 2016, file photo, a Maasai man in ceremonial dress poses in front of one of around a dozen pyres of ivory, in Nairobi National Park, Kenya. The Kenya Wildlife Service stacked 105 tons of ivory consisting of 16,000 tusks, and 1 ton of rhino horn, from stockpiles around the country, in preparation for it to be torched to encourage global efforts to help stop the poaching of elephants and rhinos. (Source: AP Photo/Ben Curtis, File)

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The Split

The appointment of al-Barnawi as Wali of Boko Haram is one of the first tangible results of the sect's [pledge of bayat](#) (allegiance) to the Islamic State (ISIL) in March 2015. ISIL's intervention on the leadership role could signal an intention to increase its involvement with the sect, but that is far from certain. According to most reliable accounts, affiliation has not radically altered Boko Haram's objectives and capabilities. In the year and a half since the pledge of bayat, there has been much speculation about the potential for an influx of foreign fighters or material support to the Nigerian sect, but neither has materialized.

Little is known about al-Barnawi. According to well-regarded analysts with connections to the insurgency, including [Ahmed Salkida](#) and [Fulan Nasrullah](#), he is the son of Boko Haram's founder, Mohammed Yusuf. Yusuf was killed in 2009 during a government crackdown on the then largely criminal enterprise. Nasrullah and Salkida have both asserted that after Yusuf's death, Abubakar Shekau not only took over leadership of Boko Haram, but also took al-Barnawi under his wing.

The falling out between al-Barnawi and Shekau appears to be related to Shekau's indiscriminate killing of Muslims and allegedly luxurious lifestyle. In his interview with Dabiq, al-Barnawi asserted that during his tenure he would focus on targeting Christians and Western aid.

Shekau's [response to the announcement](#) of al-Barnawi's appointment, first through an audio message and then through a video, broke his year-long silence and dispelled the claims that he had been killed. In both of these messages, Shekau expressed disappointment in ISIL's endorsement of al-Barnawi, but reasserted his commitment to the insurgency's campaign against the Nigerian state. Shekau referred to Boko Haram by its original name, "Jamaatu ahlis Sunna li'Dawati wal Jihad," rather than by its recent ISIL-affiliated moniker "Islamic State—West Africa Province," underscoring the perceived fragmentation within the group. In the video he released, Shekau featured the Chibok girls, who have come to be a valuable [negotiating tool](#) and symbol of the sect's strength. Even if Shekau was subsequently killed, as claimed by the Nigerian government, it is unclear if al-Barnawi's faction would obtain control over the Chibok girls.

Some theorists of insurgent organization, most notably [Paul Staniland](#), suggest that Boko Haram is predisposed to fragmentation, given that it is composed of cells that are largely independent of one another. This is not the first time that Boko Haram has experienced a splintering. In 2012, a group broke off from Boko Haram, criticizing the killings of Muslims and activities as "[inhuman to the Muslim ummah](#) [nation]." The group, called "Ansaru" but formally known as



In this photo taken Friday, Oct. 30, 2015, a poster featuring wanted Boko Haram members, pasted onto the wall by Nigeria army in Maiduguri, Nigeria. Nigeria's army has displayed the poster of 100 photographs of the most wanted Boko Haram militants including the shadowy leader Abubakar Shekau, large picture at center, whom they claim to have killed on at least three occasions. (Source: AP Photo/Jossey ola.)

[“Jama’atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan,”](#) which means “Vanguards for the Protection of Muslims in Black Africa,” was led by Khalid al-Barnawi (who has no apparent relation to the al-Barnawi—appointed Wali). The group’s activities petered out within a few years. It is unclear if the new, ISIL-affiliated sect will have greater longevity than the previous splinter group.

According to the experienced Africanist [Ambassador John Campbell](#), the apparent fracture is likely to result in a greater geographic scope of the insurgency. Campbell speculates that activities could spread to Kano in the North West, possibly Lagos in the country’s south, and almost certainly in Cameroon and Niger. He also asserts that as a result of this fragmentation, “there may well be greater cooperation with the various criminal networks that are active across the Sahel,” aimed at raising money for their operations. Campbell suggests that the ISIL affiliation, with its transnational implications, may portend a “cosmopolitanism” that would encourage pan-Sahelian cooperation between the Nigerian insurgents and groups like al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO), and criminal networks.

The Solution

While shifts in the group’s leadership may alter the insurgency’s modus operandi and geographic scope, there are no grounds to radically alter ongoing counterinsurgency efforts. As rainy season in the north is drawing to a close and ground mobility becomes easier, it is likely that the insurgents will renew their violent campaign. Regional governments should consider a multifaceted approach to countering Boko Haram, focusing not only on military operations but also on social and economic development. As Secretary Kerry emphasized during his visit, “We also know that beating Boko Haram on the battlefield is [only the beginning](#) of what we need to do.” He emphasized that to counter violent extremism, “nations need to do more than just denounce bankrupt, dead-end ideologies that the terrorists support. They also have to offer their citizens an alternative that is better, that offers hope, that actually delivers on its promises.” The provision of services, including health care and education, and emergency humanitarian aid, are important aspects of defeating Boko Haram and preventing the rise of similar groups.

Finally, addressing the [human rights abuses](#) that have been committed by the Nigerian police and military throughout this counterinsurgency campaign is an important measure. Secretary Kerry alluded to as much in his statement: “it is understandable that in the wake of terrorist activity, some people are tempted to crack down on everyone and anyone who could theoretically pose some sort of a threat.” This message should also be conveyed in neighboring countries that share the threat posed by Boko Haram. In Cameroon, for example, reports of [military abuses against civilians](#) and extrajudicial killings of young men merely suspected of being Boko Haram fighters are particularly disturbing.

Conclusions

Recent shifts in Boko Haram’s leadership structure have already indicated a distinct fragmentation of the organization. Looking ahead, it will be critical to monitor how this fragmentation will affect the geography of the insurgency and the various groups’ operating methods.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

CAN THE UPCOMING CITES CONFERENCE STOP ELEPHANT POACHING?

By Sarah Graveline

Elephant poaching carries a tangible cost for both animals and humans in sub-Saharan Africa. Across the continent the elephant population declined by [144,000](#) from 2007 to 2014, primarily due to poaching. Not only does this loss negatively affect the tourism industry in central and southern Africa, but poaching also provides revenue to criminal gangs, militias, and corrupt units of some African militaries. While these issues are well known, efforts to restrict poaching are mixed and do not address larger challenges related to interfaces between elephant populations, poachers, and rural communities. As members of the regulatory Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) prepare to meet in South Africa on September 24, African nations have an opportunity to consider adopting policies that take into account these broader concerns.



In this April 28, 2016, file photo, a Maasai man in ceremonial dress poses in front of one of around a dozen pyres of ivory, in Nairobi National Park, Kenya. The Kenya Wildlife Service stacked 105 tons of ivory consisting of 16,000 tusks, and 1 ton of rhino horn, from stockpiles around the country, in preparation for it to be torched to encourage global efforts to help stop the poaching of elephants and rhinos. (Source: AP Photo/Ben Curtis, File)

Poaching: Dangerous for Elephants and Humans

Poaching creates economic and security challenges for countries with large elephant populations. Economically, poaching threatens Africa's [\\$43.6 billion](#) tourism industry. A United Nations [survey](#) of African tour operators found that animal-watching safaris account for 80 percent of their revenue. Declining elephant populations can affect demand for these trips. A [report](#) by the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's "iWorry" campaign attempts to put a price on this declining demand, estimating that poaching costs the tourism industry over \$44 million annually, with each individual elephant generating an estimated \$1.6 million in tourism revenue over its lifetime.

Elephant poaching also creates insecurity through first- and second-order effects. Heavily armed poachers regularly attack and kill [park rangers](#), who are frequently the only law enforcement officials present in remote parks. In Central Africa, armed militias increasingly use revenue from poaching to sustain themselves, while preying upon local communities. Advocacy groups [report](#) that the Lord's Resistance Army and Seleka rebel groups actively poach in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), respectively.

More concerning still, many African militaries appear to be involved in poaching networks. Park rangers in the DRC's Garamba National park have reported that the [Ugandan military](#) has taken part in poaching, shooting elephants from attack helicopters. Similarly, Sudanese, South Sudanese, and Congolese militaries have also been [implicated](#) in poaching or benefiting from poaching by controlling the illicit networks through which ivory flows. Government complicity in poaching clearly challenges conservation efforts, while simultaneously eroding security in conflict areas. When militaries and the militias they are supposed to be fighting both profit from the same illicit networks, local communities are right to question their government's commitment to ending conflict.

How Effective is CITES at Stopping Poaching?

Despite these challenges, African states and international partners have taken tangible steps toward controlling poaching. The primary tool used to fight poaching is [CITES](#), a multilateral treaty that brings together 182 nations to identify and regulate the trade in 35,000 species to ensure their conservation. CITES entered into force in 1975. It lists flora and fauna in three appendixes, each with different levels of restriction on trade. Since 1990, African elephants have been classified in Appendix I, meaning that the trade in ivory is wholly prohibited on the international market. Some elephant populations have been moved back to Appendix II, which allows limited trade, since 1997. (Appendix III has the fewest restrictions on trade.)

This strict classification has generated debate over the impact of trade bans on poaching. Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe have regularly sought permission to auction collected ivory and have held [controlled ivory sales](#) in 1997, 2002, 2004, and 2008. While activists claim these sales have increased poaching by driving up the demand for ivory, academic findings are mixed. A [study](#) that found the 2008 sale increased poaching has been [contested](#), and a broader [survey](#) finds that corruption and access to uncontrolled markets have a stronger impact on poaching than controlled sales, which are correlated with declines in poaching.

Divided Over the Decision to Sell

While the impacts of controlled sales on poaching are not fully understood, southern African states' pursuance of special permission to sell ivory has generated fierce political debate. In the lead-up to the September CITES Conference of Parties, Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe have submitted a [proposal](#) to legalize controlled ivory trade in their countries. Namibia and Zimbabwe are also requesting the complete removal of their elephants from the CITES appendixes. Led by Zimbabwe, these countries argue that removing the ban on ivory will enable money from sales to support communities near elephant territory and actually reduce poaching by driving down the price of ivory.

The proposals to sell ivory are largely opposed by other CITES parties. Kenya, in particular, has historically taken a hard line against controlled ivory trade. Richard Leakey, the Head of Kenya's Wildlife Service, strongly [opposes ivory sales](#) because he believes they drive up demand. In April this year, Kenya publicly [burned 105 tons](#) of ivory in a pointed critique of the southern states' plans to sell.

Although the disagreement over banning the ivory trade is not new, neither side is willing to concede easily. Because the academic evidence is [inconclusive](#), nations can cherry pick studies to support their chosen policies. It therefore appears that the debate over ivory sales will dominate the 2016 CITES agenda, leaving little time to consider policies to mitigate other challenges to Africa's elephant populations.

Accounting for More Human-Elephant Interactions

When African states and the international community focus on poaching, they frequently overlook the challenges of managing the increasing number of areas in which rural communities and elephant territory overlap. Elephants can be destructive, destroying crops, homes, and occasionally taking human lives when they venture into rural villages. As Africa's population grows, and elephants' territory shrinks, experts [predict](#) there will be a corresponding uptick in conflict between human and elephant populations. African states have proposed several solutions, including [fencing](#) national parks or [culling](#) elephant herds, but these proposals are expensive and, [some argue](#), inhumane.

Conclusion

The 2016 CITES Conference of Parties presents an opportunity for all countries invested in protecting African elephants to consider the broader ramifications of policies affecting trade in ivory. African states' priorities should be to protect communities affected by their proximity to elephant populations and to address the corresponding economic and security challenges imposed by poaching. While these policies, which may include strengthened support to park rangers and increasing community-based tourism opportunities, must be generated nationally, building consensus through deliberations within the CITES forum is an important first step toward creating international norms that protect both elephants and neighboring human communities.

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IS ISIS MAKING INROADS IN EAST AFRICA?

By Sarah Graveline

On September 11, 2016, three women were killed while attempting to bomb a police station in Mombasa, Kenya. Responsibility for the attack was quickly [claimed](#) by the Islamic State (ISIS), marking the first time ISIS has formally linked itself to an attack in Kenya. While the incident has generated concern that ISIS is expanding in East Africa, these fears seem overstated. The growing number of ISIS supporters across the region is more likely a reflection of internal political jockeying among East African jihadists rather than an indication of a deliberate strategy for expansion by ISIS leadership. ISIS's support for the Mombasa attack shows that it may be increasingly willing to link itself with its proclaimed supporters in East Africa, but it seems unlikely to provide significant resources to the region. While the risk of lone-wolf attacks by ISIS supporters is real, al-Shabaab remains a greater threat to security in East Africa. [more...](#)



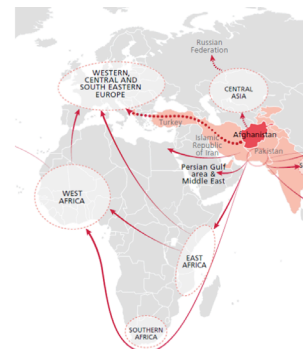
A member of a bomb disposal team prepares the scene before checking the bodies of three women who were shot dead by police outside the central police station in the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya, Sunday, Sept. 11, 2016. The three women were killed by police after they attacked the police station using petrol bombs and knives, a police official said Sunday. (Source: AP Photo.)

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

DRUG TRAFFICKING IN AFRICA: FROM TRANSIT ZONE TO CONSUMER MARKET?

By Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee

About 10 years ago, the international community became aware that Africa, in particular West Africa, had become a frequently used transit zone for criminal organizations trafficking cocaine from South America to Europe. Several large [seizures](#) involving African trafficking networks and drug-related [political instability](#) in several West African countries placed the continent on the radar of law enforcement officials and analysts alike. Perhaps as a result of the attention, West Africa appeared to [decline](#) as a major transit hub by 2009. Yet by 2013, [East Africa](#) (located on what some have coined the “Smack Track”) was attracting significant attention for its use as another transit zone for southwest Asian heroin en route to Europe. The latest World Drug Report indicates that West Africa may now be experiencing a [resurgence](#) in cocaine transiting the region, while other reports tell how the [production](#) of synthetic drugs is rising in Africa. Most of the discussion of the African drug trade has focused on its destabilizing effects on national politics and how it has eroded the rule of law through widespread corruption. Drug trafficking poses a multifaceted challenge to the continent, affecting not only politics and security but potentially also public health. [more...](#)



Main trafficking flows of heroin. Solid red line = southern route. Dashed red line = Northern route. Dotted Red line = Balkan route. (Source: Map adapted from “Executive Summary,” World Drug Report 2016, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, xiii. Map sources: UNODC, responses to annual report questionnaire and individual drug seizure database.)

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About IDA

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IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.

THE OBSTACLES TO CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY IN GABON ARE SHARED THROUGHOUT REGION

By Hilary Matfess

Recent events in Gabon mirror challenges experienced in other recent African elections. The August 31, 2016, elections in Gabon were followed almost immediately by rioting and protests in the streets against the reelection of President Ali Bongo Ondimba. The protestors set [fire](#) to the country's parliament and went on a nationwide strike. Events in the days following the elections resulted in more than 1,000 arrests and an indeterminate number of fatalities. [more...](#)



Burnt-out vehicles outside a government building, following an election protest in Libreville, Gabon, Thursday, Sept. 1, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Joel Bouopda.)

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A member of a bomb disposal team prepares the scene before checking the bodies of three women who were shot dead by police outside the central police station in the coastal city of Mombasa, Kenya, Sunday, Sept. 11, 2016. The three women were killed by police after they attacked the police station using petrol bombs and knives, a police official said Sunday. (Source: AP Photo.)

ISIS in East Africa: Estimating the Extent of the Network

The attempted Mombasa bombing appears to be the result of planning by existing extremist networks in Kenya. Although all three attackers [signed](#) pledges of loyalty to ISIS, they had ties to the larger jihadist milieu on Kenya's coast, which has traditionally affiliated itself with al-Shabaab. The attackers' ringleader, Tasmin Yakub, reportedly communicated with and potentially received financial assistance from [Hania Said Sagar](#), the widow of a radical [preacher](#) who led an al-Shabaab-affiliated organization in Kenya.

Although many Islamist extremist organizations in East Africa are [affiliated](#) with al-Shabaab, there is credible evidence that some of these organizations are also beginning to provide financial support to radicalized youth who wish to join ISIS. For example, Yakub, the Mombasa attack ringleader, lived with two Somali refugees who Kenyan police allege ran a [safe house](#) for both al-Shabaab and ISIS supporters. Similarly, in a March 2016 [report](#), the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) noted the presence of a terrorist cell in Mombasa that raised funds for both al-Shabaab and ISIS.

These networks' willingness to support both ISIS and al-Shabaab recruits is likely due to the increasing number of radicalized East Africans interested in joining ISIS rather than al-Shabaab. As [Africa Watch](#) reported in May, Kenyan police arrested a group of Ugandan medical students in Nairobi who were allegedly part of a network planning biological attacks and sending recruits from across East Africa to fight with ISIS in Libya.

Although experts say the threat of a biological weapon was overblown, authorities and independent observers agree that groups of East Africans have [traveled to Libya](#) to fight with ISIS. Even though many more radicalized East Africans have joined al-Shabaab than ISIS, ISIS's narrative of global struggle is powerful. Moreover, joining ISIS can offer East African recruits a way to sidestep the regional politics inherent in joining al-Shabaab.

ISIS as an Alternative to al-Shabaab?

Rather than undertaking an effort to build up its own network in East Africa, ISIS seems to be attempting to leverage existing networks by seeking a merger with al-Shabaab. Within Somalia, however, al-Shabaab's leadership views support for ISIS as a threat. Starting in March 2015, ISIS addressed several messages directly to al-Shabaab's leadership, asking them to join ISIS. Al-Shabaab, which publicly pledged loyalty to al-Qaeda in 2012, has rejected these advances and suppressed dissenting views among its rank and file. In [September 2015](#), al-Shabaab reportedly detained a handful of its foreign fighters who had expressed support for ISIS. Throughout that year, al-Shabaab's internal security division [arrested or killed](#) other members who expressed pro-ISIS views.

Despite these harsh tactics, some fighters within al-Shabaab have continued to express support for ISIS. They tend to be young, and many are not ethnically Somali. As the 2016 IGAD [report](#) notes, these fighters feel threatened by the continued centralization of al-Shabaab's command structure and the marginalization and execution of foreign fighters at the hands of al-Shabaab's internal security wing. For these fighters, vocalizing support for ISIS is a way to register discontent with al-Shabaab's leadership without abandoning their ideological precepts. Some have even broken with al-Shabaab to pledge their loyalty to ISIS. For example, in October 2015, [Abdiqadir Mumin](#), a senior commander in Puntland, Somalia, left al-Shabaab to form his own militia that he declared was loyal to ISIS. In April 2016, a new group, calling itself [Jahba East Africa](#) and with [apparent ties](#) to Mumin, announced its support for ISIS.

ISIS has acknowledged these organizations through its media arm, which claimed its supporters carried out an [attack](#) against the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) in April 2016. The international community has recognized the threat posed by ISIS-linked organizations in Somalia, and on [August 31](#), Mumin was added to the State Department's designated terrorist list.

Despite the attention Mumin has garnered, he remains a relatively marginal figure. To date, he has failed to expand his organization's impact beyond three small attacks in Somalia. More significantly, ISIS has not created a formal province in East Africa, which suggests the terrorist organization is [not confident](#) that Mumin's forces are sustainable. Also, providing tangible support to potential affiliates in the region is at present a challenge for ISIS. Although Mumin's forces allegedly [received supplies](#) from ISIS-backed affiliates in Yemen, ISIS's [tenuous](#) position in Yemen challenges its ability to regularly provide supplies to Somalia.

Conclusion

While fear of ISIS's expansion into East Africa appears overblown, radicalized sympathizers present a threat even if they are not actively supported by ISIS. By piggybacking on the same networks that support al-Shabaab, ISIS supporters in East Africa can gain access to money and supplies needed to launch homegrown attacks. In copying ISIS's tactics, these supporters may also introduce and normalize types of attacks that were previously rare in East Africa. For example, al-Shabaab has traditionally declined to use female combatants, while ISIS and its affiliates, such as Boko Haram, have embraced female suicide bombers. The use of female assailants in the Mombasa attack may [signal a shift](#) toward the acceptance of female combatants in East Africa.

Overall, al-Shabaab maintains a strong regional network and has proved itself to be a resilient organization capable of successfully executing complex attacks outside Somalia. Currently, ISIS does not seem to have the capacity to compete directly with al-Shabaab. Despite this, ISIS remains attractive to some radicalized youth in the region, pulling recruits toward Libya and inspiring followers to attempt lone-wolf attacks. Efforts to stem the threat of terrorism in East Africa must therefore account for the risk of homegrown plots inspired by ISIS.

Sarah Graveline is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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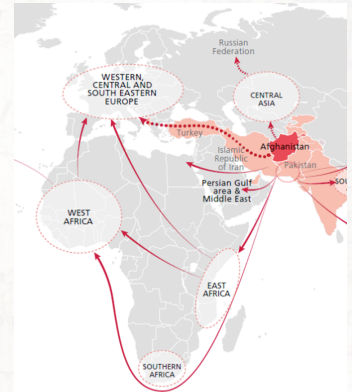
About 10 years ago, the international community became aware that Africa, in particular West Africa, had become a frequently used transit zone for criminal organizations trafficking cocaine from South America to Europe. Several large [seizures](#) involving African trafficking networks and drug-related [political instability](#) in several West African countries placed the continent on the radar of law enforcement officials and analysts alike. Perhaps as a result of the attention, West Africa appeared to [decline](#) as a major transit hub by 2009. Yet by 2013, [East Africa](#) (located on what some have coined the “[Smack Track](#)”) was attracting significant attention for its use as another transit zone for southwest Asian heroin en route to Europe. The latest World Drug Report indicates that West Africa may now be experiencing a [resurgence](#) in cocaine transiting the region, while other reports tell how the [production](#) of synthetic drugs is rising in Africa. Most of the discussion of the African drug trade has focused on its destabilizing effects on national politics and how it has eroded the rule of law through widespread corruption. Drug trafficking poses a multifaceted challenge to the continent, affecting not only politics and security but potentially also public health.

Concerns Persist on Narcoterrorism

To date, Africa has not had to contend with the type of drug violence that plagued Colombia in the 1980s or Mexico in recent years, where drug gangs battled for market domination. Rather, the security concern in Africa stems from the potential for narcoterrorism, where terrorist groups use the proceeds of drug trafficking, or simply drug taxing, to fund their operations. Early on, [Hezbollah](#) and [Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb](#) (AQIM) were most commonly cited as probable participants in Africa's drug trade. Today, the concern has expanded to the [Islamic State's](#) (IS) arm in Libya and [Boko Haram](#) in Northeastern Nigeria.

Over the course of 32 months (beginning in April 2013), [Italian authorities](#) seized more than 280 tons of hashish, valued at \$3.2 billion, on 20 large cargo ships bound for Libya. This was a significant deviation from the well-established hashish trafficking route from Morocco to Spain. The Italian anti-drug unit believes it is highly possible that IS, which until recently controlled several large port cities on Libya's coast, was taxing the lucrative shipments. Although the anti-drug unit lacks concrete evidence for this, such a hypothesis is consistent with IS's tactics in Syria and Iraq, where it is known not only to tax, but also to be involved in the production and trafficking of drugs.

In Nigeria, most analysts believe that [Boko Haram](#) is funded through an array of illicit activities including drug trafficking, though evidence is scarce and difficult to verify. According to [AFRIPOL](#), the African national police services' intelligence-sharing mechanism, the leader of Boko Haram, Abubakar Shekau, oversees a massive drugs and weapons-trafficking network. Boko Haram purportedly taxes weapons traffickers in and around the Lake Chad region in exchange for providing them with logistical support to transport heroin and cocaine shipments through Port Harcourt as well as the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Africa. This assertion was supposedly [confirmed](#) by detained Boko Haram militants. A more common association between Boko Haram and drugs is the militants' reported consumption of stimulants, including Viagra, which provides a means of maintaining the level of energy and motivation required for their ruthless attacks and enables them to maximize their number of rape victims. Evidence to support this notion includes the 2015 seizure of a [vehicle](#) allegedly transporting fuel and stimulant drugs for Boko Haram by the Nigerian military. Other [reports](#) suggest that Boko



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Haram's involvement in drug trafficking may extend as far as India, where the group has teamed up with Dawood Ibrahim, the leader of the Indian organized crime syndicate D-Company based in Mumbai.

A Public Health Problem

Drugs pose a potential threat not only to political stability in Africa, but also to public health. Although data are sparse, there is enough evidence to suggest that both West and East Africa have evolved from simply transit zones to regions where [consumption](#) and [production](#) are on the rise. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)), using reported trend perceptions, finds that the use of opioids may have grown in Africa, while West Africa has reported above-average rate of use of crack cocaine (less expensive than the purer powder form). South Africa in particular has witnessed a significant increase in consumption of synthetic drugs. [Nyaope](#), for example, first appeared in Durban a decade ago and has since become prevalent in townships across the country. It is a mixture of low-grade heroin and marijuana cut with a variety of other substances, including cleaning detergents, rat poison, chlorine, or even antiretroviral drugs. At approximately \$2 for one hit, it is affordable for even the poorest South Africans. Consumption and addiction carry a bevy of social implications, including increases in prostitution (so that addicts can pay for their addictions), prevalence of HIV/AIDS (as a result of unprotected prostitution or sharing of needles for drug injection), and mortality rates. On a continent with limited capacity and resources, most African governments can ill afford the measures and solutions necessary to counter a drug epidemic.

Cooking on the Continent

Laboratories constructed for the production of synthetic drugs have also been found over the last 10 years, with several being discovered by authorities in [South Africa](#), [Nigeria](#), and [Guinea](#). They produce a variety of synthetics, including methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA or “Ecstasy”) and [methamphetamine](#) (“meth”). Production of these drugs is relatively simple given the [lax regulation](#) by African countries of the precursor chemicals required to produce them. While the bulk of the product is destined for [Asia](#), a portion stays in country, contributing to local addiction. The profit earned by producers is huge, with one [report](#) stating that 1 kilo of meth costs around \$1,500 to make in West Africa but sells for around \$150,000 in Japan. Reports of [thefts and losses](#) of the precursor chemicals required to produce these drugs (ephedrine and pseudoephedrine) are another indication of drug production on the continent.

Conclusion

International attention to the drug trade in Africa appears to wax and wane in response to high-profile events or major shifts in the market. However, despite the scarcity of reliable data, there are suggestions that the trade has grown steadily over the last decade, with Africa's transit zones sprouting consumer markets for cocaine, opiates, and synthetic drugs. Not only do consumption and addiction represent potentially major public health challenges, but they also introduce new malicious “players” into African society in the form of local drug dealers or gangs. Furthermore, it seems plausible that terrorist organizations such as IS or Boko Haram are benefiting financially from this trade. The limited capacity of most African countries to contend with the threat to security and public health from the drug trade makes this challenge one that bears watching both on the continent and internationally.

Dr. Ashley Neese Bybee is a Research Staff Member in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

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Patronage in Gabon

The issue in Gabon is deeper than merely electoral violence and a state crackdown in response. A system of patronage characterized by extended political terms and recycled elites, an election campaign marred by identity politics, and electoral irregularities have all played a role in stunting democratic consolidation. Unfortunately, these conditions are shared by a number of African countries. Examining Gabon's experience not only helps to place the country's current instability in context, but also sheds light on the state of democratization in other sub-Saharan African countries.

The 2016 election result, if it stands, will extend the Bongo family's 50-year rule. Omar Bongo, Ali's father, led the country from 1967 until his [death in 2009](#), when his son took the reins. This succession was eased by the powerful networks that Omar Bongo developed and reinforced through oil revenue and patronage.

The 2016 elections illustrate the depth of patronage in the country. Although Ali Bongo and Jean Ping, his opponent, are now bitterly opposed to one another, both of them owe their careers to the late Omar Bongo. Jean Ping's appointment to the African Union Commission as chairman and Ali Bongo's position as the minister of foreign affairs were the result of Omar Bongo's support.

In addition to his professional relationship with the Bongo family, Jean Ping is also connected to the family through marriage. Ping was [once married](#) to Ali Bongo's sister, with whom he had two children. In 2014, however, Ping turned on the Bongo family when he told *Le Monde*, "Gabon is a pure and simple [dictatorship in the hands of a family](#), a clan." The presence of such ruling families and long-term leaders has [stunted democratic development](#) throughout the region, and it has been linked to violence in [Kenya's](#) elections. The system of recycled elites in the Central African Republic, called the "[Bangui Carousel](#)," has been cited as central to the country's continued instability. In these countries just as in Gabon, political opposition is best seen as a struggle among elites rather than a competition among differing political outlooks and governing principles. This view was reflected in the campaign rhetoric of the 2016 elections in Gabon.

Identity Politics

Much of the 2016 campaign was focused on the nationality of the two candidates, rather than on discussing the serious challenges the country faces. Jean Ping argued that Ali Bongo was ineligible to run, asserting that he was born in Nigeria. It was alleged that Bongo's [birth certificate had been forged](#) to allow him to take over from his father.

Ali Bongo's campaign capitalized on Ping's Sino-Gabonese heritage to suggest that the Ping family is "[secretly serving Chinese interests](#)." In the past, Ping has embraced his heritage; he told Quartz. "This cultural mix had a profound impact on my childhood," arguing that "looking different" made him "[more open-minded](#)" and would make him a better leader. During the election, however, the Bongo campaign used Ping's heritage to cast doubt on his dedication to Gabon.



Burnt-out vehicles outside a government building, following an election protest in Libreville, Gabon, Thursday, Sept. 1, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Joel Bouopda.)

The “birther allegations” levied at both candidates in Gabon are similar to the nationalistic electoral rhetoric in places like Côte d’Ivoire, where the concept of “[Ivoirité](#)” has been used to stymie political opposition. Such narrowly defined citizenship lends itself to political marginalization, which can be destabilizing.

Throughout the campaign in Gabon, such identity politics displaced important discussions about the country’s economy and development. Though Gabon has considerable oil wealth, youth unemployment is [35](#) percent and much of the country still lives in poverty. Engaging in rumor-mongering and casting aspersions on the other side’s heritage allow both camps to eschew responsibility for economic development and to ignore its highly unequal society.

Electoral Irregularities and Tepid Constitutional Courts

In Gabon’s 2016 elections, incumbent President Ali Bongo Ondimba was declared the winner by a margin of approximately 5,000 votes. This thin margin was made more controversial when the authenticity of the results from Bongo’s home district came into question. In the days following the electoral commission’s tally, opposition candidate Jean Ping demanded a [recount](#). The [African Union is sending a delegation](#), headed by Chad’s President Idris Deby, to address the contested elections, but few think the results will be overturned.

Like the 2016 elections, the 2009 elections were followed by rioting and a rejection of the results by the opposition and demands for a recount. The Constitutional Court conducted a recount that affirmed the results and placed Bongo in power. Such a sequence of events is not uncommon in sub-Saharan African elections; attempts to address electoral disputes through the judiciary in other countries have been unsuccessful. In [Uganda, Ghana, and Nigeria](#), courts have found irregularities in elections, but declined to overturn the results.

State Crackdown

Bongo’s government has responded to the protests through forceful repression and Internet censorship. Following the elections, the Internet was shut down for 104 hours, and since September 5 there has been an overnight, 12-hour “[internet curfew](#).” This curfew is similar to restrictions put on the Internet to stifle protests in [Ethiopia, Uganda, and Côte D’Ivoire](#).

Conclusion

According to the most recent Afrobarometer survey, 51 percent of Gabonese said they have no trust “at all” in the national electoral commission; more than 70 percent believe that votes in elections are “never” or only “sometimes” accurately counted. This lack of trust in the country’s electoral institutions should not be confused with political apathy or a lack of support for democracy—more than 75 percent of citizens polled “agree” or “agree very strongly” with this statement: “We should choose our leaders in this country through regular, open and honest elections.” Despite the support for open elections, the lack of trust in the independence and credibility of the country’s electoral watchdog could undermine the perceived quality of elections in Gabon. If left unaddressed, patronage systems, xenophobic campaign rhetoric, electoral fraud, and state repression might threaten to stymie democratization, both in Gabon and in other countries across the region.

Hilary Matfess is a Research Associate in the Africa Program at the Institute for Defense Analyses.

DEMOCRACY DELAYED IN SOMALIA

By Hilary Matfess

Despite high hopes that 2016 would see the return of the “one-person, one-vote” electoral system in Somalia, in early September it was announced that the earliest this type of election for parliamentary representation will take place is [2020](#). Shortly thereafter, it was announced that the indirect 2016 elections for parliament would be pushed from August until late September to give the country more time to prepare. The elections were supposed to run from September 24 to October 10, but have been delayed twice and are now slated to take place from [October 23 to November 10](#). The presidential election too has been delayed and is now scheduled to take place November 30. Each subsequent delay contributes to uncertainty about Somalia’s ability to hold peaceful, credible, and timely elections. [more...](#)



Somali soldiers stand near a destroyed building after a suicide attack that targeted a convoy escorting a senior military general in Mogadishu, Somalia, Sunday, Sept. 18, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh.)

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A man drives past a burnt vehicle after a recent protest against a delay of the presidential elections in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tuesday, September 20, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/John Bompengo.)

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The Institute for Defense Analyses is a non-profit corporation operating in the public interest.

IDA's three federally-funded research and development centers provide objective analyses of national security issues and related national challenges, particularly those requiring scientific and technical expertise.

IDA's Africa team focuses on issues related to political, economic, and social stability and security on the continent.

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Somali soldiers stand near a destroyed building after a suicide attack that targeted a convoy escorting a senior military general in Mogadishu, Somalia, Sunday, Sept. 18, 2016. (Source: AP Photo/Farah Abdi Warsameh.)

In response to the initial postponement, the United Nations expressed “disappointment,” but Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said he hoped that the new timetable would be tenable and underscored that these elections would be an [“important milestone”](#) for the war-torn country. Unfortunately, the combination of delays, renewed attacks by al-Shabaab, and increased restrictions on the political opposition suggest that Somalia may be headed toward a constitutional crisis.

What’s the Significance of One Man, One Vote?

One-person, one-vote elections would have been a significant milestone in the country’s history. Somalia has had only two such elections in its history, in 1964 and 1969. Direct elections would signify that Somalia is stable enough to hold popular elections and manage a major political transition. Following the creation of a new federal government in 2012, many were optimistic that the government would put in place the necessary institutions and security for popular elections. Instead, however, the country has maintained a convoluted indirect system based on clan representation. According to [Saferworld](#), “many in Somalia sought to leave behind” a clan-based political process. The report concludes that such a system has become a boon to the government—in the absence of a strong state and national identity, the government relies on clan-based representation and traditional authority “to inject a modicum of legitimacy into the political transition.”

In lieu of popular elections, the voting that was scheduled to begin September 24 is [a process](#) in which Somali clan elders pick roughly 14,000 delegates, who will then be organized into “electoral colleges” that will select the 275 members of the Parliament. According to Ty McCormick, writing for [Foreign Policy](#), the clan rivalries that underpin this electoral system “have made everything from drafting a new constitution to federating the country to drawing up a plan for the current election . . . excruciatingly difficult.”

Why the First Delay?

The first decision to delay the elections in August came from the National Leadership Forum (NLF), a consortium of state and federal leaders tasked with helping institutionalize and harmonize the country’s political system. Moving the national elections from August to October was justified on the basis of the country’s inadequate preparation for elections.

The NLF has been accused of politicizing the elections. The Coalition for Change, a platform for opposition political parties in the country, is [“deeply concerned](#) about the independence and effectiveness of the electoral commission and the lack of transparency in the electoral process.” The NLF has been criticized for its role in the redistribution of parliamentary representation. The body has continued to use the controversial, informal [“4.5 formula,”](#) a power-sharing system that aims to assuage clan dynamics through mandated representation.

Analysis done by [Somalia Newsroom](#) found that the funds allocated for the elections in the 2016 budget were

inadequate for elections “without heavy or complete donor support.” Even with the international community’s financial support for the Somali elections, ensuring both security and political freedom remain pressing challenges.

Why the Second Delay?

The series of delays throughout August and September seem to corroborate claims that the country’s supposedly independent electoral bodies have been politicized. Some [analysts](#) suggest that the delay may be part of an effort by the incumbent government to extend its tenure in office. The Coalition for Change released a statement condemning the delay as “an utter [violation](#) of Article 91 of the Provisional Constitution,” which establishes limits on time in office. The current government has been in power since 2012, when it was inaugurated as the country’s first internationally recognized permanent government in 22 years. Over time, the optimism about President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and his government has given way to frustration in many circles as the war against al-Shabaab has continued and the country’s stability remains uncertain.

The [Federal Indirect Elections Implementing Team](#) and its state-level counterparts justified the delay as a result of elders’ failing to submit lists of representatives to the electoral body. The body also claimed that clans were not respecting the 30 percent quota system for women.

Security Challenges Compound Other Issues

In the run-up to the election, the country has experienced a spate of attacks by al-Shabaab. A spokesman for the terrorist group claims that the elections serve “[foreign interests](#)” and vowed to disrupt them. The detonation of a car bomb in Mogadishu in mid-September, which killed a Somali general and at least five others; an attack on a Kenyan border town; and a suicide bombing near the presidential palace on August 30 that killed at least 20 people all suggest that the group remains a [potent threat](#).

Security concerns have been used as justifications for limitations on political rallies and public protest. In late September, the city government of Mogadishu banned demonstrations without the mayor’s approval in response to a plan by the political opposition to protest peacefully against incumbent President Mohamud’s government. [Mogadishu’s mayor](#) claimed that the decision “was not political, but based on security fears.” The political opposition, however, asserts that the ban restricts freedom of expression and is a way of preventing the opposition from gaining support.

Conclusions

The combination of a mistrusted electoral system, persistent delays, restrictions on political opposition, and security concerns is a potent mixture, which could continue instability in Somalia.

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Watershed Protests End in Violence

On September 19, [thousands](#) of Congolese citizens took to the streets of Kinshasa to protest the postponement of presidential elections, which according to the DRC constitution, were [supposed to be called](#) for by that date. These protestors were met with repression; between 17 and 50 [protestors died](#) after Congolese security forces fired into crowds, while three opposition groups' headquarters were [destroyed](#) by arsonists. Security forces were also [targeted](#), and one police officer's body was set on fire by protestors.

Although last week's demonstrations were not the first public protests against delayed presidential elections, [analysts](#) believe the scale and violence of the protests has generated a level of animosity that changes the nature of the crisis. Before the protests, attempts at political dialogue were ongoing, albeit with challenges. After the protests, however, it seems increasingly unlikely that stakeholders will be willing to seek a political solution through dialogue.

Are Attempts at Dialogue Too Weak to Succeed?

As [Africa Watch](#) previously reported, although DRC president Joseph Kabila is constitutionally mandated to leave office following the December 2016 elections, these elections are unlikely to happen on time due to government obstruction. While Kabila has continued to delay progress toward elections, he has [supported](#) the development of a national dialogue to discuss electoral issues. Kabila may have intended the dialogue as a public relations maneuver to give a veneer of legitimacy to his power grab. The international community, however, has sought to turn the dialogue into a legitimate endeavor.

In [April](#), the African Union, supported by the United Nations, the European Union, and the International Organization of la Francophonie, appointed Edem Kodjo to lead the national dialogue. Almost immediately the dialogue's legitimacy was challenged when the DRC's most prominent opposition leaders, Etienne Tshisekedi and Moïse Katumbi, [objected](#) to Kodjo's appointment and refused to participate. The dialogues [began](#) on September 1 with 280 other participants, but the overall impact of discussions was disputed.

This legitimacy was further challenged by the September 19 protests. Citing the government's violent response to protestors, several [civil society](#) organizations, including the [Catholic church](#), pulled out of the AU-led dialogue. Their departure means only the government and minor opposition groups and civil society organizations continue to participate.

Despite this shrinking number of participants, the national dialogue process has continued. On September 23, the AU [distributed](#) the text of a draft agreement outlining potential steps to resolve the election standoff. Without the participation

of important opposition and civil society organizations, however, the dialogue may not have the legitimacy to make proposed solutions tenable to the public or the opposition.

Can the International Community Intervene?

Even though efforts to peacefully resolve Congo's election crisis appear increasingly remote, the international community maintains some leverage over the government's willingness to negotiate in good faith. In June, the United States imposed [sanctions](#) on a senior official in Kabila's government.

The DRC government has invested in efforts to avoid further sanctions. On September 2, the DRC government [signed](#) an \$875,000 contract with the American lobbying firm BGR Group to improve its image with the U.S. Congress. On September 16, a senior advisor to Kabila reportedly [traveled](#) to Washington, DC, to lobby against further sanctions. Despite these efforts, on September 28 the Treasury Department [sanctioned](#) Gabriel Amisi Kumba, a Congolese general responsible for suppressing political demonstrations in Kinshasa, and John Numbi, an advisor to Kabila and former National Inspector for the Congolese National Police.

The American government's willingness to use more aggressive tactics, like sanctions, may help force the DRC government to make real changes. If Kabila can be persuaded to agree to some of the opposition's preconditions, perhaps key opposition leaders and civil society organizations can be persuaded to come back to the table and continue a legitimate dialogue.

Conclusion

The example of neighboring Burundi, which has descended into conflict following a similar election crisis, should give Congolese stakeholders pause. Having been the site of two of the most destructive wars in African history, the DRC can ill afford another nationwide conflict. Although it is mired in political challenges, the national dialogue seems the DRC's best opportunity to resolve its election crisis.

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After several years of robust economic growth, relatively low inflation, and manageable current account deficits, economic conditions in the southern African country of Mozambique began to deteriorate in 2015. Prices for the country's major commodity exports fell just as the cost of imports needed for the development of large-scale industrial projects increased. Inflation began to spike, and the current account deficit grew sharply. The outlook worsened still further in April 2016, when *The Wall Street Journal* [revealed](#) that the government of Mozambique had failed to disclose the existence of government guarantees made in 2013 and 2014 for at least \$1.2 billion in loans and \$850 million in bonds. After accounting for the previously undisclosed guarantees, Mozambique's debt rose suddenly to 86 percent of gross domestic product. Although the long-term economic prospects of resource-rich Mozambique remain bright, its medium-term hopes seem to depend on revenues that may be gained from exploiting its large natural gas reserves. Investor decisions in the next several weeks may help clarify whether those revenues will arrive in time to buttress the country's economic prospects.



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Navigating Low Commodity Prices

For the past several years, Mozambique's government has invested heavily in developing its extractive industries. At around 15 percent of GDP annually, Mozambique's [public investment spending](#) has been higher than in other emerging resource-rich countries such as Uganda and Tanzania. During most of this period, rising commodity prices and economic growth produced sufficient revenues to finance the high level of public investment. More recently, commodity prices for natural gas, coal, and bauxite, Mozambique's primary natural resources, have fallen, and regional markets in other Southern African countries have withered. As a result, Mozambique's current account deficit has progressively widened during the current commodity price downturn.

Unwise Borrowing Has Consequences

The previously undisclosed borrowing already noted seems to be based on the assumption that Mozambique would quickly become a global natural gas exporter and therefore able to carry an increased debt load. Since Mozambique is estimated to possess [85 trillion cubic feet of natural gas](#), mostly offshore, that assumption was plausible at a time when worldwide demand for gas was rising rapidly. The [loans](#) were used to procure, on a noncompetitive basis, naval vessels and equipment for maritime security and logistics and a tuna fishing fleet.

In the intervening period, the timeline for exploitation of the natural gas reserves has been extended, and the tuna fishing venture has encountered great difficulties. With government resources already strained by these negative developments, the [suspension of aid](#) to Mozambique by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United Kingdom in the wake of the lending disclosures was a heavy blow. In May, a state-owned asset management firm [missed a loan payment](#) of \$178 million. In July, one leading credit rating agency cut [Mozambique's sovereign debt rating](#) to one of the lowest rungs on the junk-debt ratings ladder.

Prospects for Natural Gas

Anadarko, an American natural gas and oil exploration and production company, made its first discovery of natural gas in Mozambique's Offshore Area 1, one of six offshore blocks, in 2010. The company has reported that the discoveries have the [potential](#) to make Mozambique the world's third-largest exporter of natural gas. Several other global oil and gas giants are also involved in work on the offshore blocks.

Although [preliminary agreements](#) for the purchase of Mozambique's natural gas have reportedly been made, none of these agreements have reached the final, binding stage. Potential buyers are apparently reluctant to complete gas purchase agreements in the absence of final investment decisions on the part of the exploration and production firms responsible for building the infrastructure needed to bring the resources on line. The investors, in turn, have hesitated in making final decisions at the current depressed market prices for natural gas.

This chicken-and-egg situation has persisted for some time. As a result, the production schedule has been stretched considerably. In November 2015, the [Economist Intelligence Unit](#) reported that Eni, the Italian firm that is one of the major players in the Mozambican fields, was hoping to make a final investment decision in early 2016 on a project that would have brought gas on line by 2019. That decision has been delayed. A final investment decision is now expected by the end of 2016, perhaps by the end of October, with [initial output delayed](#) until 2021.

Will Natural Gas Rescue Mozambique?

Mozambique is currently caught in a vise, with low gas prices on one side and ballooning debt on the other. The debt load could prove manageable if investors have confidence that Mozambican gas will come on line without further significant delays. [One study](#) estimates that liquid natural gas production could spur growth in the Mozambican economy of 24 percent annually from 2021 to 2025.

Increased gas prices would help the needed investment decisions come together. Currently, [natural gas prices](#) are recovering from the lows reached in early 2016, but are still only around half the prices of 2013–2014. Continued price increases would make final investment decisions more likely. Conversely, continued stagnation in prices and demand for natural gas could leave Mozambique in a difficult economic situation that could require increased engagement by both multilateral economic institutions and bilateral donors.

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